

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

The Superiority of Christ



COMMENTARY OVERVIEWS BY JOHN GILL

With additional outlines and study notes

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A good title for the book of Hebrews is "The Superiority of Christ" because that is its message. Jesus Christ is superior to everything and everyone. Hebrews is both a tremendous and difficult book. It has many truths that are difficult to understand if we are not diligent in our study. Apart from having an intimate knowledge of the Spirit of God and a commitment to understand the Word of God, you will not understand Hebrews. Also, you cannot understand the book of Hebrews unless you understand the book of Leviticus because Hebrews is based on the principles of the Levitical priesthood.

A. The Particulars of Hebrews

1. The author

Hebrews was written by an unknown author. Some think it was Paul, some Apollos, and some Peter. One thing we do know, it was written by the Holy Spirit. I personally believe it was written by Paul and I believe that it can be proven by the book itself.

2. The community

Hebrews was written to a group of suffering, persecuted Jews somewhere in the east outside of Israel. There are no references to Gentiles. The problem faced in Jerusalem of having both Gentile and Jew in the church is not discussed in Hebrews. The letter was written to Jewish believers and unbelievers to reveal the merits of Jesus Christ and the New Covenant as opposed to the Old Covenant.

We do not know the exact location of these Hebrews. They may have been located somewhere near Greece. We do know that this Jewish community had been evangelized by the apostles and prophets soon after Christ's ascension (Heb. 2:3-4).

Included within the framework of the letter are unbelievers within the Jewish community. Unlike Jerusalem or Galilean Jews, they had never met Jesus. Everything they knew about Him they received second-hand. They didn't have the New Testament as it now stands because it had not yet been put together. Whatever they knew they received directly from the mouths of the apostles and prophets. So the recipients of Hebrews were second-generation Christians as a result of apostolic missionaries.

3. The date

The letter to the Hebrews had to have been written sometime after Christ's ascension (about A.D. 30) and sometime before the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) because the Temple was still standing. I believe the date is somewhere between A.D. 60 and A.D. 69, perhaps about A.D. 65. There had to be time for the apostolic missionaries to evangelize the area. We know that apostolic missionaries were not sent out from Jerusalem for at least seven years after the church had been founded. It was sometime after those seven years before this Jewish community was reached. There also had to have been a certain amount of time for this community to grow spiritually. Hebrews 5:12 says, "When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God." The writer was saying that they had enough time to be mature, but were not.

4. The recipients

The critical thing about understanding the book of Hebrews is that there were three basic types of people in view throughout this epistle. For example, if it were written only to Christians, as some

have said, then severe problems arise in interpreting passages that could hardly apply to believers. Since it so frequently addresses believers, it could not have been written primarily to unbelievers either. So it must have been written to include both.

a) Hebrews who were intellectually convinced and committed to Christ

There was a legitimate congregation of true believers in Jesus Christ in this community. They had been raised in Judaism, but they received Jesus Christ as their Savior. The result was tremendous hostility from their own people. They were ostracized from their families, persecuted by their own countrymen, and suffered greatly.

(1) Their weakness

They should have been mature, but they weren't. They had no confidence. They were in danger of returning to the patterns of Judaism. They were not in danger of losing their salvation, but they were in danger of confusing their salvation with legalism. They couldn't make a clear-cut break between the New Covenant in Christ and all the ceremonies and patterns of their old life in Judaism.

The Hebrew Christians were still hung up on Temple ritual and worship. That's why the Holy Spirit tells them about a new priesthood, a new temple, a new sacrifice, and a new sanctuary that are better than the old ones. These people had gone beyond Judaism by receiving Jesus Christ, but they were still hanging on to many of the Judaistic rituals that had been so much a part of their life. That's understandable when their friends and countrymen were persecuting them. They were in great danger of creating a ritualistic, legalistic Christianity. They had become a congregation of weaker brothers (Rom. 14:2), who were still calling unclean what the Lord had sanctified (Rom. 14:14).

(2) Their strength

The Holy Spirit directed the book of Hebrews to these weak Christians to strengthen their faith in the New Covenant. They did not need the old Temple, which would be wiped out by Titus Vespasian in a few years, revealing that God was bringing an end to the Old Covenant. They did not need the old Levitical priesthood. They did not need the old day-in, day-out sacrifices. They had a new and better covenant with a new and better priesthood, sanctuary, and sacrifice. The book of Hebrews was written to give confidence to those floundering believers.

b) Hebrews who were intellectually convinced only

(1) Their ego

These people knew the truth about Christ, but never committed themselves to it. You've probably met people like that—they are intellectually convinced that Christ is who He claimed to be, but they're not willing to put their faith in Him. Why? Because they love the praise of men more than the praise of God (John 12:42-43). They aren't willing to make the sacrifice.

(2) Their exhortation

The Holy Spirit exhorts this group in the book of Hebrews to go all the way to saving faith—to make the necessary commitment.

(a) Hebrews 2:1-4—"We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast,

and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (vv. 1-3). This group of unbelievers was at the point of belief, but wouldn't make the commitment. They were guilty of the great sin of neglecting to do what they had been convinced was right. They should have known better because the truth had been confirmed by the apostles with miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit (v. 4).

(b) Hebrews 6:4-6—"It is impossible for those who were once enlightened [not saved but intellectually convinced], and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, 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." When a man is totally convinced that Jesus Christ is who He claimed to be, but still refuses to believe in Him, he is without excuse and without hope because he won't put his trust in what he knows to be true. There is nothing else God can do but warn him.

(c) Hebrews 10:26-27, 29—What is the greatest sin a man can commit? Rejecting Christ. Verse 26 says, "If we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." If a man receives the truth, understands it, and is intellectually convinced of it, yet willfully rejects Christ, what can God do? The writer continues, "But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries . . . Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (vv. 27, 29). When someone knows the truth and rejects it, he will face severe punishment.

(d) 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 by it many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For ye know how 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." That is the tragedy of making a decision too late—another warning to the convinced individual who has never made a commitment to Christ.

c) Hebrews who were neither convinced nor committed to Christ

This group refers to Israel in general. The Holy Spirit, in addition to strengthening the faith of Christians and exhorting the intellectually convinced to put their faith in Christ, wants to show those who are unconvinced that Jesus is in fact who He claimed to be. In Hebrews 9 He speaks directly to those people: "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 . . . 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? 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 who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (vv. 11, 14-15). In verses 27-28 he says, "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, 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." Those messages were for the unbeliever who needed to know who Christ really is.

Three groups of people are in view in this epistle. The key to interpreting Hebrews is to determine which group the writer is addressing. If we don't understand that, then we will be

confused. He is not for example, telling believers, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). The primary flow of the text is to believers, but periodically there are warnings to two groups of unbelievers: the intellectually convinced and the unconvinced. In a masterful way, the Holy Spirit pulls these three groups together to meet every one of their particular needs and answer their questions in the same letter. There is confidence and assurance for the Christian. There are warnings to the intellectually convinced to receive Christ or be damned by his knowledge. And there is a convincing presentation to the unbelieving, unconvinced Jew that he should believe in Jesus Christ. Hebrews is simply a presentation of Christ as the Messiah—the Author of a New Covenant greater than the one God made in the Old Testament. That is not to say the old one was wrong; it just was incomplete.

5. The theme

The theme of Hebrews is the superiority, or preeminence of Christ. He is better than any Old Testament person, institution, ritual, or sacrifice.

The book of Hebrews begins with the superiority of Christ to everyone and everything. That's a summary of the entire book, and it's contained in the first three verses. From those verses we move on to the superiority of Christ over angels, over Moses, over Joshua, over Aaron and his priesthood, and over the Old Covenant. From that the book moves to the superiority of Christ's sacrifice over the old sacrifices, of Christ's faithful over all the faithless, and of Christ's testimony over the testimony of all others.

B. The Problems of the Jews

1. Looking for the perfect priest

It had always been dangerous for a Jew to approach God. Exodus 33:20 says, "There shall no man see me, and live." Only on the great Day of Atonement, which occurred once a year, could the high priest enter the Holy of Holies where dwelt the Shekinah—the glory of God's presence. The Jewish people could not see God. They couldn't go near Him except for one day a year, and then only one person could do that.

a) Establishing the Old Covenant

Since nearness to God was not possible, there had to be a basis for some relationship between God and Israel. So God established a covenant, which meant that God, in His grace and sovereign initiative, offered Israel a special relationship with Himself. In a very unique way He would be their God and they would be His people. They could have special access to Him if they were obedient to His laws. But to break the law was sin, and sin interfered with their access to Him. Since they were always sinning, access was always interrupted. So God instituted a system of sacrifices. The Levitical priesthood offered sacrifices to atone for sin, which removed the barrier so that access to God might be resumed.

How many times did the sacrifices have to be made? Incessantly—hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after year. Since the priests were also sinners, they too had to make sacrifices for their own sins just to be able to make sacrifices for the sins of the people. So the barrier between God and the people was continually going up and down. That is proof of how ineffective the system was.

b) Establishing the New Covenant

Mankind needed a perfect priest who could open the way to God once and for all. He needed to

perform a perfect sacrifice that didn't just deal with one sin, but took away all sin forever. And that, says the writer of Hebrews, is exactly what Jesus did. He became the mediator of a better covenant—better because it doesn't have to be repeated every hour, because His sacrifice covers every sin once and for all, and because He's a priest who doesn't need to make any sacrifices for Himself—He's totally perfect. His perfect sacrifice eliminated sin.

Hebrews 10:10 says, "By which will we are sanctified [made pure] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. " That was something new in the sacrificial system. It was a better covenant because one sacrifice accomplished sanctification. Verse 12 says, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down." That's something no priest could ever do. They had to keep making sacrifices. Jesus made one, sat down, and it was done. Verse 14 says, "For by one offering, He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

Christ is a better priest making a better sacrifice. That is the message of the book of Hebrews to the Jewish people. To the believer the writer says, "Have confidence in the new covenant." To the intellectually convinced he says, "Receive it; don't fall into perdition when you're only a step away." And to the unbeliever he says, "Look at how much better it is. Receive Christ." All their lives the Jewish people had been looking for the perfect priest and the perfect final sacrifice. The writer tells them He is found in Jesus Christ. The superiority of Christ is the theme of the book of Hebrews.

2. Letting go of the Old Covenant

It was extremely difficult for the Jews to accept the superiority of the New Covenant. It was especially hard for them to make a clean break with the old. The Gentiles didn't have that problem because they had never been a part of the old. They had lost the knowledge of the true God long before and consequently worshiped idols.

a) An uneasy transition

The Jews always had a divine religion and a divinely appointed place of worship. Difficulty arose when presenting the truth to the Jew because he would say, "I already know the truth." It was not easy for him to make the transition because he saw it as a complete forsaking of all his God-authored heritage. It was a natural desire for a Christian Jew to retain some of the forms and ceremonies that were a part of his life when he was brought up. That was part of the problem faced by the writer of Hebrews—confronting the born-again Jew about letting go of his past. That was especially hard for him since the Temple was still standing and the priests were continuing to minister. It was easier after the Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70.

b) An intense persecution

Intense persecution added an extra dimension that made it even more difficult for the Jew to give up the Old Covenant. Ananias, the high priest, banished Christian Jews from the holy places. They could no longer take part in God-appointed services. They were considered unclean. They couldn't go into the Temple and take part in the sacrifices. They couldn't communicate with the priests. And they could have nothing to do with their own people. They were cut off from their society. By clinging to their faith in Jesus as the Messiah, they had been banished from everything they had ever known. They were considered worse than Gentiles, but they were actually the only true Jews. For the true Jew is not one outwardly, but inwardly (Rom. 2:28-29).

The Christian Jews were beginning to say to themselves, "This life is rough. We believe in Christ, but it's tough to make the break with the traditions we've held. Is Christ really the

Messiah?" Doubt had become a problem. They were spiritually infantile in their thinking, and they didn't have any resources to fall back on.

3. Living a better life

Throughout the book of Hebrews the writer tells the Christians to put their confidence in Christ, who is the mediator of a better covenant and the new, great High Priest. They weren't losing anything; they were gaining something better. They may have been deprived of an earthly Temple, but they were going to get a heavenly one. They had been deprived of an earthly priesthood, but they had a heavenly priest. They had been deprived of the sacrifices, but Christ gave them one final sacrifice. Everything in Hebrews is presented as something better. These phrases are just a sample of those better things: a better hope, a better testament, a better promise, a better sacrifice, a better substance, a better country, and a better resurrection. Hebrews presents Jesus Christ, and we are presented as being in Him—dwelling in a new dimension: the heavenlies. In Hebrews we can read about the heavenly Christ, the heavenly calling, the heavenly gift, the heavenly country, and the heavenly Jerusalem. Everything is new and better. We don't need the old anymore.

A good summary of the book of Hebrews is in chapter 8, verse 1: "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is seated on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." We have a great High Priest who is seated, and that means His work is done.

The writer of Hebrews wants to show three groups of Jews that Christ is better than anything in the Old Testament and that the New Covenant is better than the old. Everything they have in Christ is infinitely sufficient. The first three verses of Hebrews show us that Christ is superior to every one and every thing. And that is the theme of the epistle. I want you to see three features: the preparation for Christ, the presentation of Christ, and the preeminence of Christ.

I. THE PREPARATION FOR CHRIST (v. 1)

"God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets."

That verse gives us an indication of how God wrote the Old Testament. The purpose of the Old Testament was to prepare God's people for the coming of Christ, whether it be through prophecy, type, principle, or commandment. As marvelous as the senses of man are, they are incapable of reaching beyond the natural world. If we were ever going to know anything about God, it was God who had to speak. Verse 1 says that God spoke (emphasis added). We could never know God if He did not speak to us.

The Religion Box

You and I live in a natural box—we are bound by our existence in time and space. Outside our natural box is the supernatural. Deep down, we know the supernatural exists outside of ourselves, but we can't know anything about it on our own. There are people who want to discover the supernatural, so they start a religion. They run to the edge of the box and try to chisel holes in it. They figure that a hole will let them crawl out of the box and find God. The various religions of the world are all trying to accomplish the same thing-- to escape the natural and enter the supernatural. But there's one problem: No one can do it. The natural man cannot escape into the supernatural.

You can't take your clothes off in a phone booth and come out Superman. You cannot transcend your natural existence. If you are ever to know anything about God, it will not be because you escaped to God, but that He spoke to you. You cannot discover God anymore than a bug could understand me. We can't even condescend to a bug's level, but God can condescend to ours. He literally became a man and burst into the box to tell us about Himself. That's what revelation is all about.

Every religion in the world is man's backward attempt to jump out of the box. But Christianity takes the opposite approach: Jesus said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). When God burst into the box, He did so in a human form. The name of that human form was Jesus Christ. That's the difference between Christianity and every other religion in the world. Many people think you can believe in any religion you want. However, you won't find God by doing so. Every religion is man's attempt to discover God. Christianity is God bursting into man's world and telling man what He is like. Man is incapable of comprehending, identifying, or understanding God at all on his own. God must first invade his world. And He did!

A. The Accuracy of the Old Testament

God first spoke through the words of the Old Testament. Men didn't write it; they were simply the instruments. God was the energizing author. Deity is not speechless. The deists have taught that God started the world going and then went away and let it run by itself. But God is not detached or uninvolved. The true and living God, unlike the idols of the heathen, is not a dumb being. The God of Scripture, unlike the impersonal "First Cause" of some philosophers, is not silent. He speaks, and He spoke in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is not the wisdom of man; it is the voice of God.

1. The resource

a) Portional revelation

Hebrews 1:1 says, "God, who at sundry times [Gk. *polumeros*] and in diverse manners [Gk. *polutropos*]." That is a play on words by the writer. Those two Greek words mean, respectively, "in many portions" (different books) and "in many different manners."

There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament. That's many portions! Sometimes God spoke directly to a man and told him to write. Sometimes He communicated through a vision, sometimes in a parable, and sometimes through a type or a symbol. There are different ways in which God spoke in the Old Testament, but it was always God who spoke. The personalities and minds of the men were used, but they were totally controlled by the Spirit of God. Every word they said was what God decided they should say. Some of the Old Testament is history, some is poetry, some is law, and some is prophecy. God speaks through it all.

b) Progressive revelation

The Old Testament was fragmentary and incomplete. It was written over a period of fifteen hundred years by more than forty writers, each book having its own element of truth. The Old Testament is progressive revelation. First Genesis gives some truth, then Exodus, and it continues to build. It is progressive not in that it goes from error to truth, but it goes from incompleteness to a higher state of completeness. It remained incomplete until the New Testament came along. In the Old Testament, God was pleased to dispense His gracious truth to the Jews by the mouths of His prophets in different manners. His revelation started with a lesser

degree of light and progressed to a greater degree.

Remember one important thing: Just because the Old Testament was progressive does not mean that it is wrong in any way. There is simply development. For example, the standards of morality established in the Old Testament were totally refined in Jesus. God gave man a progressive revelation. The distinction is not in the nature of the truth; it's in the amount and time of it. Children are first taught letters; then they worry about the words and the sentences. God gave His revelation in the same way. His spelling book began with types, ceremonies, and prophecies and progressed to final completion in Christ.

2. The recipients

Hebrews 1:1 says, "God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." God spoke back in the past to the fathers—the Old Testament saints, our spiritual ancestors. He spoke to them by the prophets. They were His messengers. A prophet is one who speaks to men for God; a priest is one who speaks to God for men. The priest took man's problem to God; the prophet took God's message to man.

B. The Affirmation of the New Testament

In verse 1 the Holy Spirit establishes the accuracy of the Old Testament and its divine authorship. And this truth is affirmed throughout the New Testament.

1. 2 Peter 1:21--"The prophecy [the Old Testament] came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

2. 2 Timothy 3:16--"All scripture is given by inspiration of God."

The Old Testament is true. It was the progressive preparation for Jesus Christ.

II. THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST (v. 2a)

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

A. Final Revelation

This verse describes the finalizing of the revelation. God, who used to speak in many ways and many forms to many people, has finally spoken in one way through one individual—Jesus Christ. The entire New Testament is centered around Christ. The gospels give His story, the epistles comment on it, and the book of Revelation tells about His future. No one prophet was ever able to grasp the whole truth. Only Jesus is the whole truth. The Old Testament was pieces and fragments, but Jesus is full and final revelation.

B. Promised Revelation

Notice in verse 2 the phrase "in these last days." There are several ways to interpret that. The writer could be referring to the last days of revelation, meaning final revelation. There is no question that Christ is the final revelation. He could also be saying that in the last days of revelation, God spoke through His Son. But better than that is the interpretation that the writer is making a Messianic reference. The phrase "the last days" was very familiar to the Jew. Since he was writing to Jews, we will take it in that context. Whenever a Jew saw the phrase "the last days," he immediately had Messianic thoughts because the promise was given that in the last days, the Messiah would establish His Kingdom (Micah 4:1-2). So the writer is saying Jesus was

that Messiah and spoke the final revelation of God. Unfortunately, the Jewish nation as a whole rejected the Messiah. The fulfillment of all the promises of the last days had to be postponed and the age of grace (the church age) intervened instead. In John 4:25 the woman at the well in Sychar said to Jesus, "I know that Messiah cometh, who is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things." She knew that Messiah would unfold the full and final revelation of God—and indeed He did.

C. Complete Revelation

To add anything to the New Testament is blasphemous. Revelation 22:18 says, "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Verse 19 indicates that if someone takes anything away from it, God will take away his part from the tree of life.

God's final revelation was made in one greater than the prophets—Jesus Christ. The Old Testament was revealed in pieces. To Abraham was revealed the nation of the Messiah; to Jacob, the tribe of the Messiah; to David and Isaiah, the family of the Messiah; to Micah, the town where He would be born; to Daniel, the time when He would be born; to Malachi, the forerunner who would precede Him. To Jonah His resurrection was typified. Every one of those pieces came together in Jesus Christ. Everything is complete in Him (Col. 2:9-10).

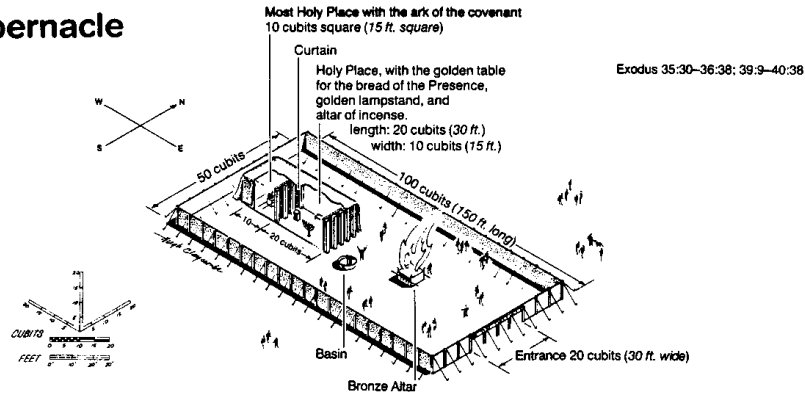
Jesus Christ is greater than the prophets and greater than any revelation in the Old Testament because He is the embodiment of all revelation. God has fully expressed Himself in Christ.

In Hebrews 1:2 the Holy Spirit established the superiority of Christ over all the Old Testament prophets—first in character, because the old was fragmentary and the new is perfect; second, the New Covenant is even better because the instruments of revelation in the old were sinful men while the instrument in the new was the Son of God; and third, God's revelation in the past has been completed in the last days. In the first one and a half verses, the Holy Spirit establishes the preeminence of Jesus Christ over all the Old Testament. And that is exactly what the Jewish Christian believers and unbelieving Hebrews needed to hear.

Some of you who read this perhaps have never met Jesus Christ as your Savior. Maybe you have put your faith in money, popularity, prestige, or success. But Jesus Christ is superior to anything and everything. Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). There is no other way to God. Jesus Christ is superior to any method, any religion, or any philosophy. He is the preeminent One. Unless a man puts his faith in Jesus Christ, he is doomed, for it is Christ alone who provides revelation and redemption from God.

The Layout of the Tabernacle and The Furnishings

The Tabernacle



The new religious observances taught by Moses in the desert centered on rituals connected with the tabernacle, and amplified Israel's sense of separateness, purity and oneness under the Lordship of Yahweh.

A few desert shrines have been found in Sinai, notably at Serabit el-Khadem and at Timnah in the Negev, and show marked Egyptian influence.

Specific cultural antecedents to portable shrines carried on poles and covered with thin sheets of gold can be found in

ancient Egypt as early as the Old Kingdom (2800-2250 B.C.), but were especially prominent in the 18th and 19th dynasties (1570-1180). The best examples come from the fabulous tomb of Tutankhamun, c. 1350.

Comparisons of construction details in the text of Ex 25-40 with the frames, shrines, poles, sheathing, draped fabric covers, gilt rosettes, and winged protective figures from the shrine of Tutankhamun are instructive. The period, the Late Bronze Age, is equivalent in all dating systems to the era of Moses and the exodus.

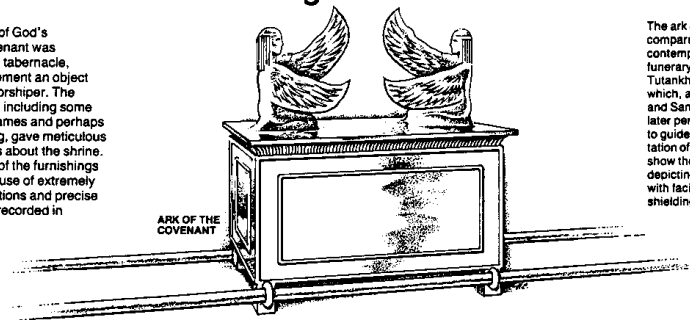
© Hugh Claycombe 1981

The Tabernacle Furnishings

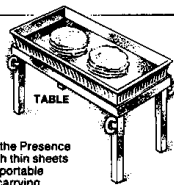
Exodus 37-38:8

The symbolism of God's redemptive covenant was preserved in the tabernacle, making each element an object lesson for the worshiper. The Levitical priests, including some with Egyptian names and perhaps Egyptian training, gave meticulous attention to facts about the shrine. Reconstruction of the furnishings is possible because of extremely detailed descriptions and precise measurements recorded in Ex 25-40.

The ark of the Testimony compares with the roughly contemporary shrine and funerary furniture of King Tutankhamun (c. 1350 B.C.), which, along with the Nimrud and Samaria ivories from a later period, have been used to guide the graphic interpretation of the text. Both sources show the conventional way of depicting extreme reverence, with facing winged guardians shielding a sacred place.



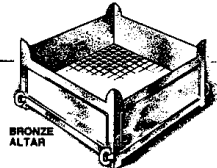
The traditional form of the lampstand is not attested archaeologically until much later.



The table holding the bread of the Presence was made of wood covered with thin sheets of gold. All of the objects were portable and were fitted with rings and carrying poles, practices typical of Egyptian ritual processions as early as the Old Kingdom.



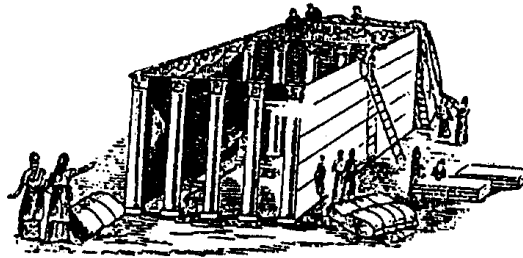
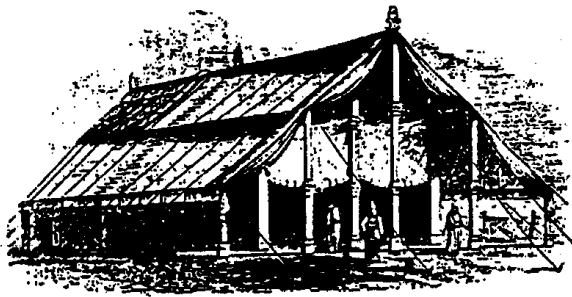
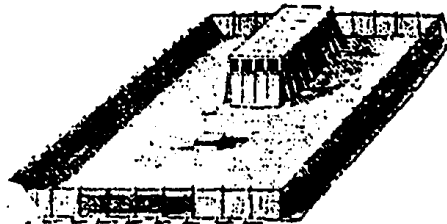
INCENSE ALTAR

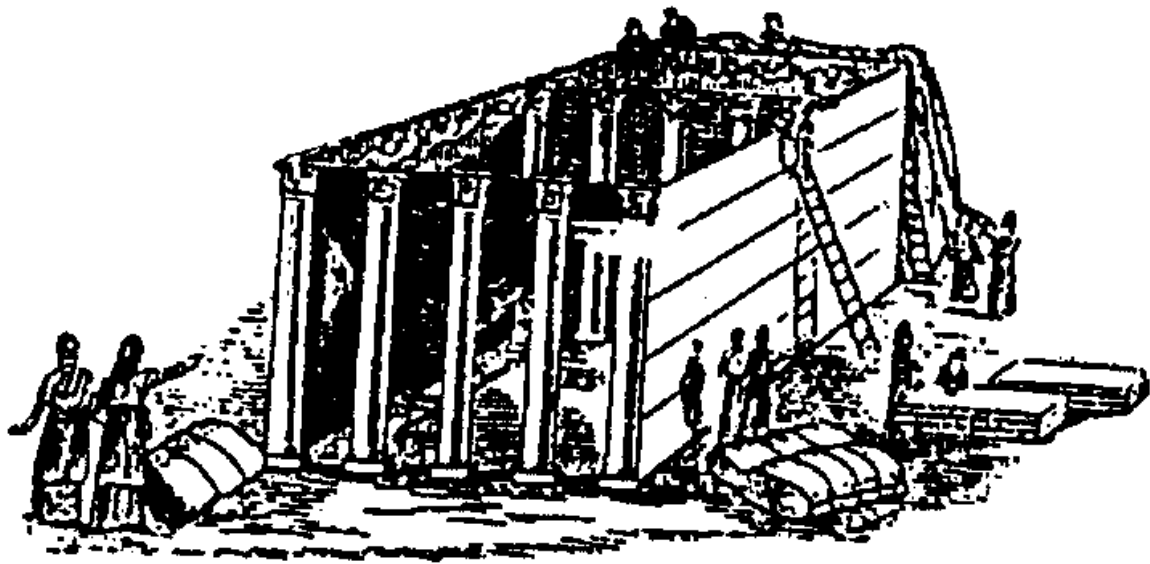


BRONZE ALTAR

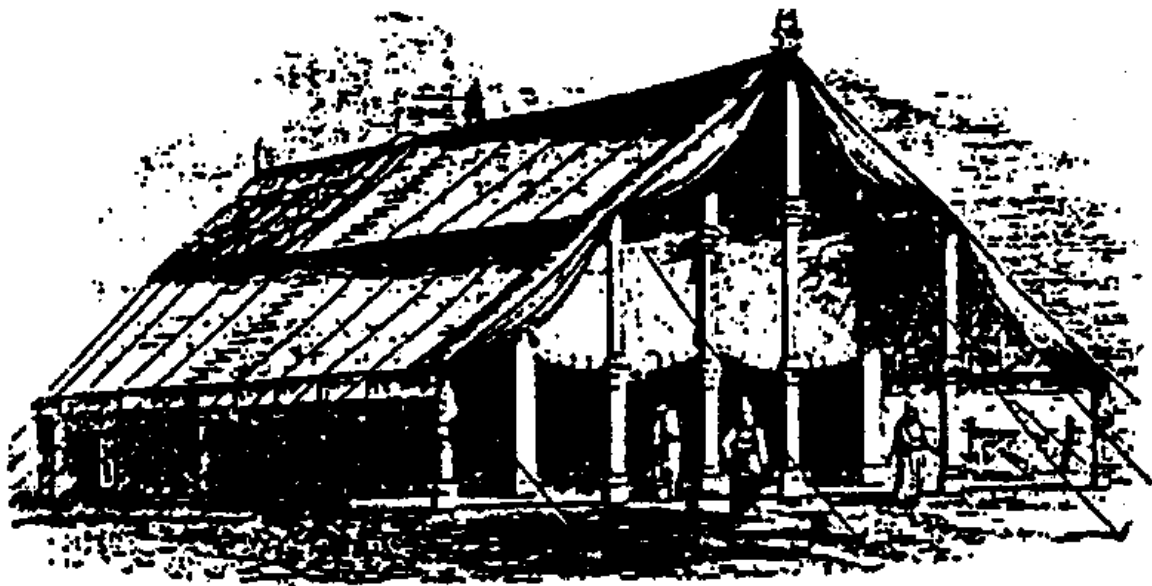
The altar of burnt offering was made of wood overlaid with bronze. The size, five cubits square and three cubits high, matches altars found at Arad and Beersheba from the period of the monarchy.

The Tabernacle/Tent of Meeting

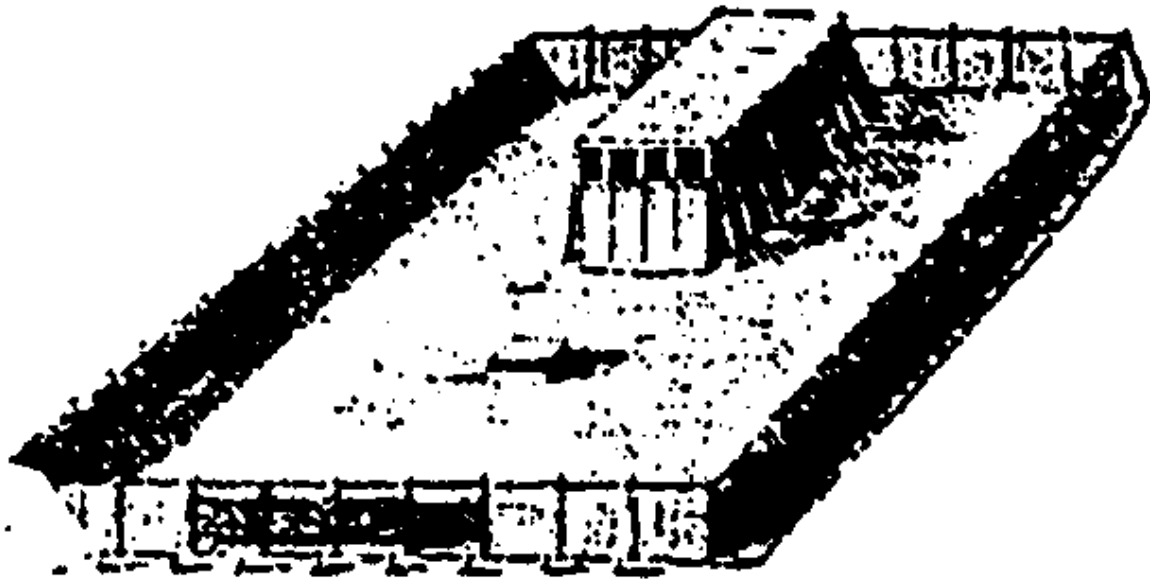




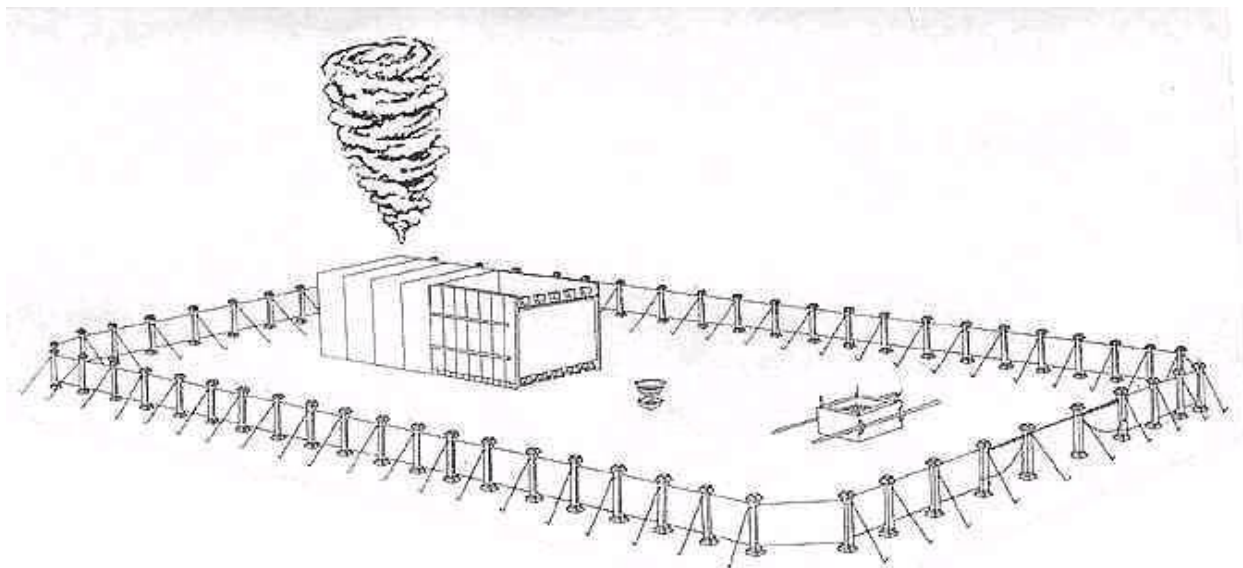
Moving the Tabernacle



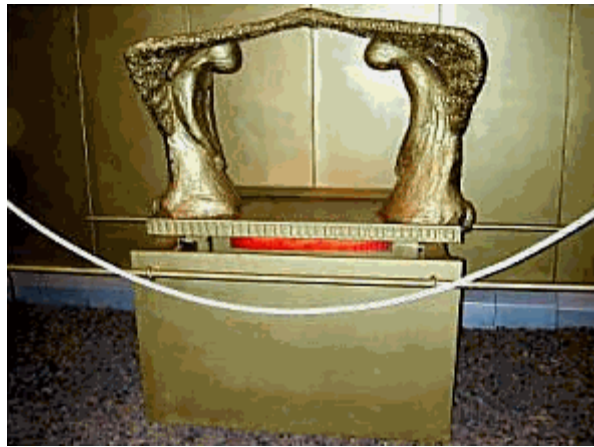
The Tent Of Meeting



The Tabernacle in the Wilderness



The Tabernacle View



The Ark



Bronze Laver



The Shewbread Table



Incense Altar



Priest's Breastplate



Tabernacle in the Wilderness

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER ONE

[Introduction/Chapter 2](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

The intention of this epistle being to demonstrate the superior excellency of the Gospel revelation to the legal one, the apostle begins with the divine author of it, in which they both agree, and observes that in other things they differ. The revelation under the law was made in times past, the Gospel revelation in these last days; the former was made to the Jewish fathers that were of old, the latter to the then present apostles; the one was made at sundry times, and in divers manners, the other was made at once, and in one way; the one was made by the prophets of the Lord, the other by his own son (vv. 1,2), and therefore the latter must be the more excellent; in proof of which the author enlarges on the character of the son of God, with respect to his person, office, and glory; showing that he is heir of all things, the Maker of the worlds, of the same nature and glory with his father; is omnipotent, and upholds all things by the word of his power; is the High-priest of his people, who has made satisfaction for their sins, and purged them from them, and is now at the right hand of God (vv. 2, 3). He goes on to prove that he is more excellent than the angels, by a variety of arguments, and these supported by testimonies from the Scriptures; as that he has a more excellent name than any of them, being called the Son of God (vv. 4,5), which is proved from Psalm 2:7; 2 Samuel 7:12-16. that he is the object of the worship of angels (v. 6), which is required of them, Psalm 97:7. that he is their Maker and creator (v. 7), which appears from Psalm 104:4. that he has an everlasting kingdom, is a righteous king, and is richly anointed above his fellows (vv. 8, 9), which is the sense of some passages in Psalm 14:6,7, and that he is the founder and former of the heavens, and of the earth, and will endure when they shall not (vv. 10, 11, 12), which is confirmed by testimonies out of Psalm 102:25, 26, 27, that he sits at the right hand of God, where none of the angels were ever admitted, (v. 13), as is clear from Psalm 110. and besides, the angels, as they are ministers made by him, they are sent out from him to wait on his people, the heirs of salvation, and minister to them, and therefore he must be greater than they are (v. 14).

Hebrews 1:1-14

OUTLINE OF HEBREWS

Part One: The Superiority of Christ's Person (1:1-4:13)

I. The Superiority of Christ over the Prophets 1:1-3

II. The Superiority of Christ over the Angels 1:4-2:18

A. Christ Is Superior because of His 1:4-14

Deity

B. First Warning: Danger of Neglect 2:1-4

C. Christ Is Superior because of His Humanity 2:5-18

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 1:1-3 [God's Perfect Spokesman]

The superiority of Christ is demonstrated through a number of contrasts. First, Jesus is contrasted with the Old Testament prophets.

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

· **“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners”** - “The God (who) of old (times past) in many portions (little by little) and in many ways”; Because of man's limited ability to comprehend, God has chosen to reveal himself to humanity, little by little. He disclosed himself at times through the Law, and then again through Prophecy, Types, Shadows, Sacrifices, Visions, Dreams, Audible Voice, and Angels.

· **“Spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets”** - Spoke (is “having spoken) to the fathers (of us) by (means or agency of) the prophets...what did they speak of... the testimony of Jesus Christ as the spirit, object, and essence of all prophecy, which pointed to the coming Messiah, the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. For “To him give all the prophets witness,”

Ⓟ Acts 10:43— “43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.”

1. **“In time Past”** - God spoke “originally” through the prophets to our forefathers.
2. **“Unto the fathers”** - the patriarchs [patria means fathers] [arch means high](the “high fathers” or the founding fathers)
3. **“By the Prophets”** - The prophets became the agents whereby God spoke...to the generations [the word prophet in the Greek means “to before see.”] Note that the words prophets and fathers are in the plural...God spoke to many and not just one.

· **“In divers manners”** - “in many ways” or “various ways”...

1. In other words, God's revelation did not come all at once, but progressively at different times and in different ways by means of visions, dreams, symbols, and the like.
2. So God has clearly revealed Himself as One who “speaks”; that is, He communicates His will to mankind! What He revealed through His prophets “in time past” is now superseded the message that comes from the One that is far superior to the prophets...

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;

· **“Hath in these last days spoken unto us”** - Spoke to us in these last days.

1. Our Creator, our refuge, our daily sustaining God, has condescended to speak to us in these “last days,” days of the Gentile era and church age. This God spoke audibly from heaven saying, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him,”

2. Literally, **“at the end of these days,”** which may be understood to mean either;

(a) The closing of the Jewish period or age

(b) The period of the Messiah...this denotes the final phase of history, brought on by the first coming of Christ, continuing until his second coming and the consummation of all things.

ⓓ Hebrews 9:26— “26 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.”

ⓓ 1 Peter 1:20— “20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,”

ⓓ 1 Corinthians 10:11— “11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

· **“By his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things”** - In (a) Son (manner), (Even by him) whom he appointed, assigned, or designed heir—heir restorer of all things...The Father “Loved the Son and committed all things into his hands,”...In other words, God has sent His Son to speak for Him...as wonderful as the prophets were, how can they compare to God’s own Son?

ⓓ John 3:35— “35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.”

There is no contrast because God’s Son is perfect and “appointed heir of all things.” What does “all things” include?

1. All that the Father has.

ⓓ John 16:15— “15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”

2. The authority to raise and judge the dead.

ⓓ John 5:26-29— “26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; 27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

3. The authority to rule in heaven and on earth.

ⓓ Matthew 28:18— “18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

4. The authority that Christ possess now.

ⓓ Acts 2:36— “36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made

the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

ⲡ Acts 10:36— “36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)”

ⲡ Ephesians 1:20-22— “20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”

ⲡ 1 Peter 3:22— “22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”

ⲡ Revelation 1:5— “5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,”

· **“By whom also he made the worlds”** - Through whom even or also he made, formed, fixed, or laid out the ages; NOT ONLY the “Heir” but the “Creator”!

ⲡ John 1:1-3— “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

ⲡ 1 Corinthians 8:6— “6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

ⲡ Colossians 1:16— “16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:”

Jesus was the agent of the lay-out of the ages, the person by whom all creation came to exist. Not only were all things made by Him but they were made for Him.

1. **“These last days”** - {*eschaton*} The rabbinic term indicated the time of the Messiah...”the last of these days.” Implies the last in order that is this period of the church...God’s last in order with his dealings with the world.

2. **“Spoken”** - The aorist tense used in both God’s speaking by the prophets and also His speaking by Christ indicates that God has finished speaking in both cases.

3. **“By [his] Son”** - instrumentality...everything flows through the Son.

4. **“Heir”** - “assigned one” legally of all things. The word “heir” is derived from the term “lot” and referred to a situation in which lots were drawn to divide property or select a winner; the one who drew the lot was the heir. The word came to be used for dividing the property that a father left to his children when he died. When there was only one son, there would be only one heir. Christ is the heir of all things precisely because God has one Son and only one heir.

5. **“By whom also he made the worlds”** - “made” is aorist tense which means that God at a point in time made all the ongoing ages.

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;

· **“Who being the brightness of his glory”** - Who being (existing as) the radiance of his glory. This radiance was perhaps reflected in Christ most fully before men on the mount of transfiguration. The active meaning has the idea of emitting brightness and the meaning is that shekinah glory of God radiated from Christ. Glory (*doxa*) refers to the brilliant radiancy from the person of God. Jesus is the very radiance of God’s glory.

Ð John 1:14— “14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

· **“And the express image of his person”** - And the representation of his reality of being. The very character and attributes of God’s existence were visibly, audibly, and physically expressed in the person of Jesus Christ, so that Jesus declared, “I and my Father are one,” one in nature and essence being and existence.

Ð Colossians 2:9— “9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”

Ð Timothy 3:16 — “16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

Ð John 17:22 — “22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”

1. To Thomas Jesus would say:

Ð John 14:7— “7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.”

2. To Philip Jesus would say:

Ð John 14:9— “9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?”

EXPRESS IMAGE {an exact reproduction}: For the phrase “express image” there is a single word in the original, a word transferred and familiar in our own language...that word is “character.” It is formed from the word signifying to sharpen, then to scratch or furrow with a sharp instrument, to write, to engrave. Our term, therefore, means a writing or engraving, and in this sense we often use it. So, also, as a form is engraved on a seal, and then stamped upon wax, the word indicates a figure stamped upon wax or soft metal. The figure impressed is precisely like the engraving and which determines it. The word accordingly signifies likeness. Then, from the notion of likeness it extends to that of sameness, so that we say of one’s combined qualities, they constitute his character, and more emphatically the character is the man. It is the man revealed and known. The Son of God is, then, the revelation of the person of God. Jesus Christ is God’s very Self revealed and known. He could say of Himself truly, as He said, “He that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me.”

1. **“Brightness”** - radiance (reflection) Christ is the reflection of God...Christ is the One ever existing as the radiance of God.

2. **“The express image”** - exact characterization...the exact likeness or full expression of God’s very being.

3. **“Upholding all things by the word of his power”** - upholding is a pres. act. part. which means that Christ is constantly upholding or that he always “carries about” all things. The concept is dynamic and not static...Christ’s work of upholding involves not only support, but also movement. Christ is the One who carries all things forward on their appointed course. Christ is the “Sustainer” of the universe!

⌞ Colossians 1:17— “17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

4. **“By the word of His power”** - dative of instrument The “Word” is the means of His power!!! Power has the idea of ability. Christ is the one constantly holding up all things by the content of His ability [all He has to do is say he word and the universe is no more!]

5. **“Purged”** - purification...Christ by Himself made us clean. “When he had” the aorist tense points to a completed action. Action that occurred before the purification. This is a clear reference of His death on the cross for our sins and speaks of His role as the “Redeemer.”

6. **“Majesty”** - greatness of God on High...in heaven. Here Jesus sits and reigns.

⌞ Ephesians 1:21-22— “20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”

⌞ 1 Peter 3:22— “22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”

CONCLUSION: God is clearly a God who speaks and by so doing makes His will known to mankind. He now speaks through His Son who is the appointed Heir of all things; the Creator; the brightness of God’s glory; the express image of His person; our Sustainer, Redeemer, and KING!

⌞ Matthew 17:5— “5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 1:4-14 [Jesus’ Superiority to Angels]

Since the purpose of “The Epistle to the Hebrews” is to show the superiority of Christ and the New Covenant to the Law of Moses it is necessary that the “writer” has something to say about angels [Angels were an important part of the Jewish religion and appear throughout the history of Israel]. So it is that we find the comparison of the Son of God to the prophets of God followed by a comparison to the angels {Hebrews 1:4-14}.

The premise is clearly stated that the Son (Jesus) is “much better than the angles” and the reason in a nutshell is that “He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” The title “Son” is only given to Jesus and He alone can properly wear this name. Angels may be called “sons of God” collectively (Job 1:6), but no angel can be called “Son of God” individually! As evidence for the superiority of Jesus over angels, the “author” proceeds to offer scriptural support from the Old Testament.

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

· **“Being made so much better than angels”** - Christ is better in dignity and authority than angels; For angels are to worship and serve him in time and eternity.

Ⓐ Matthew 4:10-11— “10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”

Ⓐ Luke 22:43— “43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.”} ...the idea is that of superiority in dignity or worth or advantage...the fundamental idea being power and not goodness.

1. *Kartos*- better, superior; The word is characteristic of this epistle and the idea is that of superiority in dignity, worth, or advantage. The fundamental idea being that of power and not of goodness.

2. When Christ was *risen* from the dead, and ascended to heaven, He was placed at the right hand of God, where nobody else ever was placed or ever will be. Therefore, the age of Christ is superior to the past ages.

· **“As he hath by inheritance obtained”** - As (since or because) he has inherited (from his Father), an heir-setting, a right to the ownership jurisdiction, to rule and to reign over the earth which he died to redeem from its bondage to restore to His Father.

1. *The more excellent name is the “Son of God.”* Christ’s name arises from His nature and His relation to God. His inheritance was obtained by means of His resurrection.

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?

· **“For unto the angels said he at any time”** - “For to which of the angels did he ever say,” which individual angel or which band of angels did God the Father directly say, or assert, at any point in time?

· **“Thou art my Son,”** “Thou art Son of me,” or “you are my heir,” to inherit all my possessions, the universe---did God ever affirm such; make a pledge to an angel?

Ⓐ Psalm 2:7— “7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”

This Psalm depicts the enthronement of the Messiah (the Lord’s Anointed) Here Jehovah calls the Messiah “My Son.”

· **“This day I have begotten thee”** - Did God ever say to an angel “I have begotten you?” Paul rhetorically challenges...the answer is NO. Angels were created, but Jesus was begotten of the Father, that He might be heir-redeemer to all that the Father had.

Ⓐ John 1:14— “14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

1. *This begetting is the begetting of the incarnate Son and it marks the completion and the acceptance of His redeeming mission to our world.*

2. And the “*begetting*” has reference to the resurrection of Jesus.

ⲡ Acts 13:33— “33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.”

ⲡ Romans 1:4— “4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:”

· **“And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?”** - The heritage redemption and restitution of all things have been pledged to Jesus Christ by the Father. And through faith in the Son, men may become heir inheritors of all things, jointly with the Son; but angels are not heirs to such; they are only servants

ⲡ Hebrews 1:14— “14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

1. Psalm 2:7 is quoted to point out the contrast between the Son and the angels.

ⲡ Psalm 2:7— “7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”

2. 2 Samuel 7:14 shows that God promised David a son who would establish David’s house, throne, and kingdom forever

ⲡ 2 Samuel 7:14— “14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:”

This verse demonstrates Jesus’ superiority to angels...it proves that Jesus Himself was not an angel [this teaching is held by the Jehovah Witness]

6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

· **“And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten”** - that is, the first born from the dead; when he brings the first-begotten to earth again, in power and great glory.

ⲡ Colossians 1:15— “ 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:”

ⲡ Acts 1:10-11— “10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

ⲡ Revelation 1:7— “7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”

ⲡ Psalm 89:27— “Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth”

1. Begotten from all eternity.

2. “firstbegotten” does not always mean “first born.” It is also used in the Scriptures as a metaphor to describe one who occupies the rank and privilege of being firstborn (without

literally being “firstborn”)

¶ Psalm 89:20,27— “20 I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: 27 Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.”

3. This term is used of Jesus to stress His preeminence over creation.

¶ Colossians 1:15-18— “ 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

By virtue of being “Creator,” Christ maintains the rank and privilege of “firstbegotten.”

· **“Into the world, he saith”** - Into the inhabited earth...God says, As sure as I sent my only begotten Son into the world, the inhabited earth, to redeem men the first time, he shall send him the second time to restore all things to their original perfection, holiness, and beauty;

¶ John 3:17— “17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. “

¶ Galatians 4:4— “4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,”

· **“And let all the angels of God worship him”** - The Master is greater than the worshipper. Thus Paul concludes and affirms the excelling greatness of Jesus Christ above angelic beings, who never become Kings, Priests, Judges, or Heirs of God’s world, such is only given to Christ and to His obedient covenant children.

1. No created being is or was ever worthy of worship:

a) The angels refused worship.

¶ Revelation 22:8,9— “8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. 9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.”

b) Peter refused worship.

¶ Acts 10:25-26— “25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. 26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.”

2. Jesus received worship.

a) From the wise men.

¶ Matthew 2:11— “11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.”

b) From the leper.

ⲡ Matthew 8:2— “2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.”

c) From the ruler.

ⲡ Matthew 9:18— “18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.”

d) From His disciples in the boat.

ⲡ Matthew 14:33— “33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.”

e) From the Canaanite woman.

ⲡ Matthew 15:25— “25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.”

f) From the man born blind.

ⲡ John 9:38— “38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.”

g) From the women and other disciples following His resurrection.

ⲡ Matthew 28:9, 17— “9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.”

h) From the disciples following His ascension.

ⲡ Luke 24:52— “And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:”

7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

1. Angels are simply for the service of God. Their service can be as powerful yet as transient as “wind” or “flames of fire” if the need arises.

ⲡ Ps. 104:4— “4 Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:”

· **“And of the angels he saith”** - and with regards to the angels he says, discloses, informs, or makes known the following information:

· **“Who maketh his angels spirits”** - the one making his angels spirits; forming them as spiritual beings, invisible beings...this shows the superiority of Christ to the angels...they are spirits...created beings (created by Christ and owe their existence to Him) and as such differ from God the Creator. This proves the Son to be very God.

· **“And his ministers a flame of fire”** - angels are ministers to God; they attend his presence; and are at ready to perform any service for Him.

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. The Messiah is designated as GOD!!!! As such, He is promised an eternal throne, His rule shall be just, and He is personally committed to righteousness, anointed royally, and crowned with joy.

Ð Psalm 45:6-7— “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. 7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

· **“But unto the Son [he saith],”** - But with regards to the heir-Son, the inheritance Son, who is more excellent than angel servants, God speaks, commits a vow, a covenant pledge, as follows:

· **“Thy throne, O God,”** - ascribes deity to Christ...The Son is far superior because He is here addressed as GOD!!! Christ is God by nature not by office. The Son, who is called God, has been enthroned...

· **“[Is] for ever and ever:”** - As God, Christ’s throne is for ever and ever...from eternity past through eternity future. The Son who is called God is enthroned and reigns forever and ever. His kingdom shall never be destroyed!

Ð Daniel 2:44— “ 44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

Ð Luke 1:33— “ 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

· **“A sceptre of righteousness [is]”** - Christ is righteous because He is God, is throne is for ever because dominion and duration are ascribed to Him.

· **“The sceptre of thy kingdom.”** - His throne denotes his Kingly power, and government...his kingdom is everlasting for He has the sceptre (royalty) of righteousness or just government.

9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, [even] thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Ð Psalm 45:7— “7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

Ð Isaiah 61:1,3— “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.”

Here we find a distinction of personalities with the Godhead which we learn through later revelation involves the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son, Who is God, has been enthroned, and reigns over an everlasting kingdom with righteousness.

· **“Thou hast loved righteousness”** - Christ loves everything that is holy such as, righteous persons, righteous works, faithfulness and integrity. Christ in His earthly ministry was working out righteousness for his people, and encouraging righteousness in them, and He now leads his people in the way of righteousness. The righteousness that the saint now possesses is the “imputed” righteousness of Christ.

· **“And hated iniquity”** - Christ therefore, hates unrighteousness...WHY?...it is contrary to His very nature as God and Christ hates unrighteousness as man because He fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Law.

· **“Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows”**

1. The anointer is “God the Father,” the anointed is the Son of God. Christ is not anointed as God but rather as the Mediator...to be Prophet, Priest and King. He is anointed not with a material oil but with a spiritual oil or the Holy Spirit;

Ð Acts 10:38— “38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”

2. Therefore, Christ is above His fellows which are the saints; and because we are of the same nature and of the same family, and are partakers of the same Spirit we shall be companions with Him through all eternity.

3. Why was Christ anointed...because He loved righteousness;

Ð Philippians 2:7,8— “7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Conclusion: The words may be rendered...thou lovest righteousness—because God, thy God, hath anointed thee.

10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

· **“And, thou, Lord, in the beginning”** - “And thou Lord, at the beginnings,” or according to the beginning or origin of all things,...this certifies the coexistence of Jesus Christ with God from the beginning or origin of all things, even from the creation of the angels.

1. This also calls Jesus God...Psalm 102:24-27 addresses God using His covenant name Yahweh (or Jehovah). But the “writer” of Hebrews by divine inspiration applies this Psalm to Jesus. Such application would be blasphemy, unless Jesus was truly Deity! So while the Son is distinct from the Father, He and the Father are also the same.

Ð Psalm 102:24-27— “24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations. 25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.”

· **“In the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth”** - ...this also shows the

eternity of Christ...He had to exist before the foundation to have laid the foundation of the earth. This proves the deity of Christ for only deity can create.

- **“And the heavens are the works of thine hands”** - they are made by Christ and not the angels.

℟ Psalm 19:1,2— “1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.”

. . . The present heaven and earth are products of Christ the Grand Architect of the Universe by whom they are also daily sustained, held together.

℟ Colossians 1:17— “17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

℟ Acts 17:28— “28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.”

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

℟ Psalm 102:26— “26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:”

- **“They shall perish”** - pass away or be dissolved

- **“But thou remainest”** - to remain to continue throughout - pres. act. ind. emphasizes the permanent continual existence. Christ shall be or exist forever, without end or cessation of being; as he existed before He created all things, so shall He exist in every essential element of His being when heaven and earth's tainted things are gone forever.

- **“And they shall wax old as doth a garment”** - the heaven and the earth, in time, will come to the end of their usefulness, in the present form of them;

℟ Isa. 51:6— “6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.”

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.

℟ Psalm 102:26-27— “26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.”

Compare:

℟ Hebrews 13:8— “8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

- **“And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up”** - shall lay them aside to be dissolved; one has described the visible heaven and earth as God's vesture, vestment, or robe that has been defiled so badly that he can not always use them to declare his glory,

℟ Ps. 19:1,2 — “1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.”

Therefore, both the creation and the dissolution of all things are attributed to God the Son,

¶ II Thess. 1:6-9— “6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”

· **“And they shall be changed”** - as to their form and use; not as to their being; they shall be altered, restored, or made new, even as our mortal bodies shall be made new in the regeneration, the restitution of all things of creation through the redemption wrought in Christ.

¶ Revelation 21:1— “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.”

¶ 1 Corinthians 15:23-28— “23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. 24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

· **“But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail”** - expressive of the immutability of Christ...Christ is the unchangeable One, in all holy nature, attributes, and power.

¶ Malachi 3:6— “6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

· **“But to which of the angels said he at any time”** - the preeminence of Christ established. God never designed to give anyone such honor other than Christ Himself...and He never gave it to anyone else.

· **“Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool”** - Yet God said this about His Son... therefore, Christ must be greater than the angels.

¶ Psalm 110:1— “1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

· **“Are they not all ministering spirits”** - Angels are servants of God, to Christ, and to God’s elect; therefore, they must be inferior to the Son of God.

· **“Sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation”** - The word “sent” *apostellomena* is derived from the Greek root *stello* which means or signifies an authoritative commission for a specific purpose.

Angels are sent forth, by God, with an authoritative commission to minister to those who shall come into the possession of salvation...God's elect. We shall inherit God's salvation...which is Jesus Christ...angels minister both in the temporal and the spiritual...Christ ministers in the eternal. They are sent forth by God, even Christ, so therefore, Christ must be superior to them.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 1:4-14

In a very forceful manner, the "writer" to the Hebrews has shown Jesus' superiority to the angels. He has done so by showing Jesus to be the "Son" and not the angels. Jesus is the "firstborn" who receives worship; He is "God" enthroned and anointed; He "Lord" (Yahweh) who is the eternal Creator whereas angels are created spirits; and Jesus is "Sovereign," reigning at God's right hand. All of these things are attributed to Jesus and not to angels.

While angels certainly have a special place in God's plan for redeeming man, they are not the object of worship or adoration; only Jesus is worthy of such worship and adoration.

¶ Revelation 5:11-12— "11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

[Introduction/Chapter 2](#)

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER TWO

[Introduction/Chapter 3](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

In this chapter the apostle, from the superior excellency of Christ, by whom the Gospel revelation is come, discoursed of in the preceding, urges the believers he writes to, to a more diligent attention to the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; to which he adds another motive inducing thereunto, lest those things should be let slip, and be lost (v. 1), and then, by another argument from the less to the greater, that if the law, which was given by angels, could not be broke with impunity, then how should such escape divine punishment that neglected and despised the Gospel, which is the doctrine of salvation, was delivered by the Lord himself, and confirmed by various testimonies and miracles (vv. 2, 3, 4).

And besides the Gospel dispensation is not put into the hands of angels, but into the hands of Christ, to whom all things are subject, which is proved out of Psalm 8:4,5,6, and which proof shows that though Christ, on account of his sufferings and death, was for a while crowned with glory and honor, he is above them, and they are subject to him, since all things are (vv. 5-9). And this anticipates an objection that might be taken from hence against what the apostle had asserted in the foregoing chapter, concerning the superiority of Christ to angels; and this leads him to observe the reason of the sufferings and death of Christ, and also of his incarnation; that the moving cause of Christ's sufferings and death was the grace and good will of God; that he did not suffer for himself, but for others, for every one of those described in the context; that inasmuch as he was the surety of those persons, it was agreeable to the justice of God, and it could not be otherwise, but he must be made perfect through suffering; and this was the way to bring many sons to glory (vv. 9, 10).

As for his incarnation, or his becoming a man, that was necessary, that the sanctifier and the sanctified might be of the same nature, that he might be able to call them brethren and children (vv. 11,12,13), as he does, for which are cited Psalm 22:22 and 18:2. Isaiah 8:18 and because the children he engaged to bring to glory were partakers of flesh and blood; and also that he might be capable of dying, and by dying destroy the devil, and deliver his timorous people, who, through fear of death, lived in a continual state of bondage (vv. 14,15), for which reason he did not take upon him the nature of angels, but of the seed of Abraham (v. 16).

And besides, it was necessary he should be merciful to them, and faithful to God, and be in a state and condition capable of sympathizing with them, and succouring them under their temptations, which he was able to do by suffering through temptation himself (vv. 17,18).

Hebrews 2:1- 18

B. First Warning: Danger of Neglect 2:1-4

C. Christ is Superior because of His 2:5-18

Humanity

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 2:1-4

The “author” of Hebrews was concerned about the spiritual well-being of his initial recipients. They were fellow Jews who had become Christians and his concern was that they not drift back into Judaism. As a result of this concern, he deals with the problem in two ways.

1. By emphasizing the superiority of Christ and the New Covenant.
2. By a series of exhortations for them to remain steadfast.

As review, Chapter 1 showed the superiority of Christ to the prophets (Heb. 1:1-3) and the superiority of Christ to the angels (Heb. 1:4-14).

Now we come to the first of several exhortations (Heb. 2:1-4) in which we find a warning about the danger of “drifting.” The figure that the “writer” uses is that of a boat drifting along at an almost imperceptible pace being carried along in the wrong direction by a subtle current.

In this chapter we should examine the (1) the reasons behind such an exhortation; (2) various “currents” that can cause us to “drift away”; and (3) the key to avoiding “drifting away.”

1 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.

· **“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed”** - Therefore it behooves or becomes us more abundantly (even more diligently) to give heed (attention); that is to give heed to the Law and to the Word of the Lord, as it implies to each of us! Since God has spoke in these last days by His Son, who is infinitely above the angels the greater regard to the Gospel ought to be given. The final expression of God’s love and mercy has been given through Jesus Christ, his Son, to be esteemed in word and deed more highly than any man or angel.

¶ Luke 8:12-15 12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13 They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. 14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. 15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

There should be no doubt or question in the mind of the believer why we should “give the more earnest heed.” It is a matter of the dignity of the One through whom God has spoken. As previously noted in Chapter 1, God now speaks through His Son. We have seen that this Son is;

1. Superior to the prophets (Heb. 1:1-3)
2. Superior to the angels (Heb. 1:4-14)
3. The appointed Heir of all things.
4. The brightness of God’s glory, the express image of His person.

5. Our Sustainer and Redeemer.
6. The “Firstborn” who is worthy of worship.
7. “God” enthroned and anointed.
8. The Lord (Yahweh) who is the eternal creator.
9. The “Sovereign,” reigning at God’s right hand.

Oh! The indictment that we have as a people of God when we take ever so lightly our Savior Jesus Christ. If this is true, the church as Christ’s official earthly representative has a awesome responsibility both within and without the walls of the Church. But be it far more worse for those that stand unclothed in the Day of Judgment!

· **“To the things which we have heard,”** - to the things which have been spoken to us...men are not only to take heed “what” they hear, but also “how” they hear...when Paul preached on Mars Hill there were basically three hearing responses,

⌘ Acts 17:32-34: 32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

1. Some believed;
2. Some mocked;
3. Some procrastinated

These things heard were none other than the truths of the Gospel...these are the very things that their forefathers had desired to hear and which the carnal ear cares not to hear. Scripture constantly reminds those the have an “ear” to listen and to be obedient to those important truths contained therein.

· **“Lest at any time we should let [them] slip”** - the people of God are subject to some slips:

1. Lot did!
2. David did!
3. the Prodigal son did!
4. the Rich man in hell did (this “drifting” ended in eternal damnation!)

Men should give heed to the Word of God...for the Gospel, duly attended to, is a preservative from falling...we should give heed to the doctrines of the gospel, lest we let them slip out of us, through us, or besides us. The word for slip in the Greek was used of something slipping from one’s memory or of a ring slipping from one’s finger or of a crumb going down the wrong way...it also indicated a ship drifting away. Therefore without proper attention the Gospel may be lost to some that hear it, as to any real benefit and advantage by it.

One day the Master shall return and require an accounting of life’s decisions and deeds. Of that our Lord warned:

¶ Luke 21:24— “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.”

2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

· **“For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast,”** - For if the word (logos-which means authority) spoken through angels (the Law) was firm or confirmed...and if Jesus is so much superior than the angels, the Son of God through whom God now speaks, the apostle argues to a stricter regard is to be applied to the Gospel...as from the lesser to the greater.

Bebaios (bebaioV) means to be firm, dependable, reliable, guaranteed...it is the word of God which cannot pass away until it is fulfilled...it still continues as a cursing Law, the judicial and ceremonial parts are abrogated and the whole of it has been abolished as a covenant of works but remains as a means of conviction to sinners in the hands of the Spirit.

· **“And every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;”** - every precept of the Law had a penalty annexed to it and every breach of it was punished as that penalty required...none escaped, but all suffered the punishment due to the violation of the precept either in themselves, or in their surety

1. transgression *parabasis* (parabasiV) stepping beside
2. disobedience *parakoe* (parakwe) hearing beside

Both expressions here involve an expressed rejection of the divine will. Now that God as spoken through that which is superior to anything previously employed, does not His word prove steadfast? Will not every unrepented transgression and disobedience receive its just reward? Dare we neglect the Word of God spoken through His Son?

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];

· **“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation;”** - how shall we avoid punishment corresponding to our offense against or neglect of the word of the Son of God who is greater than the angels...as the Gospel is that which is called salvation...it is great because the Son of God, Christ Jesus, is the author of it. “*Neglect*” to be unconcerned about. If the greater message is neglected will there not be a greater punishment than the one mediated by angels? The words are emphatic...those who live in the final age of human history when God himself was revealed in the Son...how shall then we escape?

What is it that may be lost through “Neglect.”

1. We lose “so great a salvation”!
2. Which includes:
 - a) The forgiveness of sin.
 - b) Transformation of character by providing power over sin.
 - c) Assurance of God’s fatherly presence.

- d) A clear and peaceful conscience.
- e) A glorious hope for all eternity.

· **“Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord,”** - the Gospel was first preached by Christ (See Gen 3:15-24) in the Garden of Eden to Adam...by the Word of the Lord or the essential Son of God...the doctrines of grace came by him in all their fulness and glory.

Ð Genesis 3:15-24— “15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. 20 And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

· **“And was confirmed unto us by them that heard [him];”** - through the prophets and the apostles.

Confirmation of the Revelation Given:

1. The word spoken was confirmed by the Apostles.

- a) These were individual eyewitnesses:

Ð Acts 10:39-41— “39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; 41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.”

Ð 2 Peter 1:16— “16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.”

- b) These men endured much to serve their Lord!

Ð 1 Corinthians 4:9-13— “9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised. 11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; 12 And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: 13 Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.”

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?

· **“God also bearing [them] witness,”** - means “With God bearing witness” ...it was God testifying to the mission and commission, of the apostles of Christ, the truth of the doctrine that they preached.

· **“Both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles,”** - all of which were the confirmation of the Gospel preached by the apostles...a marvelous work done before men wrought by the very power of God to confirm the divine truth (Acts 2:43)...these certified that the testimony of the witnesses was beyond any reasonable dispute, true or trustworthy.

▷ Acts 2:43— “ And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.”

· **“And gifts of the Holy Ghost,”** - These gifts were divers in kind and distributed among the church body, or church assembly, until the Bible was completed, as a perfect rule and word of confirmation or certification of the Lord’s free salvation.

▷ 1 Corinthians 12:8-10;— “8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:”

▷ 1 Corinthians 12:12-31— “12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? 18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. 24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked. 25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? 30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? 31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.”

· **“According to his own will?”** - either according to the will of God or the wisdom of God, who bore testimony by these miracles and gifts; or according to the will of the Holy Spirit, who distributed them to men as He pleased. .

1. The word spoken was confirmed by even more.

a) By God Himself: through signs, wonders, and miracles.

ⲡ John 10:38-38— “37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. 38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.”

b) By the Holy Spirit, with gifts according to His will.

ⲡ 1 Corinthians 12:7-11— “7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

Just as those who neglected the word spoken through the angels [the Law of Moses] lost their “promised land,” so there are grave consequences for those who neglect the salvation spoken of by the Son of God!

The question that must be answered by each saint is, “What are the ‘currents’ that can cause one to ‘drift away’?” [The following examples are not inclusive of the many problems that can be faced by the saint of God. Furthermore, these examples are not intended to indicate or suggest that there is even the remote possibility of the saint falling or drifting from a state of grace and returning to the state of total depravity. However, these are intended to be used as an evaluation tool and even as a warning against the possible problems that the saint is subjected to.]

I. “Currents” that can cause us to drift.

A. The Current of “Time”:

1. In which we grow weary of doing good, a concern expressed in...

ⲡ Galatians 6:9— “9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

2. As time passes by...

a) We can gradually lose some of the fervor of our devotion...

ⲡ Revelation 2:4— “4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”

b) We may begin to rest on past accomplishments, and cease pressing forward.

ⲡ Philippians 3:13-14— “13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

B. The Current of “Familiarity”:

1. As we become familiar with the truth, it may seem common place to us and we may lose its

sense of novelty or take it for granted...

2. Like the Ephesians we may lose our “first love.”

℟ Revelation 2:4— “4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”

C. The Current of “Society”:

1. The tides of modern opinion can easily induce us...

℟ 1 Corinthians 15:33— “33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”

2. Bombarded by secular humanism, false religions, and even plastic counterfeit “Christianity” offered as “truth,” it is hard to maintain a true course if one is not founded in the WORD that directs life.

3. Such things can move the saint away from the simplicity and wisdom of our Lord.

℟ 2 Corinthians 11:2-3— “2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”

D. The Current of the “Flesh”...

1. Our warfare is not only without, but also within.

℟ 1 Peter 2:11— “11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;”

2. Our flesh is constantly waging war against our souls, and against the Spirit who desires that we follow Him...let us not deceive ourselves...we are at war!

℟ Galatians 5:16-17— “16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

E. The Current of “Daily Concerns”:

1. The constant pressure of daily cares, anxieties, and duties can distract us.

2. Jesus warned against this on several occasions.

℟ Luke 8:14— “14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.”

℟ Luke 21:34— “34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.”

Any or all of the aforementioned things can slowly move us away from the Lord and His great salvation if we are not careful.

II. The Key to Prevent “Drifting Away”

A. We must give “the more earnest heed”...

1. We can follow the analogy of the previous verses and imagine ourselves in a canoe, in a river with a slow moving current. Failure to pay attention leads to a drifting that in itself may be subtle and yet by the time we realize it, it is too late! Last minute corrections may be attempted, but even then we may run into the brush, crash into the rocks, or go over the falls. Only by giving earnest heed can that be avoided.

2. So it is with our salvation.

a) We must be “diligent” to the task at hand.

ⲡ 2 Peter 1:5, 10— “ 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:”

b) There is no place for the Christian to be half-hearted.

ⲡ Philippians 3:12-15— “12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.”

3. Note that we must give the “more” earnest heed (Heb 2:1). We are to be more earnest than those who heard the word of God spoken through angels [the Israelites], because we have the word of God spoken through the Son which pertains to a salvation greater than that enjoyed by them (the operative word being “enjoyed” for salvation is through Christ alone).

B. We Must Give Heed to the “Things we have Heard”...

1. The “things we have heard” refer to the Word of God spoken through His Son or the Great Salvation through the gospel of Christ in all its aspects.

2. The Bereans provide a good example.

ⲡ Acts 17:11— “ 11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

The Bereans “received the word with all readiness” and they followed up and “searched the Scriptures daily...” They displayed an earnest attention whenever God’s Word was proclaimed, they studied the Word, and prepared themselves for study.

3. With this as a pattern we may then;

a) Enter into a prayerful devotion to the Word and to God.

ⲡ Psalm 119:18— “ 18 Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

b) After which we may have a prayerful desire to please God.

Psalm 119:10-11— “ 10 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. 11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 2:1-4

We have been blessed to receive so Great a Salvation...a salvation first spoken to “us” through God’s own Son and then confirmed by God Himself, the Holy Spirit, and those that heard Him. This salvation is much greater in enjoyment than any ever offered. Yet, we must note carefully that one need not “reject” or “actively fight” against this great salvation to “receive a just reward.” Those who simply “drift away” through “neglect” will also not escape the pitfalls of passiveness and indifference. We must continue to run the good race and to fight the good fight!

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 2:5-18

Following the warning against drifting (Heb. 2:1-4), the “writer” of Hebrews continues to illustrate Jesus’ superiority to angels [in Chapter 1 the emphasis was on the deity of Christ but now the focus shifts to the humanity of Jesus].

One can imagine the sort of objections that would be raised about the humanity of Jesus (i.e., didn’t the humanity of Jesus make Him lower than the angels and if so, how can He be said to be superior to them?) The response is that Jesus’ humanity provided several advantages. It contributed in (1) regaining man’s lost dominion; (2) bringing many sons to glory; (3) in disarming Satan, and delivering us from the fear of death; and (4) in becoming our sympathetic High Priest. Therefore, becoming flesh did not prove to be a handicap or a mark of inferiority, rather, it served to make Him the perfect sacrifice and to act on our behalf!

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

• **“For unto the angels”** - though God has used the angels in the giving of the law and in giving messages to men in the old economy, it is not to them that the subjection of the world has been given...

• **“Hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.”** -but the world to come, as opposed to this world, is not at all subject to them.

Ps Jude 5:6 — “5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”

Ps Hebrews 2:9-14— “9 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. 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. 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, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 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;”

Such dominion, both now, and in “the world to come” was never given to angels. Man had it and lost it. Becoming a man and suffering death enabled the sinless Jesus to regain that dominion.

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?

· **“But one in a certain place testified,”** - (probably David; Psalm 8:4-8)...the name of David was probably not mentioned here because the Jews were familiar with the author of the Psalm...this was another way of saying, “Scripture says.” These words should be taken as serious.

Ð Psalm 8:4-8— “4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? 5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. 6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: 7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; 8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

· **“Saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?”** -

1. **“What is man,”** - Man is so unworthy of Divine care, mercy, compassion and love, yet when ungodly, God loved him, and his Son gave himself for him.

Ð John 3:18— “18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

Ð Romans 5:6-8— “6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

2. **“That thou art mindful of him?”** - God remembers man by taking him into union with His Son...His providential care...raising him from the dead...and glorifying him.

3. **“or the son of man that thou visitest him?”** - not in a way of wrath but in a way of favor, with His presence, with the gifts and graces of His Spirit, with Divine supports and spiritual peace and joy...all of which is not deserving and therefore are the favors of God visited to man.

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:

· **“Thou madest him a little lower than the angels;”** - Christ was made a little lower than the angels, through the assumption of the human nature...Christ was made unto the law which was given by angels and sometimes He stood in the ministry and support of angels...the word “little” has a temporal force and should be understood to say “for a little while.”

· **“Thou crownedst him with glory and honour,”** - with that glory that Christ had with the Father before the foundation of the world...after Christ ascended unto the Father He was honored by sitting on the right hand of God...which none of the angels have and, therefore, is now above them.

· **“And didst set him over the works of thy hands:”** - over angels, principalities,

and power; over the kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of it, and all things in it, and made Him higher than the heavens, and gave Him a name above every name.

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.

· **“Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.”** -

Ð 1 Peter 3:22— “Who is gone to heaven and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”

· **“For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing [that is] not put under him.”** - there is no one person or thing that Christ is made subject to. God has put all under the power of the Son.

· **“But now we see not yet all things put under him.”** - although this subjection is not seen by us it does not mean that it is not so. Though it is not yet visible...it will be.

How idiotic it is for man to say that he is in control of his own destiny...if this verse is true, then man is subject to the control of God. It is God that carries out His plan throughout the ages. It is God’s providence that ensures that His eternal plan is consummated. How else could God know or determine the beginning from the end?]

9 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.

· **“But we see Jesus.”** - we see Jesus in our understanding that He is indeed the Jesus that has had all things made subject to Him and that although He was humbled He is now exalted.

· **“Who was made a little lower than the angels”** - In the state of His humiliation.

· **“For the suffering of death,”** - the angels suffer not death, however, Christ in stead of His people, humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. By the same suffering and death, Jesus was able to “taste death” in His humanity for everyone.

· **“Crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”** -

1. Due to Christ’s obedient death, He is crowned with glory and honor;

Ð Philippians 2: 8-9— “8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.”

2. Christ was made a little lower than the angels by becoming man that he might die for His church and His people.

3. “should taste death” - signifies the bitterness of the death of Christ...receiving in Himself the very wrath of God, the curse of the law.

4. Christ died as a surety for every man that is His...as such, Christ secures for them what they could not secure for themselves.

5. “grace” *chariti* (cariti)...by the “joy” of God...Christ saved His people.

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.

- **“For it became him, for whom [are] all things,”** - the “him” here mentioned is none other than God himself who delivered His Son unto death...it is God who is the final cause of all things for all things are made for His pleasure and for His glory.

- **“and by whom [are] all things,”** - all the works of grace and providence.

- **“in bringing many sons unto glory,”** - not to worldly glory but to heavenly glory...which they are undeserving of but of which was long ago prepared for them...although it is at present hidden from us it shall be ours for eternity. God gave Christ the task of restoring man to his position of glory and honor...

- **“to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”** - Christ is the Captain of our salvation because He is the Author of it...we are committed to His charge...He is our leader who has gone on before us to prepare a mansion for us. Christ is made perfect [the word “perfect” means to be “complete,” “effective,” “adequate.”] (he has brought to maturity or made complete our salvation) because He has suffered all that the law required and therefore, became perfectly acquainted with the sufferings of His people. Christ is the “perfect” Savior. God’s design was to bring His adopted sons to glory by the suffering of His own Son [to be the complete perfect Savior Jesus’ sufferings were necessary].

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,

- **“For both he that sanctifieth”** - Those that are the Son’s, those whose Captain of their salvation is Christ, are sanctified (positional) are made holy and are set aside to belong to the Father...We are sanctified in Him for He has been made sanctification for us...by His blood that expiates us from our sins and by His spirit that is ever working holiness in us.

- **“And they who are sanctified”** - we are not naturally holy...we have been made holy...therefore, God has adopted us into the family.

- **“[are] all of one.”** - we are of one God and Father...our Savior’s God is our God...Christ’s Father is now our Father...we are all of one new nature or new creation in Christ Jesus; we are all one in Christ.

Ð Ephesians 2:10, 11— “ 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. 11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

Ð John 20:17— “17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”

- **“For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,”** - Christ is now our near-kinsman...our brother...and we are adopted into the family of God when our regeneration is made manifest...therefore, we are to do the Father’s will even as Christ did.

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

· **“Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren,”** - This passage is not for the Jews alone but for the entire congregation or that which Christ has sanctified...to all Christ’s disciples and followers shall God declare the name of Christ.

Ð Psalm 22:22— “I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.”

· **“In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.”** - That is, the church of this age...there is a song of praise to be offered for the saving of the brethren.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

· **“And again, I will put my trust in him.”** - Both the prophet and Christ put their trust in God, the prophet and his children as well as Christ and His brethren stand before God. Christ is in the midst of His people as was the prophet in the midst of his people.

Ð Isaiah 8:17— “And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.”

· **“And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.”** - The children are saints of God because they have been adopted by God with respect to Christ...the saints were given to Christ as His spiritual seed...as his portion...therefore, Christ and His people are one.

Ð Isaiah 8:18 “Behold I and the children that the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of Hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion.”

[The idea of Jesus as the One whose suffering in the flesh makes Him the Author of our salvation, and not ashamed to call us brethren, is expanded even further in the remaining verses of the chapter.]

14 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;

· **“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood,”** - “children” are all the children given to Christ that are partakers of flesh and blood...those with a human nature...frail and mortal men.

· **“He also himself likewise took part of the same;”** - Christ became man or assumed a human nature like ours which was in union with the Divine nature that Christ possessed before His incarnation...this is seen as a voluntary act on the part of Christ...He chose to participate to show that He faced those things that we face...yet He was without sin.

· **“That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;”** - Christ took away from the devil the power of death...therefore, the Messiah has truly destroyed the effects that Satan has...not as to his being...but as to his power.

1. Through His own death and resurrection Jesus destroyed the devil! Nevertheless, the devil

is still very active!

ⲡ 1 Peter 5:8-9— “8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”

2. But though he once “had” {past tense} the power of death, no more!

ⲡ Revelation 2:18— “ 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:”

3. His power greatly weakened by Jesus’ victory over death, Satan will be destroyed for all time at the time of our own resurrection!

ⲡ Revelation 20:10-12— “ 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

· **“And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”** - we (Jews probably meant here) are under the bondage of sin until delivered by the power of God in Christ. Yet, now we should suffer no fear of death for we have been delivered...delivered from the bondage of the law and the fear of death that accompanied the law. This “fear” keeps many in bondage throughout their lifetime. But the faithful Christian need not fear death.

ⲡ Romans 8:38-39— “38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

ⲡ 1 Corinthians 3:21-23— “ 21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your’s; 22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your’s; 23 And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.”

ⲡ Philippians 2:21— “ 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.”

16 For verily he took not on [him the nature of] angels; but he took on [him] the seed of Abraham.

· **“For verily he took not on [him the nature of] angels;”** - an angelic nature is not capable of death...therefore, Christ’s nature had to be different...an angel’s nature is not redemptive.

· **“But he took on [him] the seed of Abraham.”** - Christ assumed human nature from the line of Abraham...therefore, the spiritual seed of Abraham are the children of the promise...Christ laid hold of this nature to bring into union with himself those that he would

bestow grace upon [the “seed of Abraham” may be understood to mean “faithful Christians.” The promise was given to “faithful Christians” and not to angels...this is the reason that angels seek to look at the mystery of the gospel].

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.

· **“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto [his] brethren,”** - Before the foundations of the earth we were adopted as sons through our surety, Jesus Christ. It was only for those that were adopted that Christ took on human nature.

· **“That he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things [pertaining] to God,”** - Christ could not have become our high-priest unless he had assumed the nature of man...he would not be able to sympathize with his people in their sorrows...every high priest is taken from among men. Christ’s priestly work is perpetual, continuous, or unceasing for his children.

· **“To make reconciliation for the sins of the people,”** - that is, the people that God has chosen for himself and given to Christ by whom we are saved from our sins...Christ has made satisfaction for us...to the law and to the justice of God...which is the definition of reconciliation.

18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

· **“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted,”** - by Satan at the beginning of His ministry, and sometime before His death.

Ð Matthew 4:10— “10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

Ð Matthew 26:37-41— “ 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. 40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

· **“He is able to succour them that are tempted.”** - Therefore, Christ is able to sympathize with us...through temptations our faith is tried, we are incited to prayer and watchfulness, and to ever be dependent on the power and the grace of God.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 2:5-18

What angel has accomplished such things as to regain man’s lost dominion, bring many sons to glory, disarm Satan and deliver us from the fear of death and become a sympathetic High Priest. All these things Jesus has done by virtue of becoming man. Jesus was also tempted, suffered and tasted death for everyone, and is not ashamed to call us “brethren.” Are we ashamed to call Him “Lord”? Are we willing to serve Him as Lord?

. Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER THREE

[Introduction/Chapter 4](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

The apostle having discoursed, in the preceding chapters, concerning the dignity of Christ's person, and his wondrous grace in the assumption of human nature, and suffering in the room and stead of his people, exhorts the Hebrews in this to a serious consideration of him, attention to him, and faith in him, and constancy in it; the arguments he uses to engage them to these things are taken from the grace and benefit they themselves were partakers of through him, from the office in which he was, and his faithfulness to his Father in the discharge of it (vv. 1,2). which is illustrated in the case of Moses, who was faithful in the house of God, and whom Christ excelled, and therefore was worthy of more honour; partly, because he is the builder of the house; and partly because he is a Son in it, when Moses was only a servant; which house is Christ's own, and consists of true and steadfast believers in him (vv. 2,3,4,5,6). wherefore the exhortation to regard him is renewed, enforced, and expressed in the words of the Holy Ghost (vv. 7,8,9,10,11). which are taken out of Psalm 95:7-11, and applied to the present case.

Hence the apostle cautions against unbelief, as being a great evil in itself, and bad in its consequence, causing persons to depart from the living God (v. 12), in order to prevent which he advises to a daily exhortation of each other to their duty, that so they might not be hardened in sin through the deceitfulness of it (v. 13), and rather it became them to be concerned, to hold fast their faith in Christ to the end, since this is the grand evidence of being a partaker of him (v. 14). And the exhortation in the above passage of Scripture is recited (v. 15), to shew, that though not all persons spoken of, yet some did provoke the Lord by their unbelief, and unbecoming carriage (v. 16), wherefore, by the example of punishment being inflicted on such, of which instances are given in the forefathers of these people, such as their carcasses falling in the wilderness, and their not entering into the land of Canaan, which they could not, because God swore they should not, being grieved and provoked by them, and because of their unbelief, they are dissuaded from the same evils, lest they should be punished in like manner (vv. 17, 18, 19).

Hebrews 3:1- 19

III. The Superiority of Christ over Moses	3:1--4:13
A. Christ Is Superior to Moses in His Work	3:1-4
B. Christ Is Superior to Moses in His Person	3:5-6
C. Second Warning: Danger of	3:7--4:13

Unbelief

1. Danger of Hardening the Heart 3:7-19

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 3:1-6

We have seen that the “writer” to the Hebrews sought to encourage faithfulness to Jesus by illustrating His Superiority; (1) Over the prophets [Heb. 1:1-3] and (2) over the angels [Heb. 1:4-2:18]; both of which were very important to the Jewish people.

Highly revered also by the Hebrews was Moses. He was the author of the first five books of the Old Testament; the deliverer, who led them out of Egyptian bondage and to the promised land; the lawgiver, through whom God revealed so much of the Jewish religion.

If the “writer” was to be successful in encouraging his brethren to remain faithful to Jesus he would (1) have to compare Jesus with Moses and (2) he would have to illustrate “The Supremacy of Jesus Over Moses.” This he does, especially in Hebrews 3:1-6.

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

· **“Wherefore, holy brethren”** - The Hebrews are called “brethren” by the apostle because they were in the same spiritual condition...they were all adopted sons of the Father, the brothers of Christ, not by birth or external separation from other nations but through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit...it is to the brethren of Christ that these things are being written.

· **“Partakers of the heavenly calling”** - “partakers” because of a special call of grace...”heavenly”...because saving grace is only extended from heaven, and it is to heaven that we are called by the Gospel. Yet, the Hebrews were “partakers” with others [they were associated with others]...they had come to share in the call extended from above through the gospel.

1. For that is the method that God uses to call us all.

℞ 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14— “13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

2. It is a call to Glory!

℞ 1 Thessalonians 2:12— “12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

3. Clearly the original recipients of this book were Christians!

· **“Consider the apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus”** - Jesus an Apostle; because He was sent with authority from God to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and do the will of God...more particularly to obtain redemption and salvation for His people.

1. The word **apostoloV** [apostolos; apostle] means one sent with authority. Just as Moses was sent by God, so was Jesus sent, as foretold by Moses and the prophets that followed.

¶ Acts 3:22-26— “22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. 24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. 26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.”

· **“High Priest of our profession”** - Christ was the Author, sum, and substance of the religion, faith, and Gospel which was professed by the Hebrews...His greatness is seen as being the Son of God and His death for His people.

1. Christ is our High Priest because He has made “propitiation” [an appeasing of God] for our sins, through offering Himself on the cross.

¶ Hebrews 7:26-27— “26 For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; 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.”

2. Christ continues to intercede on our behalf.

¶ Hebrews 7:24-25— “24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 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.”

3. Christ as Mediator was sent by God to be the Savior of sinners; and as High Priest He offered himself a sacrifice and ever lives to make intercession...this should cause the saints to hold fast to their profession.

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses [was faithful] in all his house.

· **“Who was faithful to him that appointed him”** - this verse designs the constitution and settlement of Christ’s office; as Mediator, Christ had a trust repose (at rest) in Him as to the persons of all God’s elect, and the fullness of all grace for them...the redemption and salvation of those persons committed to Him...in the distribution of grace to them.

· **“As also Moses was faithful in all his house”** - this corresponds with the dignity and honor that was repose in Moses...the authority invested with him and the responsibility and care given for his charge of the “house of Israel.”

¶ Numbers 12:7— “7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.”

Therefore, the faithfulness of Christ is not so much understood of the discharge of His trust as the trust itself...Christ was trusted by God the Father as to be our Mediator.

3 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.

· **“For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses”** - Moses was counted worthy of glory and honor because of the faithful discharge of his duties...(given by God and Man)...the Jews called Moses the “father in the law, a father in wisdom, and a father in prophecy.”

But Christ is due more honor and glory because He is the greater Savior: Moses was but a temporal savior, where Christ is the “Author” of spiritual and eternal salvation; Christ is a greater prophet because He is the Son of God; He is a greater King being higher than the kings of the earth; He had a greater testimony from God because He was declared His beloved Son, He raised Him from the dead and is set down at the right hand of God...is appointed Judge of all, ministered to and worshipped by angels and is believed on by men who is their salvation.

· **“Inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house;”** - Christ has the chief concern in the building (Church) which lies in the conversion of souls and in the edification of them...Moses, on the other hand was but part of the house[a servant] but Christ is the builder, foundation and cornerstone.

4 For every house is builded by some [man]; but he that built all things [is] God.

· **“For every house is builded by some man;”** (Someone)...a house does not build itself...the greatest saints, even apostles and prophets, such as Moses, are built upon Christ; their persons, gifts, and all their success is owed to Christ although they may be esteemed in their own right.

· **“But he that built all things is God”** - Christ has built all things and therefore, He is God and must be infinitely above Moses. This is to be understood as Christ {remembering the comparison} and not God...Christ is the builder of the Church and all the affairs relating to it, that is:

1. the constitution of it
2. setting the worship of God
3. ordinances in it
4. the redemption and salvation of the members of it
5. its rule and government

5 And Moses verily [was] faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

· **“And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant,”** - Moses was a servant to the Israelites and to God...Moses was a servant of God’s choosing, sending and approving (his service was both honorable and sincere with all due respect and obedience to God); Yet, the house in which Moses was a servant was not his own...it belonged to God even the Son of God.

1. qerapon [therapon, servant] is a term of dignity and freedom; not of servility.
2. The Son of God abides within the house forever.

Ð John 8:35— “35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.”

3. Moses was a temporal servant to God whereas Christ has always enjoyed the dignity of abiding with the Father.

· **“For a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after.”** - Moses was a servant as a testimony of God’s will to the people of Israel and he bore testimony concerning the Messiah...the things “spoken after” is the testimony that Moses gave which were done by the Messiah (typological).

1. Moses leading the people through the Red Sea and the Wilderness.

2. Giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai

3. The erection of the tabernacle

4. The institution of sacrifices

NOTE: Judaism did not understand then and it does not understand now! Judaism without Christ as well as the O. T. without the N. T., is incomplete. It is a shadow without substance. If the substance is rejected (Christ) the shadow (O. T. Sacrificial System) is worthless.

Ⓟ Hebrews 10:1— “1 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.”

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.

· **“But Christ as a son over his own house;”** - Moses was not (Moses was but a servant in God’s house) but Christ is by virtue of being Son and Heir the Lord and Master...Christ is a Son, not by creation or by adoption, or by office, but by nature— He is God, He is Son and this sonship is the foundation of His office and as such, Christ becomes the Heir of all things.

Even though Christ was a servant, as man and Mediator, yet, He was also Son, Lord, and Heir...Moses was none of these. Christ is over the house of God, as King, Priest, and Prophet, He is the first-born Son and heir, and the Master and Governor of the house....therefore, it is “his own house” given to Him by His Father and secured by Him through His death.

· **“Whose house are we,”** - believers in Christ are built up in a spiritual house over who Christ presides and reigns.

· **“If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”** - This is not a condition of the former assertion; nor a falling away from grace but that they that have faith, hope and confidence, shall keep to the end and therefore are of the house of Christ.

This is designed to give a word of exhortation to hold fast the confidence...these words are descriptive of those who are of the house of Christ...those that are of the house of Christ can use freedom of speech and boldness at the throne of grace and have confidence in the love of God and the salvation of Christ.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 3:1-6

How is Jesus superior to Moses? It is not a matter of faithfulness but rather a matter of person

and service. Moses was a servant IN the house of God; Jesus was OVER the house as both its builder and He serves the house by being the Son of the house. Indeed Moses points us forward to Jesus...

¶ Deuteronomy 18:15-19—15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; 16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. 17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. 18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. 19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

...for one to forsake Jesus in an attempt to go back to Moses alone is to frustrate the desire of Moses himself!

Speaking of the house of God, of which Jesus is the builder and over which He presides, the “writer” to the Hebrews affirms that “we” are the house of Christ. He is here speaking of the Church, those that reside “in Christ.” In Christ “we are members of the household of God,” and together with the faithful saints of old [including Moses] we are “fellow-citizens” in the commonwealth of Israel.

However, our status as the house is conditional (Heb. 3:6) upon faith, hope and confidence. Therefore, there is need for steadfastness, and the reason this epistle is filled with exhortation to be such until the end. As we contemplate the person of Christ and His ministry, it should help us to hold fast to our profession of faith!

Continuance is proof of reality:

¶ 1 John 2:19— “19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

Compare:

¶ John 8:31— “31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;”

¶ John 6:39— “39 And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 3:7-19

In the previous verses we considered “The Supremacy Of Jesus Over Moses.” Jesus was superior, not in faithfulness, but in His person and His service. Whereas Moses was a servant in the house of God, Jesus was the builder of the house and serves as the Son over the house.

Yet, we find that our status within the house is conditional and is based on our steadfastness. This explains the exhortations regarding the dangers of departing from the living God.

7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

· **“Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith,”** - to hear the precepts of Christ is to obey them and this is an acknowledgment of Christ as King of the saints...to hear is not to hear it externally but internally so as to understand it and to distinguish it from the voice of a stranger...it is to believe it and put it into practice. [This is clear proof and testimony that Scripture is of divine origin...when Paul wrote these words the Holy Spirit was speaking.]

· **“To day if ye will hear his voice,”** - (hear his word) - His essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. For those that do not have “ears to hear” they have not been granted the ability. The reception of the Word of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ, is as necessarily a part of our salvation as was the death of Christ on the cross! Where the gospel is not preached there is no salvation! Where the person of Christ is not proclaimed there is no salvation! [Primitive Baptists would have us believe that the Gospel is not an instrument unto salvation...that regeneration may occur as a direct act of God, separate from, and not contingent on the Gospel. Therefore, a person may be reborn without hearing of Jesus Christ].

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

· **“Harden not your hearts,”** - This is a natural hardness of the heart; the heart of man is like a stone, destitute of spiritual life...it is senseless, stupid, impenitent, stubborn, and inflexible by which the only impressions to be made on such a heart is made by the power of God. This the Israelites did many times during their forty years of wandering.

There is an “acquired,” “habitual,” and “voluntary” hardness of the heart...this is such a heart that finds pleasure in sin and the actual commission of sin...with frequency, it becomes customary and as such habitual; so the heart becomes hardened to the point that reproof, sermons, afflictions, and judgments are of little or no affect. There is a hardness that the people of God should guard against which is brought on by a neglect of private and public worship and by the keeping of bad company and the giving in to what may be termed “lesser” sins (all sin is hardening by nature).

· **“As in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:”** - The Jews provoked God in the wilderness with their unbelief, murmurings, ingratitude and idolatry...they distrusted God’s power and goodness;

Ð Psalm 95:7-11— “7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.”

Ð Exodus 17:7— “7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?”

1. “Provocation”—Just as quickly as the Egyptians got over their fear of God, the Israelites got over their trust in God.

2. “day of temptation”—they did not trust Him in faith.

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

· **“When your fathers tempted me,”** - Here the apostle cites examples from the O.

T. to the Jews to show them how their ancestors had followed sinful practices...this he did to dissuade them from doing the same...to deter the same by bringing to their minds both their sin and their punishment and to heighten their regards to the voice of the Gospel of Christ.

1. This is illogical unbelief!

2. The “day of trial lasted forty years

· **“Proved me,”** - This shows the long suffering of God towards a sinful people.

1. They demanded water as their due and tested the Lord to see if He would provide.

Ⓐ Exodus 17:1-2— “And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?”

· **“And saw my works forty years.”** - The people while in the wilderness saw God’s works of providence in furnishing them with the necessities of life, in guiding and protecting and in supporting them (miracles and the punishment of their enemies). Yet, they saw and perceived not, but all during the time sinned against the Lord.

Ⓐ Deuteronomy 29:2-8 2 “And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; 3 The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles: 4 Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day. 5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. 6 Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink: that ye might know that I am the LORD your God. 7 And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them: 8 And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh.”

This resulted in God’s grief and indignation at the people. The “writer” was telling the Hebrew Christians not to harden their hearts to God like their forefathers had done.

1. Yet look at the potential or the utter helplessness that the “writer” might have been experiencing.

Ⓐ Luke 16:31— “31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

2. Then there are those who honestly seek understanding.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in [their] heart; and they have not known my ways.

· **“Wherefore I was grieved with that generation,”** - (the generation of the wilderness) Yet, the Jews believed that this generation was the most beloved of all the past generations...but God was wearied by them and weary of them...He loathed them and was highly displeased with them; this shows the notice that God takes toward sin and His determination to punish it...the cause of God’s grief and indignation was the people’s unbelief, ingratitude and

idolatry.

- **“And said, They do alway err in [their] heart;”** - all sin is error or deviations from the law of God; all men err in this sense but these people erred in their heart because their sins were done heartily...they erred in their hearts continually...they were stubborn and rebellious.

- **“And they have not known my ways.”** - they did not take notice of God's ways of providence towards them; nor did they approve of and delight in his ways of worship and duty or in his commands.

11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

- **“So I swear in my wrath,”** - this indicates the certainty of the thing spoken of by God...He swore that they would be punished because of their unbelief...God shows forth his displeasure regarding the actions of the people.

- **“They shall not enter into my rest.)”** - they would not be allowed to enter the land of Canaan (God's rest)...this was a type of heaven...the rest from toil and labor...but this most prized of all generations was not allowed to enter therein. The generation that finds itself in the wilderness of God shall find no rest because of their sins and provocations.

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

- **“Take heed, brethren,”** - This exhortation is founded upon the state and case just given, their ancestors...this was a warning or a caution to the present Hebrews.

- **“Lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief,”** - the Hebrews are exhorted not to find themselves with such an evil heart of unbelief . . . this was the first sin man found himself guilty of...we are warned not to aggravate God with an evil heart...we are to avoid it at all costs.

- **“In departing from the living God.”** - that is from Christ who is the Son of His own house, and whose voice is to be heard...for He is the living God, He is life himself and is the fountain and author of life; natural, spiritual and eternal.

Once again, this is mentioned so that Christ may be exalted above Moses, the law, and past generations. We are to ever be on our guard lest we depart from the living God by a state of unbelief. We are to exercise our faith toward Christ for if we do not, we provoke God; the living God through our unbelief.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- **“But exhort one another daily,”** - (comfort one another) we as the saints are to comfort one another through the discussion of those things that are of or about God...the divine things...by instructing one another concerning the doctrines of the gospel...by putting on the mind of Christ. We should exhort one another through prayer, attendance to the word, in regard to our lifestyle, and adherence to our profession.

- **“While it is called To day;”** - while this time continues...that is, the economy of grace...or while this life that is within us continues. We will not be removed from the

aforementioned exhortations until we die or until the Day of the Lord.

· **“Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”** - actual sin which is transgression of the law...every sin results in the hardening of the nature and if it is often committed it becomes habitual and it calluses the heart to the point that it becomes evil and corrupt. It then is the heart that deceives us in the promises of pleasure through sin...by frequently repeating sin we grow hardened in it.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

· **“For we are made partakers of Christ,”** - We have been chosen in Him before the foundation of the earth and as such participate in all spiritual blessings in Him...this phrase is expressive of the union we enjoy in Christ...Christ has taken his people into oneness with him by an act of love on his part. He has therefore, become our head, our surety, our representative, which is the ground and foundation of all the blessings of grace being imparted to the chosen.

· **“If we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;”** - by confidence is meant faith...it is through faith that we have a comfortable subsistence or substance or abiding in Christ. The “beginning” is Christ himself, the Author and Finisher of our faith...it is Christ that distributes grace which is accomplished through our union and communion with Him by the Gospel.

15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

· Exhort one another, and hold fast Christ and His Gospel, and have faith and confidence therein...what follows is a repetition of verses 7 and 8 in order to make a further improvement of it; this shows that the words belong to the present times of the Gospel, and contain in them a great concern that Scripture’s instructions and exhortations are of perpetual use.

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

· **“For some, when they had heard,”** - The Gospel was heard by those that were in the wilderness...it was preached to the Israelites.

· **“Did provoke:”** - even though they had heard the Gospel preached to them they did provoke God by their idolatry, ingratitude, and unbelief; therefore, the aggravation of their sin was that they had heard the Gospel...this shows that the Gospel may be heard with no advantage.

· **“Howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.”** - that is, they did not all provoke God...Moses was the instrument or servant used of God.

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? [was it] not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

· **“But with whom was he grieved forty years? [was it] not with them that had sinned,”** - these sinned as a body of men...they joined together in the commission of sin...so, with but a few exceptions, the entire nation sinned against God for forty years.

· **“Whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?”** - they did not enter God’s rest or the land of Canaan...their deaths in the wilderness was a manner of punishment due to the rejection of the Gospel as a nation.

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

· Notwithstanding the signs and wonders He showed them they would not be persuaded by Moses, Joshua and Caleb...they did not wish to submit to the will of God and believe in Him...they were disobedient, stubborn, and rebellious. Unbelief was their source of sin and cause of judgment...they greatly provoked God.

Ð Psalm 95:11— “11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they shall not enter into my rest.”

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

· They were not allowed to enter into God’s rest...a type of heaven...the land of Canaan. For they died in the wilderness (Numbers 14:37, 45) and the reason was unbelief; their distrust of God, his power and his providence.

Ð Numbers 14:37, 45— “37 Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died in the plague before the Lord...45 Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.”

In the case of the Israelites, who was it that rebelled? All those who came out of Egypt (save Joshua and Caleb). Though led by Moses, they still rebelled. So let us learn from this witness. Not all that claim to be a part of the Church today are such. Many still reside in the wilderness due to their rebellion and they shall die in the wilderness as a result of their lack of faith. Faith is the key; it is the gift of God. Without this gift many are bound to a life of wilderness experiences regardless of their self-proclaim temporal state.

Ð Matthew 7:21-23— “21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 3:7-19

When the apostle Paul related some of the same experiences of Israel in the wilderness he wrote” “Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon who the ends of the ages have come” (1 Corinthians 10:11). It is for our own admonition that we have such warnings as that found in this text. For the deceitfulness of sin is just as strong today and the hardening of one’s heart is still the end result. For departing from God is just as possible today! As a result of the many counterfeit professions and the false Christianity the potential of falling short of promised rest is just as much a reality as it proved to be for the Israelites in the wilderness.

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes
CHAPTER FOUR

[Introduction/Chapter 5](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

From the punishment inflicted on the unbelieving Hebrews, who died in the wilderness, and entered not into the land of rest made mention of in the preceding chapter, the apostle proceeds to caution the present Hebrews of his time, and who professed faith in Christ, lest any seeing there was rest, and a promise of entering into it, they should seem to come short of it (v. 1), and the rather, since they that fell in the wilderness had the Gospel preached to them as well as they: and the reason why it did not profit was, because it was not received by faith (v. 2), as also seeing it is by faith that believers now enter into rest (v. 3), which rest is not the rest of the seventh day, on which God rested; not the rest of the land of Canaan, which Joshua led the Israelites into; for if he had entered them into rest the apostle means, David, so many hundred years after him, would not have made mention of another rest (v.4, 5, 6, 7, 8), wherefore it follows that there is another rest for the people of God, which he that enters into ceases from his own works, as God did from his (vv.9, 10), and this is the rest that every one that professes faith in Christ, should be solicitous and diligent to enter into, lest he should fall short of it through unbelief; as the unbelieving Israelites did of their rest (v. 11), and the arguments engaging to such a concern are taken from the properties and perfections of Christ, the essential Word of God; particularly from his omnipotence and his omniscience (v. 12, 13).

And seeing he is by nature the Son of God, and by office a great high-priest that is entered into heaven for his people, the encouragement is great to hold fast the profession of faith in him they have made (vv. 14), and the rather since he is a sympathizing high-priest, as he must needs be, since he has been tempted, afflicted, and has suffered every way as his people, as in all respects like them, expecting that he has no sin (vv. 15), and this consideration should engage believers to come to the throne of grace with all boldness, and in expectation of having grace and mercy bestowed on them for the supply of their daily wants (v. 16).

Hebrews 4:1- 16

2. Challenge to Enter His Rest 4:1-13

Part Two: The Superiority of Christ's Work (4:14-10:18)

I. The Superiority of Christ's Priesthood	4:14-- 7:28
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A. Christ is Superior in His Position 4:14-16

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 4:1-11

Chapter Four continues the warning of Chapter Three with a focus on the promised “rest” which awaits the faithful Christian. This promised “rest” is actually one of several “rests” found in the Scriptures. It is a “rest” that Moses and Joshua did not provide, which is another reason why the Hebrew Christian should not forsake Jesus and return to Judaism. It is “the rest that remains” for the people of God today!

1. This “rest” is alluded to:

Ⓓ Deuteronomy 3:20— “20 Until the LORD have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and until they also possess the land which the LORD your God hath given them beyond Jordan: and then shall ye return every man unto his possession, which I have given you.”

Ⓓ Deuteronomy 12:9&10— “9 For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you. 10 But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety;”

2. This “rest” was given as God promised: [ONLY Temporal]

Ⓓ Joshua 1:13-15— “13 Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valour, and help them; 15 Until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD’s servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising.”

3. In this chapter “His rest” [or “My rest”, “God’s rest”] is clearly delineated from that which was provided by Joshua.

Ⓓ Hebrews 4:8— “8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.”

Ⓓ Psalm 95:7-8— “ 7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:”

Psalm 95 was written long after the death of Joshua and shows that there is another “rest” that God intends for His people.

1 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.

· **“Let us therefore fear,”** - This is not with a “fear” of wrath or damnation nor with a fear of diffidence [hesitant to assert oneself due to the lack of confidence] and distrust of the power, grace, and goodness of God. This “fear” is one of caution or a careful circumspection and

watchfulness. Unbelief forfeits rest...this is the “writers” thought...the old life still had an appeal. There is only reverential fear for the Christian; not trusting in God is something to be feared!

· **“Lest, a promise being left [us] of entering into his rest,”** - Not Canaan, but heaven itself our ultimate glory; our rest of the soul in the arms of Christ. Heaven is the place of God’s rest whereby, the possession and enjoyment of the heavenly glory is signified by entering into it.

Ð Isaiah 66:1&2— “1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? 2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”

There is also the “rest” under which we now exist; that is, the rest we find ourselves in under the Gospel. This is a freedom from a spirit of bondage to fear, and from the yoke of carnal ordinances (Law) and the enjoyment of Gospel privileges and ordinances. Entering into God’s rest means to be at peace with God...to possess the perfect peace He gives. To “rest” in something or in someone means to maintain our confidence in it or Him. To enter God’s rest means to enjoy the perfect, unshakable, confidence of salvation in our Lord...it also means that we are to lean on the Lord with complete confidence of His finished work. For the remainder of our lives and for all eternity we can lean on the Lord. And let us never forget that as long as the promise is left we must preach and teach the gospel for the opportunity remains for those that are yet to be saved...they may still enter into the confident rest of God.

Ð Hebrews 4:3— “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.”

[katapausiV; katapausis] the Greek word for “rest” means a ceasing from work or any type of action. That is, no more self effort as far as salvation is concerned.

· **“Any of you should seem to come short of it.”** - This is to be understood as the heavenly glory and the sense of this is that true believers shall not come short of that promised glory, although to others they may seem to do so. Therefore, we are to be careful of our lives and conversations in order not to present such a picture. The saints should be concerned so to behave, that they might not seem to fail concerning the doctrine of the grace of God.

Rest is still available! Some were talking themselves out of coming because they thought it to be too late.

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].

· **“For unto us was the gospel preached,”** - The Gospel is the “good news” and glad tidings of salvation in Christ. This is not a man invented message (law and works) but it is the preached message about Christ and salvation by Him alone. This was being told to the Hebrews so that they might compare the Gospel with the Law. There was now present a spirit of liberty, in opposition to that of a spirit of bondage; based on faith in Christ alone. All peace and comfort is derived from Christ and not from works...there can be no peace within the law...only bondage. NOTE: the “gospel” or the word of God is the method by which one may enter the promised “rest.”

Hearing the gospel is essential, but, not enough. The ancient Hebrews heard but did not believe. They did not trust in, have confidence of, nor rest in the God of their salvation. It is of no benefit to hear if there is not belief. Hearing must be united with faith or there is works without faith.

· **“As well as unto them:”** - Although the Gospel was preached to the Israelites in the wilderness, they were not evangelized by it. “It was preached unto them” shows the antiquity of the Gospel and the same method, is now, and has been, required for salvation to all.

· **“But the word preached did not profit them,”** - That is, the Gospel did not profit them (the word of hearing). There was a necessity for “hearing” the word to have faith in Christ. Yet, to some such a message is unprofitable...it has no effect upon them and is even a message of death unto them. The Word of God is essential for at least two reasons:

1. Without it we would not even know about the promised “rest.”
2. Without it we would not know how to receive our promised “rest.”

· **“Not being mixed with faith in them that heard [it].”** - This is the very reason why the Gospel message was unprofitable to the Israelites. The Gospel is the food of life but it must be mixed with faith to receive it...faith is the hand that grasps hold of it, tastes it, eats it, and digests it; when this is the case it is profitable and nourishing; but when it is otherwise it is not. Therefore, the Word of God did not profit many in Israel because they did not receive it with faith. As powerful as the Word of God is (Heb. 4:12), its power in our lives is hindered unless we receive and accept it by faith.

ⲡ John 8:39— “39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham.”

ⲡ Romans 2:25, 29— “25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

If we do not hearken to the Lord, and receive and obey His word, the word will become useless to us. There should be a union or conjunction of the saints...the bond of this union is love and is the very thing in which we are to unite, faith...believing in Christ and the doctrines of faith...this will make the word profitable to us and to others who are not of the communion of saints. Without faith, then, the promise of God’s rest will not be experienced by us [if faith is a “gift of God” then those that have not the gift given will never in fact enter God’s “rest”].

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.

· **“For we which have believed do enter into rest,”** - (“have believed” pres. tense) Expresses the idea “we are already in the process of entering,” therefore, this is not a future eternal rest but a spiritual rest in Christ under the Gospel...a rest to be enjoyed by believers from the burden of the Law of Moses; from salvation by works...now we have an inward peace of the soul...we are not to experience Christ through mere profession but we are to experience Him in our hearts and enjoy such a rest...this type of rest is that which characterizes the true believer and distinguishes between saints and the unbelieving Israelites. **{This is absolute: believe and enter, unbelief and do not enter...belief and nothing else will save us; unbelief with**

everything else will condemn us.}

· **“As he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest:”** - Entrance into “God’s rest” is forbidden to them because of their unbelief...none but believers are to enter into spiritual rest.

Ⓐ Psalm 95:11— “11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.”

Ⓐ Hebrews 3:11— “11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)”

· **“Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.”** - {these words should be connected with verses 4 & 5} The absolute safety, the fixed and unchanging portion of the chosen people can never be doubted. From the eternal, heavenly, divine point of view, saints can never fail; they are seated in the heavenly places in Christ [Eph. 1:3]. Yet, the world only sees us as we live in our character and daily walk...our desire should be to continue steadfast, to abide in Christ, to walk with God, to bring forth fruit that will manifest the presence of truth and God given life. We must be diligent to grow in Christ-like character and be diligent to “make our calling and election sure.”

Ⓐ 2 Peter 1:5, 10— “5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:”

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.

· **“For he spake in a certain place”** - He speaks of another rest distinct from that of the seventh day.

Ⓐ Genesis 2:2— “2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.”

There are at least four (4) things that we can learn from this:

1. God was satisfied with all He Had made.

Ⓐ Hebrews 4:10— “10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God [did] from his.”

2. God set us an example to follow; just as He ceased from His works, so must we.

3. The primitive sabbath was a pledge of “rest” which we shall enjoy in Christ.

4. It foreshadows the eternal sabbath, when God shall “rest in His love.”

Ⓐ Zephaniah 3:17— “The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.”

· **“Of the seventh [day] on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all his works.”** - That is, of creation but not providence...God is never in a state of inactivity...God’s providence never ceases preserving, succoring [assistance or help in times of distress] and governing His creatures...God merely ceased from the ordinary works of the preceding six days.

The entire working of God in human history has but one theme: the redemption of the elect through Jesus Christ. The barrier has been removed and we His people have entered into His rest.

5 And in this [place] again, If they shall enter into my rest.

· **“And in this [place] again,”** - God speaks of another rest distinct from that of the seventh day...which is the rest that believers are now under...the Gospel.

Ⓐ Psalm 95:11— “11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.”

· **“If they shall enter into my rest.”** - That is, unbelievers shall not enter therein: as the unbelieving Israelites did not enter into the typical rest of the promised land of Canaan, so neither shall any unbeliever enter into the Gospel rest; the antitype of the former.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

· **“Seeing therefore it remaineth”** - Verse 5 shows that the unbeliever shall not enter into God’s rest; therefore, since God has made a promise that some shall enter His rest, then, it must be the believer. When man lost God’s rest there was already a recovery plan.

Ⓐ Romans 11:5— “5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”

· **“That some must enter therein,”** - If some do not enter than some must enter. The way is narrow and all do not enter therein.

Ⓐ Matthew 7:13-14— “13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

· **“And they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:”** -

Ⓐ Hebrews 3:19— “19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.”

The word “preached” (*euangelisthentes*) means “having heard the good news” namely the Gospel...this shows us that God employed only one instrument in the saving of sinners from the beginning...that is, the preaching of the Gospel [the gospel therefore is a means or instrumentation unto salvation].

Ⓐ Galatians 3:8— “8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.”

The demand of the Gospel who “hear” it is faith, taking God at His word, receiving with childlike simplicity the “good news” that God has sent through His Son.

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

NOTE: Verses 7-10 are a parenthesis of verse 6

· **“Again, he limiteth a certain day,”** - Since the seventh day of creation was a day of rest which God entered into, and not man; and since the land of Canaan was a typical rest,

which the unbelieving Israelites did not enter into, because of unbelief; and yet there must be persons (v. 6), and there must be a time for them to enter into the true rest which God has left a promise of; therefore, God has limited, fixed, and appointed a certain day, the Gospel day, for believers to enter this rest....His rest.

· **“Saying in David,”** - this may also be understood to say “or by David” as was said in Psalm 95.

¶ Psalms 95:1-11— “1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. 3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. 5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. 6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. 7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.”

· **“To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”** - Here the apostle draws his argument from Psalm 95:11 to show that the promise has been left (yet fulfilled in the Israelites)...there is another rest...other than the land of Canaan...therefore, the apostle’s argument is that the “rest” that men are invited to enter is another rest...not the rest of Canaan...the rest intended by David {spoken of in Psalm 95; 450 years after the rest of Canaan} is the “rest” given by and through the Gospel.

¶ Psalm 95:1-11— “1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. 3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. 5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. 6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. 7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.”

“To day” shows the urgency; it means NOW! Today is the time of grace but it is not to be that way forever. It is foolish and dangerous to harden ones heart!

¶ 2 Corinthians 6:2— “2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)”

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

· **“For if Jesus had given them rest,”** - [that is, Joshua...one in the same] Whereas Joshua was a temporal savior and was a type of Christ and although he led the people into a temporal rest, the apostle argues that the O.T. pointed to another yet future rest...a true spiritual rest in Christ. If Joshua’s rest had been the true rest there would have been no need to speak of

another rest.

· **“Then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.”** - God means that David (Ps. 95), spoke of another day of rest or the time of the Messiah. The apostle wants the Hebrews to see or to meditate on the nature of that rest which Moses led their fathers to...they must see that it was very far from being a perfect rest...it was only an earthly inheritance. Different by far is the rest of God into which the “Apostle of Christianity” will lead His people. Here then we see the superiority of Christ over Joshua, as the rest into which Christ brings His people excels that into which Joshua led Israel....God’s rest is not a physical rest...it is a spiritual rest that results in a physical rest as a by-product.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

· **“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”** - Notice this says nothing about “all” mankind nor of the Jews only...rather the “people of God.” If the rest spoken of by the apostle was not the “rest of creation” nor the “rest of Canaan” then there must be yet another “rest” that “the people of God” are to look forward to (based on the previous argument).

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God [did] from his.

· **“For he that is entered into his rest,”** - Here the apostle defines the nature of the excellent rest the believers shall enter into...Yet “he” is none other than Christ...this shows the superiority of Christ over Joshua; Christ, our Apostle, has entered it, and His entrance is the pledge and proof that all of His people shall enter.

¶ Hebrews 6:20— “20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

· **“He also hath ceased from his own works, as God [did] from his.”** - Question: From what works has our Savior rested? Answer: Christ had works to do...as preaching the Gospel, performing miracles, and obtaining the redemption and salvation of His people: these tasks were given to Him to do and He undertook them and He has finished them. As such, He ceases from them and shall never repeat them anymore; they being done effectually, they have no need of being repeated...so our Lord may rest and take delight that “all” of His work is good.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

· **“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest,”** - Once again not eternal rest [salvation is not by “labor” but by grace...works follow as a result of grace and not grace because of works]...What is meant here is that rest that is inherent in the Gospel, that rest that believers now enter into and is at the present time for them (Heb. 4:3, 10) and though true believers are now entered into that rest, yet, that joy, peace in Christ is not full; we enter by degrees and by believing we enjoy it all the more. This is accomplished through the labor of prayer, hearing of the word, attendance to worship and the ordinances which requires strength, diligence and industry which also presupposes difficulties and discouragements.

· **“Lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”** - That is, fall into the sin of unbelief as did the Israelites and by sinning their carcasses fell in the wilderness...they entered not into God’s rest as He swore they would not. Although believers may fall into sin they cannot finally and totally fall away because they are kept by the power of God; yet, many may fall short

of enjoying the rest and peace of the Gospel state; “**external professors**” may fall from the Gospel, and the religion they have professed, and come short of the glory they expected; ,and fall into just and deserved punishment...even as the unbelieving Israelites did in the wilderness.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 4:1-11

“The rest that remains” is indeed a wonderful blessing in that it is “God’s rest” and is, therefore, a “heavenly rest.” It is a rest in which one has “ceased from his work as God did from His.” Yet, within these verses we see how disobedience led many Israelites to fall short of their temporal “Canaan” rest although they collectively as the nation of Israel were God’s “elect,” predestined to receive the promises made to Abraham. But, individually they failed to make their “calling and election sure” even though they had the “gospel” preached to them. They did not receive it by faith and so they did not have the fear and diligence necessary to persevere.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 4:12-13

To stress the need for diligence, we are reminded regarding the Word of God in verses 12 and 13. At a time in which God’s Word is so often neglected, even by some Christians, it never hurts to contemplate the wonder of God’s Word. We should look at these verses as an opportunity to reflect upon what is said with a desire to renew and increase our appreciation of the power of God’s Word.

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 discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

· **“For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful,”** - “word”...that is, Christ, the essential Word of God {the Word of God to the Jews meant the Messiah} therefore, men should be careful not to fall from the Gospel, because Christ, the Author, sum and substance of it, is the living God...only the Word of the living God could be a “discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

1. The word “quick” may be better understood to mean “living.” In other words, this is not a dead letter or dead words.

℘ 1 Peter 1:23-25— “23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. 24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: 25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

2. The Word’s life is seen in its power to accomplish its intended purpose.

℘ Isaiah 55:10-11— “10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

3. The Gospel has the power to save.

℘ Romans 1:16-17— “16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For

therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

4. Through God’s Word we are “Born Again.

¶ 1 Peter 1: 22-23— “22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

5. God’s Word works effectively in those who believe.

¶ 1 Thessalonians 2:13— “13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

6. God’s Word can build us up, and give us the inheritance that is ours.

¶ Acts 20:32— “32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

7. God’s Word can make man complete for all good works.

¶ 2 Timothy 3:16-17— “16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

With such a “living” and “powerful” word at our disposal, we would be foolish to neglect the blessings it offers, or the warnings it gives!

· **“And sharper than any twoedged sword.”** - By the words of His mouth, by the power of His spirit, and by the efficacy of His grace....Christ’s words cut men to the quick and exposes them for what they truly are.

· **“Piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow.”** - Christ separates all things...the apostle’s meaning seems to be that whereas the soul and spirit are invisible and the joints and marrow are covered and hid; so sharp and penetrating is the divine Word, that it reaches the most secret and hidden things of men.

· **“And [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”** - Christ knows what is in a man...He is the searcher of hearts...all that seems hidden to others is seen by Christ. With its sharpness, the Word is capable of sifting through and revealing the heart of man.

1. In some cases the heart is sincere and open to change.

¶ Acts 2:36-37— “36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. 37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

2. In some cases the heart has no desire to change.

¶ Acts 5:33— “ 33 When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay

them.”

ⲡ Acts 7:54— “ 54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.”

One cannot read or hear the Word of God without in some way being affected.

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.

· **“Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight:”** - There is no creature not known by Him, all is seen by Him for all creatures are made and upheld by Him (omniscience /omnipresence)...all are under His eye of notice...all injustice done to His people is taken notice of; all false professors are distinguished from true professors. Yet, He knows that which is His for the Word of God (Christ) sits in judgment of every creature.

· **“But all things [are] naked and opened unto the eyes of him”** - Christ as God knows and sees all, (allusion to wrestlers) all is publicly exposed; all is opened as a lamb is exposed upon the altar of sacrifice. There is a judgment day coming in which God will judge the world through His Son, Jesus Christ.

ⲡ Acts 17:30-31— “30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

ⲡ Romans 2:16— “16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.”

ⲡ 2 Corinthians 5:10— “10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

· **“With whom we have to do.”** - The saints have Jesus as their way to the Father as their Savior and Redeemer...by the blood of Jesus we have been redeemed, we have been pardoned, we have been justified by the fullness of His grace. We must give an account to Christ for all that we have in this life. The standard by which we will be judged are the words spoken through the Father’s Son. Therefore, if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression was justly punished, then how shall we escape judgment if we neglect the words spoken through God’s Son?

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 4:12-13

The power of God’s Word is derived from God Himself. Thus, the omniscient God is able to see into the hearts of men and therefore His Word is able to cut to the hearts of men and reveal their true nature. God is living and eternal and will one day judge the world by His Word that abides forever and this shall be the standard by which all will be held accountable.

As a result of the power of God Himself and His powerful Word, how dare we neglect the warnings given in it and how dare we neglect to even read and heed not the warnings. Are we the dull of heart that react with indifference, anger, and stupidity? Or is our heart right with God? Revelation 2:10 says, “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou

faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 4:14-16

The main thought in this passage is that we should “come boldly to the throne of grace.” This is a part of the diligence that the Christian should display in remaining faithful.

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.

- **“Seeing then that we have a great high priest,”** - Because of the dignity of Christ’s person, we have a “great” high priest because He is the Son of God, exalted and sitting at the Father’s right hand. Christ has done the greatest part of His priesthood through His sacrifice; however, He continues as our High Priest through His Mediatorial office.
- **“That is passed into the heavens,”** - Christ came down from heaven and offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of His people and having accomplished this has ascended once again...there He continues to make intercession on our behalf fulfilling the character of our High Priest.
- **“Jesus the Son of God,”** - The name “Jesus” signifies Christ’s office as Savior...the later, “Son of God” signifies the dignity of His person. Why is He so great a High Priest? Because He is the Son of God.
- **“Let us hold fast [our] profession.”** - That is, our profession of faith or of the grace and doctrine of faith and of Christ, and our salvation by Him and in Him; He being our very hope!

Christ is our High Priest because He was faithful in His duty in the carrying out of our cause before the Father; He has bore witness to the truth of the Gospel.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin.

- **“For we have not an high priest”** - Not one that is cruel and unmerciful.
- **“Which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;”** - With bodily infirmities, persecutions from men, and the temptations of Satan...yet, Christ sympathizes with His people because He has personal knowledge and experience with those temptations and afflictions that His people experience...this should be a great comfort to us.
- **“But was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin.”** - Although Christ never succumbed to any temptation and never sinned (He had no sin nature), Christ was nevertheless subjected to the full gamut of temptations to evil. This means that Christ was tested and tried but that He never committed a sin or was enticed to evil in His mind: therefore, He understands the power of temptation.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

- **“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace,”** - That is, to Christ our great High Priest...it is to Christ that we are to come for cleansing and pardon and for justifying righteousness, for every supply of grace. “Boldly” means with confidence. In other words, we

have the right to speak our minds due to our citizenship...we have a freedom to approach God without hesitation or inhibition all made possible by the blood of Jesus.

We are to come “boldly” because of Christ’s relation to the Father. We can expect to receive mercy, hope to find grace, and help when in need...Christ as our High Priest is our access to the Father. Christ resides on “the throne of grace” as an encouragement and as an expression of His sovereignty in the distribution of grace...this is His sacerdotal act as our High Priest. “Boldly” may also connote “freedom of speech.” We may speak our hearts plainly without mental reservation, fear, or boastful spirit. All which requires a heart that has been sprinkled from an evil conscience, faith in Christ, blood redemption and the imputed righteousness of Christ.

· **“That we may obtain mercy,”** - The end of “coming” to the throne is to obtain mercy.

· **“And find grace to help in time of need.”** - That is, in time of affliction...God has promised His help in time of need...all of God’s help springs from grace...God is the God of all grace which all the fullness of grace dwells in Christ.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 4:14-16

When we are diligent to “come boldly to the throne of grace” we there find a “graceful God” and a “sympathetic High Priest” that acts in mercy, grace, and as a Helper in time of need. The means by which we draw near is through diligent study of the Word of God and prayer.

[Introduction/Chapter 5](#)

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER FIVE

[Introduction/Chapter 6](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

The apostle having made mention of Christ as an high-priest, in the preceding chapter, proceeds in this to give an account of an high-priest, and applies the character of him to Christ; and shows that he is of another order of priesthood than that of Aaron, even of the order of Melchisedec: of whom he could say many things, but the Hebrews were dull of hearing them; which leads him to blame them for their rudeness, and non-proficiency. The description of the high-priest is taken from his relation to men, separation from them, and ordination for them; from his oblation of their gifts and sacrifices; from his sympathy with them, and from his call of God (vv. 1, 2, 3, 4), all which are accommodated to Christ; as his vocation of God (vv. 5, 6), confirmed by two testimonies out of Psalm 2:7 and 110:4, his being a man, and having infirmities, though sinless ones, and his sympathy with men, and compassion on them (v. 7), his obedience and sufferings, and oblation of himself, whereby he became the author of salvation to his people, which is the main thing of his priesthood (vv. 8, 9), and which was not of the order of Aaron, though in some things there was an agreement with it, but of the order of Melchisedec (v. 10), of whom the apostle could say many surprising things; but these Hebrews were dull of apprehension and incapable of receiving them (v. 11).

And then he proceeds to blame them for their dullness, which he aggravates by the time they had been in the school of Christ, when it might have been expected they would have been teachers of others; by their being yet scholars, and of the lowest class, who had need to be taught the first rudiments of the Christian religion; yea, by their being as babes that stood in need of milk, and could not hear meat (v. 12), And then follows a description both of babes, and of adult persons; such as are unskillful in the word of righteousness are babes; and use milk; but those who exercise their spiritual senses, to discern between good and bad doctrine, are adult, and can digest strong meat (vv. 13, 14).

Hebrews 5:1- 14

B. Christ is Superior in His Qualifications	5:1-10
1. Aaronic Priesthood	5:1-4
2. Melchizedekian Priesthood	5:5-10
C. Third Warning: Danger of Not Maturing	5:11--6:20
1. Dullness of Hearing	5:11-14

INTRODUCTION; Hebrews 5:1-10

The recurring theme in this epistle is that of Jesus as our High Priest. This is in keeping with the overall purpose of the epistle which is to show the superiority of Jesus and His new covenant [Chapters 5-9 focuses on Jesus' high priesthood-His superior priesthood makes the new covenant better than the old covenant]. His superiority is compared to that of the Prophets (Heb. 1:1-3), the Angels (Heb. 1:4-2:18) and Moses (Heb. 3:1-6). It is only natural that a comparison to Aaron and his priesthood be made.

The actual comparison with Aaron will follow: first verses 1-10 will review the qualities required in high priests and second it will establish that Jesus does indeed qualify as a High Priest. This section of Scripture can be enlightening and increase one's appreciation of Jesus as our High Priest.

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:

- **"For every high priest taken from among men"** - every one that was a high priest under the law was a man that he might be a high priest for men...this was required that compassion might be shown. Only a man could rightly minister on behalf of men.
- **"Is ordained for men"** - ordained for the good of those that they were to be ministered to through the priestly office...the priest was invested with a superior office.
- **"In things [pertaining] to God,"** - That is, the high priest's work involves the things that God has to do with men...the high priest presided over men in the name of God and declared the will of God to them...the high priest also represented men and presented their sacrifices to God.
- **"That he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:"** - That is, free will offerings, peace offerings, sin and trespass offerings...all types of sacrifices.

Five things can be seen from this verse concerning the high-priest:

1. He is taken from among men (must partake of their nature)...this helps to ensure a spirit of compassion.
2. He acted as a public official.
3. He came not empty-handed before God (gifts and sacrifices).
4. He was exempt from infirmity (v. 2 & 3).
5. He did not presumptuously rush into office but was chosen and approved of God (v.4).

2 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.

- **"Who can have compassion on the ignorant,"** - those that have committed sins of ignorance...As high priest he was to bring sacrifices for them...the high priest could show pity and sympathy...he has compassion suitable for their condition because he was a man. Note: The high priest was to make a distinction between sins of ignorance and sins of presumption (rebellion).

¶ Numbers 15:22-31— “22 And if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments, which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses, 23 Even all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded Moses, and henceforward among your generations; 24 Then it shall be, if ought be committed by ignorance without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat offering, and his drink offering, according to the manner, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering. 25 And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their ignorance: 26 And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance. 27 And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering. 28 And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. 29 Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. 30 But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 31 Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.”

“And on them that are out of the way;” - That is, of the commandments of God...they are like sheep that have gone astray and have turned to their own way...possibly those that have gone out of the way knowingly and willfully. Sacrifices were to be offered in behalf of sins of ignorance but not for sins of rebellion.

· **“For that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.”** - The high priest could have sympathy due to his own sinful weaknesses...he was a sinner himself...he had personal experience with temptation and all the tendencies of man. A high priest who knew his own weakness would be more likely to be understanding of his brethren.

3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

· **“And by reason hereof,”** - That is, “because of their sinful infirmity.”

· **“He ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.”** - as he offered sacrifices for the sins of the people the high-priest was obliged to offer for his own sins...in this Christ differed from the high-priest for he had no sin of His own [Christ was born with no sin nature and, therefore could not have sinned {impeccability}].

Here again we may observe the Spirit of God calling attention to the imperfections of the Levitical priests that the way may be prepared for presenting the infinitely superior perfections of Christ...before the high-priest could present sacrifice for the sins of the people, he had to first bring sacrifice for his own sins.

4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as [was] Aaron.

· **“And no man taketh this honour unto himself,”** - That is, the honor of the priesthood: this office was an honorable one...their principle honor lay in the work they performed in representing the whole body of the people in the offering of gifts and sacrifices for the people.

No man can take this office upon himself...this office could only be obtained by a call from God...and no man dared to take this office upon his own authority.

· **“But he that is called of God, as [was] Aaron.”** - as Aaron’s call was from God and was unquestionable, no man could legitimately act as high-priest unless he was Divinely called to that office...that which makes the office lawful is the personal call of God.

5 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.

· **“So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest;”** - Christ (although the Son of God) was separated to this office as an honor to His human nature, by God...Christ did not take this dignity upon Himself...the honor was bestowed or invested by God...Christ was honored with this office being bestowed upon His Mediatorial office.

· **“But he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.”** - this testified to the Father’s acceptance of Christ in the discharge of all the work which He had committed to Christ... Christ undertook nothing that God had not appointed to Him. As evidence of His calling, two Messianic prophecies are offered.

1. His position as God’s Son... thou art my son,” tells us that Christ’s sufficiency as Priest lies in His Divine nature. It was the dignity of His person which gave value to what He did. Because He was the Son , God appointed Him High Priest.

Ⓐ Psalm 2:7— “7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”

As God’s Son, sitting and ruling at the right hand of God, His calling as a priest is only natural.

Ⓐ Psalm 110:1-3— “1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. 2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. 3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.”

6 As he saith also in another [place], Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

· **“As he saith also in another [place],”** - the Jews thought of this Psalm when these words were spoken contained in verse 6...what is here said is that the same person (God) who spoke the words of Psalm 110 also expressed the following...

· **“Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”** - This is an expression of the eternity of Christ’s priesthood and shows a distinction between the Aaronic priesthood and the priesthood of Christ.

2. His appointment as a priest after the order of Melchizedek. “Thou art a priest,” is declarative of God’s eternal decree, of the everlasting covenant between the Father and Son, wherein Christ was designated unto this office.

Ⓐ Psalm 110:4— “4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

7 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;

- **“Who in the days of his flesh,”** - In the time of Christ’s humiliation or the time of His human nature [Christ now maintains His flesh but it is free from infirmities].

- **“When he had offered up prayers and supplications”** - prayers and supplications are expressive of the frailty of human nature...angels do not pray...however this would indicate the difficulty or the great work necessary to make expiation for sin.

- **“With strong crying and tears”** - this indicates the intensity of the sufferings of our Priest and the extent to which He felt them. This shows the weight of sin of sorrow and punishment that was laid upon our Priest.

Ð Matthew 26:38— “38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.”

Ð Luke 22:42— “42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”

Ð Matthew 27:46— “46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

- **“Unto him that was able to save him from death,”** - to Him that was able to raise Him from the dead...Christ looked to the omnipotence of the Father...In view of God’s omnipotence Christ sought deliverance; in view of His sovereignty, Christ meekly submitted.

This also makes known the cause of Christ’s “strong crying with tears,”...it was the sight of death that would be the result of “the wages of sin,”...that the curse of the law which God inflicts on the guilty. Yet, God has the power to deliver from “the wages of sin”...from the power of the grave.

- **“And was heard in that he feared;”** - Christ was heard first of all because of God’s approval and His reverence towards the Father. Christ’s personal perfection made His petition acceptable.

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

- **“Though he were a Son,”** - (The Son of God) not by creation, nor by adoption, nor by office, but by nature...Christ had the same nature and perfection as the Father. This should remind us of the Divine dignity and excellence of Christ as the grounds of His everlasting Priesthood.

Ð John 1:1— “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

- **“Yet learned he obedience”** - That is, obedience unto death...through sufferings He became obedient to death, even death on the cross...He was obedient to the will of the Father or to the authority of the Father...Christ, as the One who was here to maintain the claims of God, He must “magnify the law and make it honorable,” by yielding to it a voluntary, perfect, joyous compliance. Through obedience Christ formed an essential part of His priestly oblation (the act of offering to deity). Christ denied Himself and therefore, learned obedience experimentally.

· **“By the things which he suffered;”** - the means by which Christ learned obedience was from His sufferings...as a servant of God, Christ suffered through His entire humiliation...this was necessary for our salvation...there was a complete and unquestioning subjection to God...an obedience even unto death according to the will of God. This teaches us the requirement of obedience.

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

· **“And being made perfect,”** - That is, in His obedience, through His sufferings...having completed His obedience, gone through His sufferings, and with His sacrifice, He is now perfectly glorified in heaven. This accomplished two things:

1. Christ was made perfect as to the administration of His office in behalf of sinners;
2. With respect unto believers that He might be unto them the “Author of eternal salvation.”
3. Christ was Perfected by virtue of His sufferings “in the flesh”, He has become the “Author” of eternal salvation.

The word “perfect” signifies “to consummate” or “complete” or “to dedicate” or “fully consecrate” or “to cause.” Here the verb is passive, telling us the effect of that act of God on the person of Christ; By His suffering He was perfected. This has reference to the setting apart of Christ as Priest...as the Levitical priests were consecrated by the sufferings and death of animal sacrifices to cleanse them of their own sin, so to was Christ consecrated or made perfect through His sufferings and sacrificial death.

· **“He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”** - Christ is the cause or author of eternal salvation because it was decreed in eternity past, and because of His sufferings and obedience...by obeying the precept, and bearing the penalty of the law, by the price of His blood, and by the power of His arm; by His death and by His life, by His sacrifice on the cross, and by His intercession in heaven; by bestowing grace here, and glory hereafter shows that salvation is done.

Salvation procured by our High Priest is here contrasted with that obtained by the Levitical high priest: the atonement which Aaron made, held good for one year only.

“To all them that obey him” describes those who are the beneficiaries of our High Priest’s atonement...this is not all men universally but only those that share in the interest of His salvation...this is an “obedience” of faith and identifies us with our Head. Is obedience necessary for salvation? Consider these verses.

1. Jesus will bring vengeance on those who have not obeyed the gospel.

Ð 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9— “7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”

Ð 1 Peter 4:17-18— “17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

2. Paul sought to bring about the “obedience of the faith” among all the nations.

Ð Romans 1:5— “5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:”

Ð Romans 16:25-26— “25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:”

a. But not all had obeyed the gospel.

Ð Romans 10:16— “16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?”

b. Yet Paul was grateful for those who had obeyed.

Ð Romans 6:17-18— “17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”

3. Those who have obeyed the truth have purified their souls.

Ð 1 Peter 1:22— “22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:”

If obedience is necessary for salvation, are we then saved by works?

1. Not if by “works” it is meant “meritorious works” [works by which we EARN salvation]

2. But if it is meant “works of God” [works by which we RECEIVE God’s unmerited gift of salvation] which God has ordained...then YES!

a. Believing in Christ is a “work of God.”

Ð John 6:28-29— “28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

b. Since repentance and baptism are likewise enjoined by God, they too would be “works of God” that must be obeyed in order to receive salvation.

Ð Acts 2:38— “ 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Ð Acts 10:48— “ 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.”

Thus salvation “by grace through faith” does not preclude the necessity of obedience to Christ and His gospel.

10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

· **“Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.”** - (See Psalm 110:4 - The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.) there is a resemblance between the priesthood of Melchizedek and Christ...A most important point has now been reached in the apostle’s argument, the central design of which was to “exhibit” the immeasurable superiority of Christianity over Judaism...our Priest is of Melchizedek...Christ is a priest forever.

“Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek” - is a solemn and comprehensive address by the Father to the Son and has such vivid and profound sense of the exceeding riches of heavenly knowledge, of the treasures of wisdom and consolation which are hidden in the heavenly Priesthood of our ascended Lord.

Note: That it was consequent upon Christ being officially “made perfect” and becoming “the Author of eternal salvation,” that He was saluted (called) by God as “High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.”

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 5:1-10

For the moment, the “writer” has established Christ’s qualifications as High Priest.” He has done this by pointing out Christ’s divine appointment and His sympathetic sufferings on our behalf. This makes Christ suitable as the “author of eternal salvation.” But one must not forget that He is the author of salvation “to all who obey Him.”

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 5:11-14

Here the “writer” will digress and talk to the Hebrews about the marks of spiritual immaturity. Just because one has been a “Christian” for many years, does not mean they are “mature.” They may be like the person who had been a teacher for twenty-five years...when she heard about a job that would mean a promotion, she applied for the position. However, someone who had been teaching for only one year was hired instead. She went to the principal and asked why. The principal responded, “I’m sorry, but you haven’t had 25 years of experience as you claim; you’ve had only one year’s experience twenty-five times.” As there was a lack of improvement on the part of the teacher so it is with many Christians; they have not grown, but simply have repeated their first year of spiritual life many times.

The lack of spiritual growth (spiritual immaturity) is a dangerous thing. For there may be blessings to be enjoyed in Christ that only the mature Christian can truly understand and appropriate. If one remains spiritually immature, they do not come to fully appreciate their standing and blessings that they have in Christ. Deprived of a greater understanding, they are more susceptible to the wiles of the Devil.

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

· **“Of whom we have many things to say,”** - That is, of Christ as the fulfillment of the Melchizedek type there were many things to communicate to the Hebrews, such as, the glory of Christ, the priesthood of Christ which was of great concern. Remember, if the Hebrews were to accept the priesthood of Christ, they would be confessing or admitting to the fact that the Aaronic priesthood was no longer of any use.

· **“And hard to be uttered,”** - difficult things are to be looked into, considered, searched after and insisted on. Yet, these things of necessity would prove to be unpalatable to the Hebrews.

· **“Seeing ye are dull of hearing.”** - The “dull of hearing” is descriptive of that state of mind in which statements may be made without producing and corresponding impression, without being attended to, without being understood, without being felt. Dr. John Brown in his commentary on the Book of Hebrews comments on the “dull of hearing.”

Such was the state of mind in which many of the Hebrew Christians were; and, what made it more melancholy, they had once discovered a better state of mind. The words, “ye are dull of hearing,” properly signify, ‘ye are become dull of hearing;’ and that this is their meaning is plain from the language of the following verse: “Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God;” ye “are become such as have need of milk, and not strong meat.” When the Gospel was first preached to them, it aroused their attention—it exercised their thoughts; but now with many of them it had become a common thing. They flattered themselves that they knew all about it. It had become to them like a sound to which the ear has long been accustomed, —the person is not conscious of it—pays no attention to it.

I am afraid that this is a very common habit among hearers of the Gospel in the present age. They have been accustomed to hear the Gospel from their infancy; they fancy they know and understand it perfectly; and under this impression, if they continue to read the Scriptures or hear the Gospel, it is almost entirely without anything that can be called intellectual effort. They indolently assent to what their teacher states; but they do so in a way which makes it plain they do not understand it—they are not interested in it.

The Hebrews had become mentally and spiritually what loafers are in the natural world—too indolent to bestir themselves, to lazy to make any effort at improvement. This should be an example for us of the many who are deluded into thinking their eternal salvation is secure and show no evidence, no concern over their present relationship to God.

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.

· **“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers,”** - considering the length of time from Pentecost and their hereditary background as Jews, it might have been expected, and indeed it is what should have been, that they should have been teachers of others...to have time for learning, and yet make no proficiency, is an aggravation of dullness...notice the order...one must be a proficient hearer before he can become a proficient teacher...we must not fail to “redeem the time” (Eph. 5:16). “Ye ought to be teachers” tells us of the improvement that should have been expected and the use to which it was to be applied, namely, teaching...this shows us the duty required of us. The natural response to growth is fruit...one bears fruit by teaching others.

Ð Ephesians 5:15-17— “15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”

· **“Ye have need that one teach you again which [be] the first principles of the oracles of God;”** - The apostle continues his reproof of the Hebrews by telling them that they need to learn the Scriptures...Spiritual sloth not only prevents practical progress in the Christian’s life, but it produces regression. The Hebrews had failed to live by the power of the Gospel...instead of going forward they had gone back. If one is unable to teach “the first principles” it demonstrates spiritual immaturity [a stupid Christian is of no practical use].

· **“And are become such as have need of milk,”** - of the types and shadows, and

figures of the law, which were suited for their infant state.

· **“And not of strong meat.”** - such as the deep things of God or of those deep things concerning the Melchizedek priesthood of Christ. This is manifested today in those people who can not understand the grace of God, the doctrines concerning the grace of God, of eternal election and reprobation, of the person of Christ and the setting aside of the Law...we are exhorted to “be not children in understanding”

Ð 1 Corinthians 14:20— “20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.”

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

· **“For every one that useth milk”** - those that are contented with the first principles of the Gospel are easily taken in...they are unskillful and inexperienced. The unskilled one in the Word of Righteousness is a “babe.” A babe is weak, ignorant. A spiritual babe is one who has an inadequate knowledge of Christ...an experimental knowledge and not an heart-acquaintance with Him [even the “milk” of the Word is designed to train the faculties].

· **“[Is] unskilful in the word of righteousness:”** - One cannot join man’s works of righteousness with the Righteousness of Christ...one must discover the difference between the righteousness of Christ, the justice of God, and the doctrine of justification...the matter of Christ’s righteousness, the form of it, the extent of it, the imputation of it...we must have a practical concern of such matters. By reason of use we learn to discern both good and evil. With clear examples set before us in the Scriptures we are given the opportunity to learn right from wrong. We thereby develop the ability to “distinguish” between good and evil. We become able to apply general principles to specific situations.

· **“For he is a babe.”** - Total inconsistency, ignorance and non-proficiency...want of digestion of strong meat and incapacity to take care of themselves. A babe in Christ often has difficulty discerning the difference between good teaching (truth) and bad teaching (error), good conduct (righteousness) and bad conduct (wickedness).

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.

· **“But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age,”** - Strong meat is the antithesis of a “babe.” Strong meat is contrasted with “milk,” or the “first principles” of God’s Word. The “strong meat” is the appropriate portion of those who have left infancy behind...they have grown in faith and love. This growth is produced and promoted by use of our spiritual “senses” or faculties.

· **“[Even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”** - A man by reason of use, has learned so far as to employ his senses as to distinguish between what is harmful and what is nourishing. It is only by constant and assiduous exercise of mind upon spiritual things, by the diligent study of the Word, by daily meditation thereon, by the exercise of faith therein, by earnestly supplicating the spirit for light, that we acquire the all-important discernment to distinguish between good and evil, truth and error.

“Senses exercised” means ability of fitness acquired...such capacity is only attained by the Christian through constant and diligent application of himself to the things of God...“by reason of use” refers to a regular practice, a confirmed habit...whereby the outcome is a spiritual

ability to judge rightly of all that is presented to our notice. The ability to discern means that we must be able to apply general principles to specific situations. There must be the ability to recognize when a doctrine is true to God's Word or is in fact heresy. To be dependent on someone else to "spoon feed" or to "take us by the hand and lead" us is a lack of discernment of right and wrong and what is truth and what is error.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 5:11-14

There are many indicators of spiritual immaturity which include behaving in a carnal way, possessing strife, envy, and jealousy. But the present text has focused attention on four. First there is a dullness of hearing; second the inability to teach others; third the normal diet of "milk;" and, fourth the inability to discern. All of these should serve as "warning" signs that something is amiss in the Christian life, for these are truly marks of spiritual immaturity.

[Introduction/Chapter 6](#)

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER SIX

[Introduction/Chapter 7](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

In this chapter the apostle exhorts the believing Hebrews not to rest in the rudiments of the Christian religion they had learned; and much less to lay them again in the foundation after the Jewish manner, of which he instances in six particulars; but to seek after perfect knowledge of evangelic truths, which, under a divine permission, was his determination to do (vv. 1,2,3). Which was the best method to prevent apostasy, he dissuades from; by giving the characters of apostates, showing how far they may go in the knowledge of divine things, and yet fall away; by asserting the impossibility of their repentance and recovery, with the reason of it, taken from the blackness of their crimes (vv. 4,5,6). And the difference between them, and true believers, he illustrates by two sorts of earth, the one takes in the rain that comes down from heaven, and brings forth herbs for the use of its dresser, and is blessed of God: such are true believers in Christ (v. 7). The other bears thorns and briars, and is rejected and cursed, and in the issue burned; and to such earth the above apostates may be compared (v. 8). But lest the believing Hebrews, such as were truly gracious among them, should conclude that this was their case, and that it was desperate; and lest they should think the apostle had an ill opinion of them, he declares that he was otherwise persuaded of them, and hoped and believed they were interested in the things of salvation (v. 9). The reasons of which persuasion are taken from the work of grace, which was wrought in them; from the laborious love they showed to the name of God, and to his people, and which they continued to show: and from the righteousness of God in not forgetting all this (v. 10).

And he proceeds to exhort them in diligence in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, that so they might arrive to a full assurance of hope (v. 11). And not to indulge slothfulness, but to follow the saints that were gone before them; whose character is, that through faith, and patience, they had inherited the promises, things the apostle would have those believers imitate them in (v. 12). And particularly instances in Abraham, the father of this people, and of all believers; who having a promise from God, to which an oath was annexed, patiently waited for it, and obtained it (vv. 13,14,15). And having made mention of an oath, the apostle takes notice of the nature and use of one among men (v. 16). And of the design of God in making use of one himself, which was to confirm his promise and show its immutability to the heirs of it; and that by observing these two immutable things, which could never fail, they might have solid and abiding comfort: even all such, who under a sense of danger, flee to Christ for refuge, who is the ground of hope proposed to them in the Gospel, to lay hold upon (vv. 17,18). And because of the firmness of the grace of hope, as it is conversant with Christ, and is cast on him, the good ground of it, it is compared to an anchor; and is said to be sure and steadfast, and to enter within the veil, where Christ has gone as a forerunner; and which is an encouragement to that grace to enter in after him; who is further described by his name Jesus, by his office as an high-priest, and by the order of which he is, that of Melchisedec (vv. 19, 20). Which is mentioned to lead on to what the apostle had to say concerning him in the next chapter.

Hebrews 6:1-20

Part Two: The Superiority of Christ's Work (4:14-10:18)

I. The Superiority of Christ's Priesthood	4:14-7:28
A. Christ is Superior in His Position	4:14-16
B. Christ is Superior in His Qualifications	5:1-10
1. Aaronic Priesthood	5:1-4
2. Melchizedekian Priesthood	5:5-10
C. Third Warning: Danger of Not Maturing	5:11-6:20
1. Dullness of Hearing	5:11-1
2. Need for Maturity	6:1-8
3. Exhortation to Maturity	6:9-20

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 6:1-8

The "normal" Christian life is to be one of spiritual growth and progression. Starting as "babes in Christ," we feed on the "milk" of the Word. As our spiritual senses are exercised to discern good and evil, we are then able to progress to the "solid food" or the meat of the Word. In this way we "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

But as was seen in the previous chapter, not all grow as they should, and some of the indications of immaturity are: (1) dullness of hearing, (2) inability to teach others, (3) a steady diet of "milk" only, and, (4) the inability to discern good and evil. But if we don't grow spiritually as we should, so what? Is spiritual growth really that essential and is there a "danger" involved in not progressing spiritually?

1 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,

· **"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ,"** - The Gospel is the doctrine of Christ. The principles of this doctrine are the easier parts of the Gospel, called "milk,"...this may be better rendered "wherefore having left," the verb being in the past tense enables us to understand more readily the significance of what follows. The Hebrews had left the "word of beginning" of Christ's discourse...this is parallel with the first principles of the oracles of God (Heb. 5:12). This has reference to what God has made known concerning His Son under Judaism. Thus, they had left the basics (Judaism) for the Word Himself only now to return to the basics.

There is a need for the Word of God: the application of the Word of God in the Christian life

results in a maturity in religious knowledge. Full development of the spiritual life, as a end, results in faith, knowledge, and godly character, and is our due obedience to our calling.

¶ 2 Peter 1:5-8— “5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

· **“Let us go on unto perfection;”** - In a comparative sense, to a more perfect knowledge of things...there is use of the definite article in the Greek and it may be rendered “The Revelation.” That which is here referred to as “The Perfection” is the full revelation which God now made of Himself in the person of His incarnate Son. This is, from the practical side, a “perfection” of knowledge, spiritually imported by the Holy Spirit to the understanding and heart. This has a twofold meaning:

1. “Let us go on:” - it was the apostle’s resolution to do so...I shall therefore go on to set before you the highest and most glorious things concerning Christ.
2. The apostle condescends to unite himself with them in their responsibility to press forward...they were being exhorted to be diligent to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord...it was a call to stir them up (to get off their Baptist backsides).

· **“Not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works,”** - It should be noted that there is no definite article in the Greek and this should be rendered, “not laying again ‘a’ foundation, ...therefore, it is not the fundamentals of Christianity that is here being spoken of...this foundation respects Judaism...the general principles and practices of the Jews under the former economy is what is here addressed. To “lay again” this foundation was to forsake the substance (Christ) for the shadow; it was to turn from Christianity and go back again to Judaism.

· **“Repentance from dead works;”** is a repentance which arose from, and was signified by the sacrifices of slain beasts...those works of the ceremonial law denominated “dead works” because they were performed by men in the flesh, were not vitalized by the Holy Spirit, and did not satisfy the claims of the living God. Turning from works that produce spiritual death, not life...Paul describes such works:

¶ Ephesians 2:1-3— “1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

¶ Romans 6:21— “21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.”

· **“And of faith toward God,”** - Israel’s national faith, “toward God” was now under the Christian revelation, which should be directed towards Christ, without the intermediate use of sacrifices. Such a “faith toward God” is a trusting conviction in God and His promises which is essential in pleasing Him.

¶ Hebrews 11:6— “6 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.”

This faith is produced by the Word of God itself:

Ð Romans 10:17— “17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Ð John 20:30-31— “30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

· **“Of the doctrine of baptisms,”** - This is neither Christian baptism, the baptism of the Spirit, nor the baptism of suffering which is here in view; but the carnal ablutions which were obtained under the Mosaic economy. These “washings” denoted that all the defiling effects of sin must be removed, before the worshipper could approach unto the Lord. They foreshadowed that perfect and eternal cleansing from sin which the atoning blood of Christ was to provide for His people.

· **“And of laying on of hands,”** - this is not, and never was, a distinctive Christian ordinance. The foundation of this was to be no more laid, nor the doctrine of it to be any longer taught and learned in the way that it had been. This doctrine was that practiced by the priests as they laid their hands on the “judas” goat that was to signify the transfer of the sin of the nation upon which the goat was then led out of the camp into the wilderness (Lev. 16:21). This was an essential part of the ritual on the annual Day of Atonement.

Ð Leviticus 16:21— “21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:”

· **“And of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”** - There is a distinction between the O.T. resurrection and that of the N.T. The Hebrews were not to rest in the knowledge of these things, and in the smaller degrees of light they had in them...they were to go on to perfection, and bear forward towards a greater share of knowledge of these, and other more sublime doctrines of grace.

1. Christ’s resurrection was a central theme of apostolic preaching and as such Jesus was our precious hope of our promised resurrection.

Ð Acts 4:2— “2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.”

Ð Acts 24:15— “15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”

2. Eternal Judgment:

Ð Acts 17:30-31— “30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

¶ Acts 24:24-25— “24 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. 25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

· **“And this will we do, if God permit.”** - That is, leave the rites and ceremonies of the law, which were the rudiments, or the first principles of the Gospel, and go on to a more perfect knowledge of the truth of the Gospel; and lay not again as the foundation of ministry, or insist upon them as if they were the main things. The sense is, that the apostle and his brethren in the ministry were determined to insist upon the more solid and substantial parts of the Gospel which tended to bring their hearts to perfection. The “this will we do” has reference to “Let us go on unto perfection” (Heb. 6:1). “If God permit” is the qualifying word with respect unto the unknown sovereign pleasure of God, to which all our resolutions must submit. God’s permission is much to be observed in the ministry of the Word.

Understanding these concepts serves as the “beginning” of spiritual growth! Sadly, some who have been Christians for years still “need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God;” By comprehending the “meatier” parts of the Word of God, we are more likely to remain steadfast in our faith. So it is imperative for the Christian to have the correct attitude in striving toward perfection, as did Paul.

¶ Philippians 3:7-15— “7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.”

4 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,

The first thing we should take note of in Hebrews 6:4-6 is that there is no reference at all to salvation. There is no mention of:

1. Justification
2. Sanctification
3. Regeneration
4. The New Birth

Those “who were once enlightened” are not spoken of as born again, made holy, or made righteous. None of the normal N.T. terminology for salvation is used. In fact, no term used here

is ever used elsewhere in the N.T. for salvation, and none should be taken to refer to it in this passage!

· **“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened,”** - Anticipating this exposition, be fully assured, that the “falling away” which will be spoken of signifies a deliberate, complete and final repudiation of Christ—a sin for which there is no forgiveness. Here the apostle regards the retrogression of the Hebrews as an entire, confirmed, willful, and irrecoverable apostasy from the truth. Three things must be kept in mind regarding Hebrews 6:4-6:

1. The persons spoken of
2. The sin they commit
3. The doom pronounced upon them

The persons spoken of - note that the apostle does not say “us who were once enlightened,” nor even “you,” instead he says “those.” Yet, these Hebrews had done the things that ‘accompany’ salvation; therefore the apostle does not ascribe these things to the Hebrews...if he had “these,” that is the Hebrews, would have not been part of the overall argument of the epistle. They were not spoken of as God’s elect, as those for whom Christ had died, as those that had been born of the Spirit.

The word “enlightened” signifies “to give light or knowledge by teaching.” Thus, “enlightened” here means to be instructed in the doctrine of the Gospel, so as to have a clear understanding of it. This knowledge is only a natural knowledge of spiritual things, such as is acquired by outward hearing or reading. This falls short of spiritual enlightenment which transforms. These are not spoken of as born again, made holy, or made righteous. The “enlightenment spoken of here has to do with intellectual perception of spiritual, biblical truth...they were mentally aware of something, they were instructed in and informed of the gospel...but there is no indication of a response of acceptance or rejection, belief or unbelief. There was a natural knowledge, factual information. They saw Christ, heard His message, and saw the many miracles performed by Him... But “the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not.” The light of the gospel had personally broken in on the darkness but most of these here addressed did not believe in Him.

Ð John 12:35-40— “35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them. 37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: 38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? 39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.”

· **“And have tasted of the heavenly gift,”** - To “taste” is to have a personal experience of, in contrast from a mere report of the “heavenly gift.” The persons here described are those who have to a certain degree understood and relished the revelation of mercy. Therefore, those here in view had an acquaintance with the Gospel, as to gain such a measure of its blessedness as to greatly aggravate sin and doom...

¶ Matthew 13: 20, 21— “20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon (immediately) with joy receiveth it; 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”

This gift is most likely “Jesus Christ.” This gift, however was not received. It was not feasted on, but only tasted, sampled. It was not accepted or lived, only examined.

· **“And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,”** - the word “partakers” means companions, referring to what is external rather than internal. Therefore, those spoken of here had shared in the benefit of the Spirit’s supernatural operations and manifestations externally. The Spirit of God can not be a castaway. Partakers (Greek, *metochos*) has to do with association, not possession. The Bible never speaks of Christians being associated with the Holy Spirit. It speaks of the Holy Spirit being within them.(See Hebrews 3:1 and 3:14)

5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

· **“And have tasted the good word of God,”** - Not the Lord Jesus Christ, the essential Word of God, but rather the Scriptures of truth in general, which are the Word of God. This may mean that they enjoy the advantages of the Gospel economy. The Greek word is *rhema* (word) and emphasizes the parts rather than the whole and is not the usual word (*logos*) for God’s Word.

1. There is nothing wrong with “tasting” the Word of God; every Christian must first start there;

¶ Psalm 34:8— “8 O taste and see that the LORD [is] good: blessed [is] the man [that] trusteth in him.”

2. But they must go deeper into the things of God to the point they eat of the words thereof

¶ Jeremiah 15:16— “16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.”

See 2 Peter 1:4 for the Greek word *Koinenia*— “4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

· **“And the powers of the world to come,”** - Meaning either the state of the church, and the glorious things relating to it which they may have had notional apprehensions of it or it may have been of the ultimate state of glory and happiness that is contained in all the perfection of Christianity. Yet, these professors only had a notional knowledge, a natural desire or a delight in the contemplation or in the hope of miracles and mighty works.

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.

· **“If they shall fall away,”** - This is not true believers, yet, it is a complete falling away, a total abandonment of Christianity which is here in view. It is a willful turning of the back on God’s revealed truth...it is the total renunciation of all the distinguishing truths and principles of Christianity...this constitutes apostasy. The words literally rendered are “and have fallen away”...they were already in a state of apostasy. Dr. John Brown says;

This does not consist in an occasional falling into actual sin, however gross and aggravated; nor in the renunciation of some of the principles of Christianity, even though those should be of considerable importance, but in an open, total determined renunciation of all the constituent principles of Christianity, and a return to a false religion.

· **“To renew them again unto repentance;”** - It is impossible to renew the soul or a renewing of the exercise of the grace of redemption or repentance...they never had true repentance...what are they to be renewed to again?...the opportunity for receiving salvation? The unbelieving Jews were in great danger, because of their spiritual immaturity and sluggishness, of turning back to Judaism and of never being able to repent and come to Christ. The impossibility lies in the fact that God had not appointed a means to attain the end...that is repentance.

NOTE: “To renew” means to restore, to bring back to an original condition. The original condition of these Jews was that of excitement about the Gospel when they first heard it. When one rejects Christ at the peak experience of knowledge and conviction, He will not accept at a lesser or lower level.

· **“Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh,”** - This is brought in to show the aggravation of their awful crime and the impossibility of their being renewed again to repentance. By renouncing their Christian profession they declared Christ to be an Impostor. The Jews were saying that as far as they were concerned, the Son of God deserved to be crucified...they took their stand with the crucifiers.

· **“And put him to an open shame.”** - “Shame” here may connote guilt. They declared openly that Jesus was guilty of the charge. These Jews however did more dishonor than did Jesus’ crucifiers. The crucifiers were not guilty of professing to acknowledge Christ’s divine mission; but these apostates had made such a profession—they had made a kind of trial of Christianity, and, after trial, had rejected it along with the sum and substance of it, namely, Jesus Christ.

7 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:

· **“For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it,”** - Do you see the illustration? All those who hear the Gospel are like the earth. The rain falls, the Gospel message is heard. The Gospel seed is planted and there is nourishment and growth. Yet, some of the growth is false, spurious (lacking authenticity or validity...false), and unproductive. The good ground is where the Word is received.

The Jewish nation was God’s vineyard...the rain signifies the Word or Doctrine which the Lord sent to Israel...something that man cannot manufacture...the rain produces vegetation...the Word causes God’s people to be revived. The rain produces life...the Word of God produces life...as no dead seed can be made alive by the rain, neither can a dead soul. If one is not of God’s elect, he shall not be made alive regardless of any outward appearance. The unregenerate will always return and manifest their true nature.

Ⓟ 2 Peter 2:22— “22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

· **“And bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed,”** - What response is expected of the earth when the rains are sent forth and the seeds are properly dressed...or what fruit is brought forth by those that hear the Gospel? The apostle’s design here is

to show the importance of making proper use of receiving God's Word: a "meet" or suitable response should be forthcoming.

· **"Receive blessing from God:"** - Those that receive the Word receive the blessings of the Word...if it is received it must be a gift. What we have here is God's acceptance and approbation, assuring His care unto a further improvement. Three things are shown to us about God's vineyard.

1. God owns it (Sovereignty)
2. God watches over it (Providence); He causes it to grow.
3. God's final preservation of it: it produces the desired fruit.

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

· **"But that which beareth thorns and briers"** - These are those professors that are worldly, slothful, defrauding, carnal, and wanton; they are heretical men, such as turned from the faith, apostates, denying it and persecuting the saints. Three thoughts about such ground "which beareth thorns and briers":

1. It brought forth that which was no profit to its owner, which promoted not the glory of God.
2. "Thorns and briers" are of a hurtful and noxious nature.
3. These terms tell us that all which is brought forth by the natural man is under the curse of God.

"Thorns and briers" are errors, heresies, and evil works of all kinds and indicate that the seed of the Word was never in their hearts and that which they "beareth" or throw out, is natural to them.

· **"Is rejected,"** - These are the reprobate concerning the faith...these are given up by God to a reprobate mind. The Greek word used here for "rejected," signifies the setting aside as useless after trial has been made of a thing.

⚭ Romans 1:24, 26, 28— "24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;"

· **"And is nigh unto cursing:"** - The Greek word for "cursing" means, "given over to execration (accursed)," or "devoted to destruction."

· **"Whose end is to be burned."** - As bad seeds were burned in the fields that produced briers and thorns, so to will those that are rejected be burned in the lake of unquenchable fire.

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

· **“But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you,”** - “Beloved” is never used in Scripture to refer to unbelievers, therefore, the apostle here addresses the believing Hebrews...those loved of the Lord as the elect of God. The apostle was persuaded that they had the true grace of God; whereas the preceding people had only gifts that were common to both the regenerate and the unregenerate. That which makes men better is grace...grace is of salvation. “Beloved” (*agapetos* from *agape*) expresses the highest kind of relationship...therefore, the apostle believes that these “beloved” brethren possessed all things that accompany salvation.

· **“And things that accompany salvation,”** - The ingredients of salvation; such as faith as to be predestinated, justified, called, adopted, sanctified and yet come, glorification (See Romans chapters 5 and 6). “Accompanying salvation is not infancy but maturity, not milk but solid food, not inexperience in righteousness but perfect righteousness, not repentance from dead works but repentance toward God unto life. They do not reflect external ceremonial religion but eternal regeneration, transformation, new life.

· **“Though we thus speak,”** - A paraphrased rendering would be, “Beloved fellow Christians, though we have been speaking about these awful and fearful warnings to unbelievers, we know that far better things apply to you. You have accompaniments of salvation, not of unbelief. These warnings are because there are such as these in your midst.”

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.

· **“For God is not unrighteous”** - The righteous God rewards only that which He has wrought in us. The very justice of God is engaged on the behalf of those whom Christ has redeemed, therefore, God is not unrighteous.

· **“To forget your work”** - Not external works because these are known as fruit...but faithfulness, the work of God upon them, the good work of faith that was wrought in them by God and the accompanying grace for this is the reason why the apostle was persuaded of better things of them, even such as accompany salvation.

· **“And labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name,”** - Love is another evidence of salvation but more significant evidence is love showed toward His name. God knows when our service is truly for His glory by whether or not it is done out of love for His name.

· **“In that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”** - They ministered to the saints out of their love towards God. The very reason they could love each other so much and serve each other so well was because they loved God so much. These faithful Hebrews loved the Lord and the positive proof was their love for each other.

The “saints” that are ministered to are simply fellow Christians. Being a “saint” has nothing to do with one’s degree of maturity or rank (or by being elevated to the “Rank of Saint” by some ecclesiastical body [such as the Church of Rome]). It refers to any person who is saved, who is set apart by God for Himself in His Son Jesus Christ [Notice how Paul addresses those to whom he writes his epistles— “Saints”].

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

· **“And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence”** - There is a diligence and exercise or spiritual labor that is required by the saints...former diligence is motive

towards future diligence. We are to show the same eagerness or haste unto the end. Unless this be done, our profession will not be preserved nor God glorified. Yet, there are very few who exercise a godly concern for their souls. To an earnest endeavor after personal holiness, the work of faith and labor of love, the vast majority of professors are strangers; nor can they be persuaded that any such things are required or expected of them...a work of faith and labor of love can not be persisted in without studious diligence and earnest endeavor.

· **“To the full assurance of hope unto the end:”** - “diligence” is shown “to the full assurance of hope”...“full assurance” here signifies a firm conviction or positive persuasion. “Hope” in the N.T. means a ardent desire for and strong expectation of obtaining its object. Faith looks to the Promisor, hope to the things promised. “Full assurance of hope” signifies a steady prevailing persuasion, a persuasion which issues from faith in the promises made. The “diligence” before mentioned, is God’s appointed means toward this full assurance.

12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

· **“That ye be not slothful,”** - With respect to hearing the Word and attendance on every ordinance; with respect to knowledge, faith, and hope, and ministering to the saints. The apostle here warns against any evil, indolence and inertia, which stands opposed to diligence, they are the opposite. If we faint or grow negligent in our duty, if careless or slothful, we shall never hold out until the end. The slothfulness against which the apostle warns, is in each of us by nature.

· **“But followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”** - The reference here is to the believing forefathers of the Hebrews, who, by continuing steadfast in faith and preserving in hope amidst all the trials to which they were exposed, had now entered into the promised blessings—Heaven.

Notice the two requirements: faith and patience...their faith was more than a general faith in God, it was a special faith which laid hold of the divine promises; not notional or bare mental assent to the truth...it was marked by a practical and influential acknowledgment...that is the faith required of us today. Patience is longsuffering, a tranquillity of the mind on holy grounds...it is a spirit which refuses to be daunted by the difficulties of the way, which is not exasperated by trials and opposition.

“Inherit” alludes to the fact that all that we receive is not based on merit but on Divine grace, yet, we are such heirs as have means assigned to us for obtaining our inheritance.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

· **“For when God made promise to Abraham,”** - The apostle gives Abraham as a pattern or cites the case of one whom he knew would be notable and carry weight with the Hebrews. God made a promise to Abraham, but Abraham did not obtain the fulfillment of the promise until he had “patiently endured” (v. 15).

· **“Because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,”** - Swearing is ascribed to a divine person after the manner of men...the assurance which was given to Abraham was the greatest that Heaven itself could afford; a promise and an oath...it was as though God said, I will cease to be God if I do not perform this. The Lord pledged His veracity, declared the event should be as certain as His very existence and that it was secured by all the perfection of

His nature.

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

· **“Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.”**

- This was a Hebrew expression denoting emphasis and certainty. Such reduplication is vehement affirmation, partaking of the nature of an oath...therefore, men might know God is earnest in that which he expressed...God is saying, “I will do without failing, without measure, eternally without end.

Ð Galatians 3:14— “14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

Thus in blessing Abraham, God blessed all the heirs of promise, and pledges Himself to bestow on them what He had sworn to give unto them.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

· **“And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.”** - This means that amid all the temptations and trials to which he was exposed, Abraham studiously preserved in believing and expecting God to make good His word.

1. Abraham obtained the “promise” by installments. He received the temporal blessings of God in this life and by faith in the “promise” he saw Christ’s day, and was glad.

Ð John 8:56— “56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.”

2. Abraham entered the Heavenly Country when he departed this life. God fulfilled the covenant with Abraham in Himself...He was true to Himself which resulted in the promise being fulfilled.

Ð Hebrews 11:16— “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.”

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

· **“For men verily swear by the greater:”** - These words contain a reason why God by Himself, and why His promises, having an oath annexed to them, ought to be believed. Men swear to someone that is greater than they are, but God swears on Himself for there is none greater than He. God, of course, did not need to make an oath. His word is every bit as good without an oath—as ours ought to be. But to accommodate the weak faith of men, God swore His promise on Himself. The bare word of God is guarantee enough, but God gave an oath just to show that He meant what He said.

· **“And an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.”** - an oath is used to confirm things that are doubtful, and in dispute...by an oath things doubtful are determined, all things uncertain are confirmed, and what was not believed receives creditability. An oath confirms the promises.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

· **“Wherein God, willing”** - God was willing to make of an oath due to the weakness of men...since an oath serves to establish man’s words among his kind, the great God condescended to employ this means and method to confirm the faith of His people. God’s design in swearing by Himself was not only that Abraham might be fully persuaded of the absolute certainty of His blessing, or the immutability of His counsel concerning them; for the mind and will of God was the same toward all the elect as it was toward the patriarch himself.

· **“More abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel,”** - that is, the decree of God, concerning salvation of His people by Jesus Christ, which is immutable. All proceeds from the will of God. Now this promise is not made unto all mankind, but only unto a certain number of persons to whom God designs to manifest the immutability of His counsel, and to communicate the effects thereof...that is to the “heirs of promise” which includes all the saints of God both under the O. T. and the N. T.

· **“Confirmed it by an oath:”** - God not only determined in His mind that He would save them, and promised it, but He also, confirmed it with an oath. God did as it were bind Himself by His oath, or lay Himself under obligation, for the fulfillment of His purpose and promise...He did this not due to some weakness in Himself to fulfill such a promise, but due to the weakness of man.

18 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:

· **“That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie,”** - The two immutable things are God’s promise and His oath. They are immutable without any possibility of change or variance.

· **“We might have a strong consolation,”** - that which is solid and binding and depends on God’s “two immutable things.”

· **“Who have fled for refuge”** - The cities of refuge is here alluded to which are a type of Christ (Num. 35; Deut. 19; Josh. 20). So the servants of Christ who hold Him up, are likened unto a “city of refuge,” and shall in no wise be cast out—

Ð John 6:37— “37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

...the one who desires shelter from the avenger of blood can personally flee to Christ, the city of refuge...thus Christ is known to be a refuge for distressed sinners, and He is open to all that come to Him, and at all times.

· **“To lay hold upon the hope set before us:”** - that is, to lay hold of Christ which is the object of our hope...there is safety in Him and we are in danger if we are not in that city of refuge. This shows that Christ and His grace are to be “set before us” and laid hold of by faith.

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

· **“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul,”** - The anchor is Christ himself, sustaining His people through His providence here in this world.

Ð Isaiah 57:20— “20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.”

Ⓓ John 10:28— “28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

Ⓓ John 13:1— “1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”

Ⓓ Hebrews 7:25— “25 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.”

· **“Both sure and steadfast,”** - It is sure that Christ can never be lost for those that He has secured as an anchor.

· **“And which entereth into that within the veil;”** - Heaven itself is in allusion to the veil. Within heaven is Christ, who is entered there, and appears in the presence of God for His people...if we be in Christ, positionally we have already entered into the holy of holies. Our hope being fixed in Christ grants us great privilege of safety and security.

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

· **“Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus,”** - Christ had run the race appointed to Him and by His entrance into heaven He had made fast our anchor within the veil. A “forerunner” is one who has already traversed every step of the race which is set before us and who has entered into possession of that toward which He ran. Because Christ has been where we are now, we shall be where He is now.

· **“Made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”** - The apostle now returns to the point that he had dropped at Heb. 5:10. The apostle declares who and what that “Forerunner” was, who for us has gone on High, even Jesus, our great High Priest.

CONCLUSION:

With a finely crafted argument, the “author” has returned his readers back to his original subject, which is Jesus as “a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” In doing so the author reassures us that our spiritual security is first based upon the character of God who is not unjust, will not forget our work and labor of love, and, who keeps his promises. God has promised and sworn with an oath concerning the priesthood of the Messiah. This priesthood of Jesus is now in heaven, and as such is the basis of our “hope.”

Yet, as wonderful as the character and the promises of God are, we are not to take them for granted. We must be careful not to become sluggish but to remain diligent, imitating the faith and patience of those like Abraham who obtained God’s promise. Together with God’s character and promises, this is the “basis for spiritual maturity.”

. Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER SEVEN

[Introduction/Chapter 8](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

The apostle having made mention of Melchisedec in the latter part of the preceding chapter, proceeds in this to give some account of him, and of the excellency of his priesthood, and to shew that Christ is a priest of his order, and is superior to Aaron and his sons. He first declares what Melchisedec was, that he was both king and priest; he names the place he was king of, and tells whose priest he was, even the priest of the most high God; and goes on to observe what he did, that he met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, that he blessed him, and took tithes of him (vv. 1, 2). And then interprets his name, and royal title, the one signifying king of righteousness, the other king of peace; that for any thing that can be learned from the Scriptures, it is not known who was his father or his mother; what his lineage and descent; when he was born, or when he died and that he is like to the son of God, and continues a priest (vv. 2, 3). Upon which the apostle calls upon the Hebrews to consider the greatness of his person and as it appears from that single instance of his receiving tithes from the patriarch Abraham (v. 4). By which it is evident, that he is greater than the Levites and which is demonstrated in the following particulars: the Levites received tithes of their brethren that came out of Abraham's loins, as they did, but Melchisedec, whose descent was not from them, received tithes from Abraham himself, and besides blessed him and it is a clear case, that the lesser is blessed of the greater (vv. 5, 6, 7). The Levites were mortal men that received tithes, but a testimony is bore to Melchisedec, that he lives (v. 9). Yea, Levi himself paid tithes to Melchisedec, since he was in the loins of his father Abraham when Melchisedec met him, and took tithes of him; and therefore must be greater than Levi (vv.9, 10).

And next the apostle proves the imperfection of the Levitical priesthood from this consideration, that there is another priest risen up not of the order of Aaron, but of the order of Melchisedec, of which there would have been no need, if the Levitical priesthood had been perfect; nor would it have been changed, as it is, and which has also made a change of the law, by which it is established, necessary (vv. 11, 12). That the priest that is risen up is not of the order of Aaron, is clear, because he is of another tribe, even of the tribe of Judah, to which the priesthood did not belong (vv. 13, 14). And that he is of the order of Melchisedec, and so not according to the ceremonial law, but after the power of an endless life, is manifest from the testimony of the sacred Scripture (vv. 15, 16, 17). Which lies in Psalm 110:4, and that the ceremonial law, on which the Levitical priesthood stood, is changed and abrogated, is strongly asserted, and the reasons of it given, because it was weak and unprofitable, and made nothing perfect; and this was disannulled by Christ, the better hope brought in, who has made something perfect, and through whom we have access to God (vv. 18, 19).

Moreover, the superior excellency of Christ's priesthood to the Levitical one is shewn in several particulars: the priests of Aaron's order were made without an oath Christ was made with one, as is evident from the above-cited testimony (vv. 20, 21, 22). They were many, he but one they

were mortal, and did not continue, he continues ever, having an unchangeable priesthood (vv. 23, 24). Wherefore, as they were not suffered to continue by reason of death, their priesthood was ineffectual; they could not take away sin, and save sinners; but Christ is able to save the uttermost all that draw nigh to God by him, as a priest, and that because he ever lives to complete his office by intercession (vv. 25). Wherefore such a high-priest as he is, must become men, and be suitable to them, especially since he is pure and holy, and in such an exalted state (vv. 26). And this is another difference between him and the priests under the law; they were men that had infirmity, and were guilty of sins themselves, and so had need to offer for their own sins, and then for the sins of others; but Christ, the son of God, who was consecrated a priest for evermore, by the word of the oath, had no sin of his own to offer sacrifice for, only the sins of his people, which he did once, when he offered himself (vv. 27, 28).

Hebrews 7:1- 28

Part Two: The Superiority of Christ's Work (4:14-10:18)

I. The Superiority of Christ's Priesthood	4:14-7:28
A. Christ is Superior in His Position	4:14-16
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INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 7:1-10

Now the "writer" returns to his theme concerning Melchizedek in which he establishes the greatness of Melchizedek and the significance of his priesthood, thereby, illustrating the

greatness of Christ's priesthood. Here is began the "meat" of the Word compared to the "milk" of the Word.

1 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;

· **"For this Melchisedec, king of Salem,"** - Here the apostle again contributes in support of his argument to show the immeasurable superiority of Christianity over Judaism by the super-excellency of its Priest. Yet, there is nothing said of Melchizedek which proves him to be more than a man. Melchisedec was without father or mother, but since Scripture is silent concerning his genealogy and descent, it should be seen as on purpose, that he might be a more full and fit type of Christ. This verse confirms two things about Melchizedek: he was a king, and he was a priest.

¶ Genesis 14:1-20—1 Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; 2 That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. 3 All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea. 4 Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5 And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emins in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6 And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness. 7 And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar. 8 And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five. 10 And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. 11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. 12 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed. 13 And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram. 14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. 15 And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. 16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people. 17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale. 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

· **"Priest of the most high God,"** - Melchizedek was called and invested by God with his office, and was employed in His service.

· **"Who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;"** - (See Gen 14:18)... "and blessed him (Gen. 14:19) Through this blessing Melchisedec showed that he was a type of Christ because only God can bless or curse in the absolute sense.

Ⓟ Genesis 14:18— “18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God”

Ⓟ Genesis 14:19— “19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:”

2 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;

· **“To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all;”** - that is, tithes....or one-tenth of the spoils of the enemy to testify his gratitude to God, for the victory obtained, and his reverence of, and subjection to the priest of God (J. Gill)...Abraham’s paying Melchizedek tithes was recognition of his exercise as priest.

· **“First being by interpretation King of righteousness,”** - this was Melchisedec’s proper name which signifies he was a type of Christ who is righteous...Melchizedek was first king of righteousness, “after that also”, king of peace.

· **“And after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;”** - the very word Melchizedek means “King of Righteousness,” while the name of his capitol (Salem-Jerusalem) signifies “peace.” This once again shadows or points to Christ for He has a kingdom of peace, a scepter of peace, a Gospel of peace, and are the sons of peace.

3 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;

· **“Without father, without mother, without descent,”** - not of his person but of his priesthood...his father was not a priest, nor did his mother descend from someone that was of that office...nor did he have a predecessor or a successor. (See Heb. 5:1 for qualification of a priest). Melchizedek was priest of an order where natural descent was not regarded, an order free from the restrictions of the Levitical priesthood.

· **“Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life;”** - that is, there is no account which shows when he was born, or when he died, and in this he was a type of Christ, who has no beginning of days, was from the beginning, and in the beginning, and is the beginning, and was from everlasting. There was no restriction on the order of Melchizedek.

· **“But made like unto the son of God;”** - Christ as the son of God, existed before Melchizedek in order of time Melchizedek was a priest before Christ was. Melchizedek was “assimilated to the Son of God” as a type. First, as priest of the most high God, second as being a royal priest, third as being king of righteousness, fourth as king of peace, fifth as the one who blessed Abraham, sixth as the one who received the grateful gifts of God, seventh as not owing his priesthood to natural genealogy, eighth as abiding priest beyond Levitical limitations.

· **“Abideth a priest continually;”** - not in person, but in his antitype Christ Jesus...for there never will be any change of Christ’s priesthood, nor will it ever be transferred to another...Christ’s priesthood abides forever to make intercession for His people which is true of the order of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek was simply a man that was a type of Christ.

1. He appears suddenly in Scripture as a priest.

2. No mention of parentage or genealogy.
3. No mention of his birth or death.
4. With only a mention of him as a priest of “God Most High”...that he is a “type” of Christ.

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils;

· **“Now consider how great this man was,”** - The apostle here calls upon the Hebrews to attentively mark and seriously ponder the official dignity of this ancient servant of God...that is, “think how great this man Melchizedek.

· **“Unto whom the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils;”** - To give tithes to another who is the servant of God is a token of official respect, it is the recognition and acknowledgment of his superior status. So how great must Melchizedek have been, and therefore how “great” must be that order of priesthood be compared to the Levitical. Three proofs of the eminence of Melchizedek are here identified:

1. the nomination of the person that was subject to him, “even Abraham.”
2. in the dignity of Abraham, “the patriarch.”
3. in that Abraham gave him a tenth of the spoils.

As great as Abraham was, Melchizedek was greater.

5 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:

· **“And verily they that are of the sons of Levi,”** - that is, who are the tribe of Levi, whose descent is from him. In this verse the apostle acknowledges that God had granted the Levitical priests the right to receive tithes from His people and thus the Levitical priests were set above all other Israelites.

¶ Numbers 18:21-24— “21 And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. 22 Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die. 23 But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance. 24 But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.”

· **“Who receive the office of the priesthood,”** - the Aaronic priesthood was wholly derived in its functions and privileges. But not so Melchizedek’s. He was under no law. He was “king,” as well as priest, and therefore belonged to a superior order.

· **“Have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law,”** - the Levitical priests took tithes from every tribe for their service by the commandment of God...they had no inheritance in the land.

· **“That is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:”** - Not all of Abraham’s posterity were to receive tithes... the appointment to the office as priest was from God and thus the people were required to submit. Here in lies an important truth; God calls and equips whom He pleases to engage in His public service, and bids the rank and file of His people “obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves” (Heb. 13:17).

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

· **“But he whose descent is not counted from them”** - That is, Melchizedek, whose genealogy is not reckoned from the Levites, nor from any that descended from the Levites.

· **“Received tithes of Abraham,”** - whereas the Levitical priesthood received tithes from the descendants of Abraham, Melchizedek, received tithes from the patriarch himself...this manifested Melchizedek’s superiority to Aaron and to Abraham.

· **“And blessed him that had the promises.”** - Melchizedek not only received tithes from Abraham, but he actually pronounced blessing upon him, which was further proof and evidence of his official superiority to the patriarch. The blessing was that of the Messiah that should spring from him, in whom all the nations would be blessed. There is an important practical lesson in verse 6...the one (Abraham) who had received the “promises” of God was now blest.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

· **“And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.”** - This verse summarizes the argument contained in verses 4-6. The apostle’s argument is: The person who accepts of priestly benediction from an individual acknowledges his spiritual superiority. So Melchizedek, as priest of the most high God, and with his blessing of Abraham, was therefore, greater than Abraham and so must be greater than those that sprung from Abraham (the Levites). Consequently, Christ, Melchizedek’s antitype, must be greater than the Levitical priesthood because He is from the order of Melchizedek.

8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he [receiveth them], of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

· **“And here men that die receive tithes;”** - The priests and Levites were mortal men, subject to death, and did not continue in the priesthood, by reason of death.

· **“But there he [receiveth them], of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.”** - However, Scripture makes no mention of the death of Melchizedek when it relates that tithes were paid to him; so the authority of his priesthood is limited to no time...there is perpetuity of his priesthood, and of his living antitype, Christ.

▷ Psalm 110:4— “4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

· **“And as I may so say,”** - with all truth and with great propriety and pertinence.

· **“Levi also, who receiveth tithes,”** - or the Levites who receive tithes according to the law of Moses.

· **“Paid tithes in Abraham.”** - the apostle here brings to a head his argument by pointing out that, virtually and representatively (not personally and actually), Levi himself had paid tithes to Melchizedek the principle of federal representation.

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

· **“For he was yet in the loins of his father,”** - that is, Levi and his whole posterity: which is to be understood seminally...So Levi was in the loins of Abraham when he met Melchizedek and paid tithes to him.

· **“When Melchisedec met him.”** - This proves that Melchizedek is greater than Levi, and much more Jesus Christ (being greater than Levi), who is a priest of his order, which is the grand thing the apostle has in view, is greater than the Levitical priesthood.

CONCLUSION:

There are many things that will forever remain unanswered concerning Melchizedek. But we do know that Jesus is “a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek,” as God swore He would be...

Ð Psalm 110:4— “4 Thee LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

The “writer” makes the point that Melchizedek is greater than Abraham and Levi! Understanding the greatness of Melchizedek helps prepare us to appreciate the superiority of Christ’s priesthood over the Levitical (Aaronic) priesthood.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 7:11-19

The major theme in this epistle is the priesthood of Jesus Christ. As such, His humanity prepared Him to be “a merciful and faithful High Priest” (Heb. 2:17); He is the “High Priest of our confession” (Heb. 3:1); He is “a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens” (Heb. 4:4); He is a sympathetic High Priest, for He “was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15); and, His calling as High Priest came from God Himself (Heb. 5:5-6).

Christ’s priesthood is unique. It is not according to the Levitical priesthood for He is not a priest in the order of Aaron [a priesthood that had its beginning with the giving of the Law through Moses at Mount Sinai]. Christ’s priesthood is “according to the order of Melchizedek who was a priest of “God Most High.”

Therefore, that Jesus would come to serve as a priest after the order of Melchizedek is not without significance and major implications regarding the efficacy of the Levitical priesthood and the law of Moses itself. Some of the significance and implications of Christ’s priesthood is described in Hebrews 7:11-19.

11 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?

· **“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood,”** - the Levitical was unable to bring in “perfection.” This is clear from the priests themselves. They were but men, mortal men, sinful men, and as such, imperfect; consequently their priesthood was imperfect. If the Levitical priesthood would have been “perfect” there would not have been the need of

another priest to arise like Melchizedek. That one was foretold in Psalm 110:4 and has come proves the order of Aaron was lacking.

“Perfection” could not be produced by the Levites, and that a priesthood which did bring perfection must be superior. “Perfection” means “completeness” and in this context it speaks of making men acceptable to God.

· **“(for under it the people received the law,)”** - that is the ceremonial law which was carnal, mutable, and made nothing perfect. The Old Law with its priesthood could never fully reconcile man back to God

1. Animal sacrifices could not make one “perfect”...

Ⓓ Hebrews 10:1— “1 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.”

2. Animal sacrifices could not cleanse the sinner’s conscience.

Ⓓ Hebrews 10:2-3— “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. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.”

3. Animal sacrifices could not take away sin.

Ⓓ Hebrews 10:4— “4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”

Ⓓ Hebrews 10:11— “ 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:”

· **“What further need [was there] that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?”** - Another priest was necessary because the law demanded righteousness, but fallen man was incapable of producing it...

Ⓓ Romans 3:19,20— “19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

Nor could the Levitical priesthood effect it. Thus the only hope lay outside of themselves.

Ⓓ Romans 10:4— “4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

There was another priest promised and expected whose righteousness was greater than any the Levitical priesthood contained. Jesus coming as a priest after the order of Melchizedek implies that the Levitical priesthood, while having served a purpose for which it was intended [to foreshadow the sacrifice of Christ], was not able to provide man what he really needed.

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

· **“For the priesthood being changed,”** - the Levitical priesthood was inadequate, incapable of producing “perfection.” Therefore, it was but a temporary institution, and they

whose economy was connected with it must be set aside. Judaism as such, was now defunct...it had been utterly abolished.

· **“There is made of necessity a change also of the law.”** -

1. the setting aside of the Mosaic system...the law and the Gospel could not mix. Works and grace are antithetical. Moses must disappear when Christ was revealed.
2. The ceremonial law was but for a time and was a shadow of good things to come which concerned the priesthood, and was made void by the priesthood of Christ...a putting to an end of the Levitical priesthood.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

· **“For he of whom these things are spoken”** - (Ps. 110:4) The argument of this verse, introduced by the “for” makes it plain that it is not the moral law which the apostle had reference to at the close of the preceding verse.

· **“Pertaineth to another tribe,”** - the apostle appeals to the fact that our Lord, according to the flesh, belonged not to the tribe of Levi, and therefore His sacerdotal office was not according to the Aaronic order. Jesus came from the tribe of Judah, not Levi.

· **“Of which no man gave attendance at the altar.”** - that is, no man took upon himself or exercised the priest’s office that was of the tribe of Judah...no man might lawfully do so. Moses had not authorized anyone from the tribe of Judah to serve as priest; indeed, God specifically forbid anyone other than a descendent of Aaron to serve as priest.

Ⓓ Numbers 16:40— “40 To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses.”

14 For [it is] evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

· **“For [it is] evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda;”** - that is, it is evident that Jesus who is our Lord by creation, redemption, and the conquest of grace, sprung from the tribe of Judah.

Ⓓ Genesis 49: 8-10— “8 Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee. 9 Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? 10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”

Ⓓ 2 Sam. 7:12— “12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.”

Ⓓ Isa. 11:1-5— “1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; 3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he

shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.”

Ð Micah 5:2— “2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”

· **“Of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.”** - The apostle’s object is to render it conclusive that God’s raising up of a Priest out of the royal tribe, must necessarily exclude all the house of Aaron from sharing His office...there is now a change in the priesthood...the Messiah is not to be a priest of Aaron’s order, not being of the same tribe. A Change has occurred.

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

· **“And it is yet far more evident:”** - What is it that is far more evident? A fact that cannot be denied.

· **“For that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,”** - This is the third consequence that follows verses 1-10:

1. First, the Levitical priesthood was inadequate for it was unable to usher in “perfection”.
2. Therefore, the Levitical could only be temporary and everything connected with it must be set aside.
3. The priesthood of Christ must be radically different and immeasurably superior to the Levitical order.

What was far more evident? The Levitical priesthood and economy was now obsolete. God would not own two separate and different priesthoods, the former and inferior must give place to the Superior. This is emphatic...”another priest” of a totally different order arising in Christ would supplant the Aaronic order.

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

· **“Who is made,”** - that is, was made a priest duly constituted and appointed.

· **“Not after the law of a carnal commandment,”** - the Levitical priesthood was performed by carnal men of the flesh, or mortal. Therefore, their priesthood was only concerned with the temporal external things.

· **“But after the power of an endless life,”** - that is, either the Gospel of which Christ is the priest which is called life or the endless life of Christ. Thus the contrast between Aaron and Christ is that of a mortal man and “The King eternal, immortal, invisible.”

Ð 1 Timothy 1:17— “ 17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

17 For he testifieth, Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

· **“For he testifieth,”** - The words of the Holy Spirit through David (Ps. 110:4) are here appealed to by the apostle in support of what he said. All of the points that the apostle has made previously are supported by another testimony.

· **“Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”** - The priesthood of Christ was, in the mind of God in eternity. It was so because God called forth Melchizedek, and invested him with his office in such a manner that he might be a fit shadow of Christ.

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

· **“For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment”** - The reference here is to the entire system of the Mosaic institutions. It was of Divine appointment and authority that the Levitical priesthood was called, yet it was a carnal one.

· **“Going before”** - that is, with respect to time being before the Gospel or before the covenant of grace and was a type or shadow of the good things to come...this “commandment” was that which regulated the worship of God and obedience to Him prior to the Gospel...but this has now been canceled and a new law of worship has been given. It has been canceled because Christ fulfilled it. Jesus abolished it in His death on the cross.

Ð Ephesians 2:14-16— “14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:”

Ð Colossians 2:14-16— “14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:”

· **“For the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.”** - the ceremonial law was weak; it could not expiate or atone for sin, in the sight of God. It could only remove the guilt of sin from the conscience, but there was still a remembrance of it. The ceremonial law was a type fulfilled in Christ and therefore has no further profit.

The significance of Christ’s priesthood has powerful implications. With the Law annulled, it is folly to seek justification by the Law; it also explains why we should not go to the Old Law to find authority for the work, worship, and organization of the church.

19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope [did]; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

· **“For the law made nothing perfect,”** - the law did not make the church-state perfect, it did not make the worship of God perfect, it did not perfect the promises given to Abraham in their accomplishment, it did not make a perfect covenant between God and man; it had a shadow, an obscure representation, of all these things, but it made nothing perfect. Therefore, none of the priests were made perfect by the law...there was no salvation or righteousness made perfect.

· **“But the bringing in of a better hope [did];”** - When a sufficient discovery had been made of the insufficiency of the law to make things “perfect”, God introduced that which did. The “hope” is Christ and His Gospel administration. Here we find the keyword of this epistle: “better.” Our hope in drawing near to God is now “better” than before.

· **“By the which we draw nigh unto God.”** - “we draw nigh unto God” spiritually because of the pre-eminence of our “hope,” Jesus Christ...by nature we were “alienated from the life of God”

Ⓐ Ephesians 4:18— “18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:”

But now we who were once far off “are made nigh” by the blood of Christ:

Ⓐ Ephesians 2:13— “13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”

In consequence wherefore both believing Jews and Gentiles “have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

Ⓐ Ephesians 2:18— “18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

Everything which kept us at a distance from God has been removed by the bringing in of the “Better Hope.”

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 7: 11-19

Because Jesus is “a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek, our hope for drawing near to God is exceedingly better. The Levitical priesthood does not provide what man really needs [access to God]. There has been a change in the Law; indeed, it has been replaced with a new covenant. In Jesus we now can approach the throne of grace boldly.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 7:20-28

Here we find the climatic comparison of Christ’s priesthood to that of the Levitical priesthood.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath [he was made priest]:

· **“And inasmuch as not without an oath [he was made priest]:”** - Christ, our better hope, concerning His priesthood is said to be brought in by an oath of God. The oath was extended by God due to the dignity of Christ’s person...in all things Christ must have the pre-eminence...that which was connected with an oath can never be changed or cease to be operative as the Levitical priesthood had...God’s oath is unchangeable because God is immutable.

21 (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:)

· **“For those priests were made without an oath;”** - The priests of the tribe of Levi, and of the order of Aaron, were installed into their office, and invested with it, without an oath...there is no permanence in such an office. Whereas, the oath of God is the open declaration of His eternal purpose and unchanging decree.

· **“But this with an oath”** - that is, Christ was made a high-priest with an oath, even

an oath from God. A promise joined with an oath confirms the “immutability of God’s counsel concerning the priesthood of Christ.

· **“By him that said unto him,”** - (See Ps. 110:4) to David the penman of the Psalm in which God said.

Ps. 110:4— “The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

· **“The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:”** - this proves that God swore that Christ would be a priest, and continue to be a priest. It should be particularly noted that God never solemnly interposed Himself with an oath with respect unto privilege or mercy that in each instance it had Christ in view.

22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

· **“By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.”** - There may be a two fold design in these words:

1. That Christ’s being made a priest by an oath, made Him fit to be the surety of a better testament.
2. That the testament whereof He was the surety, must needs be better than the other; because He who was the surety of it was made a priest by an oath.

The Greek work for “surety” properly means “bondsman:” One who pledges his name, property or influence, that a certain thing shall be done. A “surety” is one who agrees to undertake for another who is lacking in ability to discharge his own obligations. In view of this, Christ agreed to undertake for His people, fully pay all their debts, and completely satisfy every demand which God had against them. It is the Surety by the Divine oath which gives stability unto the testament or covenant.

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

· **“And they truly were many priests,”** - there were many common priests under the Levitical system at any given time; however, there was only one high priest but with a long line of succession...but Christ is the one and only high priest; there is no other because there is no need for another [“many priests” were required by “reason of death”].

· **“Because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:”** - death puts a stop to men’s works...no office no matter how sacred is exempt from death. These were but men, sinful men, and as such died; and their discontinuance by reason of death shows the imperfection of their priesthood.

24 But this [man], because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

· **“But this [man], because he continueth ever,”** - Though Christ died, death did not stop Him from continuing as it did other men: Christ was forced to die and died voluntarily. Although His death was short, it was a branch or part of His priestly office.

· **“Hath an unchangeable priesthood.”** - Christ’s priesthood will never become antiquated or give place to another. Because Christ lives His priesthood lives and continues

forever...Christ sits as priest upon His throne and His priesthood always continues.

25 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.

· **“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost”** - Christ is able to save to the uttermost because He continues forever, and has an unchangeable priesthood. This is not to be understood of temporal salvation, nor of providential favors, but concerning spiritual and eternal salvation.

The word “save” denotes some evil and danger from which deliverance is secured...this is sin. The way in which God has designed to save his people, is by the discharge of Christ’s priestly office. And God is able to save to the uttermost due to the perfection of Christ...so nothing is wanting in regards to our salvation.

· **“That come unto God by him,”** - This clause defines who are the partakers of His salvation. Had it been the will of the Father to save the whole world then in the exercise of His power He would have done so without the slightest loss of omnipotence. Yet, all are not saved by Him, therefore, all were not meant to be saved. To come to God means:

1. To believe on Him:

Ⓟ Hebrews 11:6— “6 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.”

2. To draw nigh to Him in worship:

Ⓟ Hebrews 10:1, 22— “1 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.... 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.”

· **“Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”** - Christ ever lives as God, He is the living God...although He died as man, He is risen from the dead, and will not die again, whereas, He lives as Mediator and Redeemer.

So stupendous is the work of saving believers unto the uttermost, it is necessary for the Lord Jesus (our High Priest), to live a mediatory life in heaven for the perfecting and accomplishing thereof. It is indeed generally acknowledged by professing Christians that sinners could not be saved without the death of Christ, but that believers could not be saved without the resurrection-ministry of Christ is at large rarely considered.

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

· **“For such an high priest became us,”** - Christ is suitable to us and fulfills our case and necessities...He is every sense all that is required for us. In this sense, the apostle shows that in order for sinners to come unto God, they have need of an High Priest to encourage and enable them to do so.

· **“[who is] holy,”** - Christ is holy by nature, originally, perfectly, and completely...therefore, His holiness far exceeds the holiness of any other priest. Christ due to His

holiness has entered the holy of holies for us or has appeared there on our account.

- **“Harmless.”** - Christ is without any moral corruption in His nature, He is without guile in His mouth, or malice in His heart...His character chiefly regards the innocence and holiness of his life by which He far exceeds the character and life of the priests of the law.

- **“Undefiled,”** - Christ is untouched by the sin of Adam, hence He was more excellent than the priest of the law.

- **“Separate from sinners,”** - Though Christ lived amongst sinners, He was infinitely apart from them, in nature and character, motive and conduct.

- **“And made higher than the heavens;”** - This refers to the present place and state of our High Priest. He was for a season made lower than the angels in the discharge of His office. But He abode not in that state and was “made higher than the heavens.” By being our High Priest, and as our High Priest He was made higher than the heavens.

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.

- **“Who needeth not daily, as those high priests,”** - the priests of the law were sinners, Christ was not ... The design of the apostle is to show that Christ was infinitely well-pleasing unto God, and because He was under no necessity to sacrifice for Himself, the offering which Christ made for His people is of eternal validity.

- **“To offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s:”** - the priests of the Law had to offer sacrifice for their own sins on the Day of Atonement. This is one reason why there was imperfection and insufficiency in the sacrifices of the former priests. However, Christ needed not offer sacrifices for his own sin, nor could He, for He had none of His own... what He had was by imputation only.

¶ Leviticus 16:6, 11, 15, 16— “6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house... 11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself:... 15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:... 16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

- **“For this he did once, when he offered up himself.”** - Whereas Christ, being perfect, needed no sacrifice for Himself; and His offering being perfect, there is no need for any further one. On the other hand, the priests of the law did not offer themselves, but what was inferior to themselves and that could not take away sin and thus had to be repeated. Christ’s offering shows the perfection and fullness of His priesthood, and the preference of it to the Levitical priesthood.

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.

- **“For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity;”** - there are five

basic things we know of the priests:

1. The Levitical priests were appointed by the law.
2. They were but men.
3. They were made by the law (where nothing was perfect)
4. They had infirmity.
5. They served only in their day.

· **“But the word of the oath, which was since the law [maketh] the Son,”** - that is, the word that declared Christ a priest was annexed with an oath from God. The law of Moses constitutes priests that were changing continually. But the word which came with the oath after the law, consecrated forevermore as High Priest who is the Son.

· **“Who is consecrated for evermore.”** - Christ is perfect in His obedience and sufferings and is a priest forever.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 7:20-28

In Hebrews 7:28, we find a summary statement that contrasts the two priesthoods. The “law,” upon which the Levitical priesthood derives its authority, appoints men who “have weaknesses”; they are sinners themselves, and death terminates their service. Also, their sacrifices cannot truly remove sin, so these sacrifices had to be repeated daily and yearly. On the other hand, the “oath,” given after the law is the basis of Christ’s priesthood which appoints the Son whom has been perfected forever as our superior High Priest.

[Introduction/Chapter 8](#)

CHAPTER EIGHT

OVERVIEW:

The apostle observing that the priesthood of Christ is the sum of what he had treated of in the preceding chapter, proceeds to shew the superior excellency of it in other instances, particularly in the place where Christ now officiates, which is in heaven; he being set down at the right hand of God there, and so was a minister of the sanctuary, and true tabernacle pitched by God, and not man; whereas the priests of Aaron's line only ministered on earth, and in the typical sanctuary and tabernacle (vv. 1, 2). And after he had observed that Christ must have something to offer, meaning his body, to answer to the gifts and sacrifices priests were ordained to offer (v. 3). He proves the necessity of his ministering in heaven, because if he was on earth he would not be a priest, a complete one, and would have been useless and needless (v. 4). And besides, it was proper that he should go up to heaven, and minister there, as the antitype of the priests, who, to the example and shadow of heavenly things, served in the tabernacle which was made by Moses, by the order of God, and according to the pattern shewed him in the Mount (v. 5). And that the ministry of Christ in the true sanctuary is much more excellent than the ministry of the priests in the shadowy one, is evident from his being the Mediator of a better covenant (v. 6). And that the covenant he is the Mediator of is the better covenant, appears from the better promises of which consists, and from the faultiness of the former covenant (vv. 6, 7). And that that was faulty, and succeeded by another, he proves from a passage in Jeremiah 31:31-34, in which mention is made of a new covenant, and as distinct from that made with the Jewish fathers, and violated by them; and several of the promises of this new and second covenant are rehearsed, and which manifestly appear to be better than what were in the former (vv. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12). From all which the apostle concludes, that a new covenant being made, the old one must be antiquated; and that whereas it was decaying and waxing old, it was just ready to vanish away (v. 13).

Since Christ has ascended to the right hand of God, and now sits there as a Priest upon His throne, proof has been given that He is not a minister of the earthy and Jewish sanctuary, but of the antitypical and heavenly one. A. W. P.

A. A Better Covenant 8:1-6

B. A New Covenant 8:7-13

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 8:1-6

With the beginning of chapter eight, we come to the close of the first major section of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The key thought in this section is “the Superiority of Christ” where Jesus is shown to be superior to the prophets (Heb. 1:1-3); to angels (Heb. 1:4-2:18); to Moses (Heb. 3:1-5); and, to Aaron and his Levitical priesthood (Heb. 5:1-10; 7:1-20).

The next major section really begins in earnest with verse 7 in which the key thought will be the “Superiority of the New Covenant.” The New Covenant is based on better promises (Heb. 8:7-13); a better sanctuary (Heb. 9:1-28); and, a better sacrifice (Heb. 10:1-18).

In Hebrews 8:1-6 there is a transition in which the main point of the first section is summarized and the main points in the next section are introduced. Indeed, these six verses truly summarize what the “writer” seeks to establish in the first ten chapters of the epistle. It can be summarized in these words: “We have such a High Priest.” A glorious High Priest by the name of Jesus!

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;

- **“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum:”** - The general reference being to the entire contents of the epistle...the specific to what is found in 4:14 to 10:18 and supports Psalm 110:4. It is here that all the previous teaching of the epistle culminates for the priesthood of Christ is its distinguishing theme.

- **“We have such an high priest,”** - this defines the relation of Christ to God’s elect: fallen angels and reprobate sinners have no High Priest...this is reason why their punishment shall be eternal. As the saints of God, we are not without an High Priest who has been exalted in dignity far above those carnal priests of the law.

- **“Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;”** - Notice that our High Priest is “set” whereas the Levitical priests stood in the presence of God...this shows that Christ’s work is complete and has been accepted by God the Father. This position is one of honor, glory, majesty, and authority. Therefore, Christ, presently is in a durable and abiding state wherein He continues to discharge His priestly office. He is incomparably exalted (“in the heavens”) above Aaron and his successors.

The phrase “the Majesty in the heavens” is a Jewish circumlocution (a roundabout saying) meaning “God”...or a roundabout way of referring to God. Many passages refer to Jesus at the Right Hand of God.

1. David prophesied that the Messiah would sit at God’s right hand:

Ð Psalm 110:1— “1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

2. Jesus said that He would sit at the right hand of God.

Ð Mark 14:60-62— “60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? 61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”

3. When Christ ascended to heaven, He then sat down at God’s right hand.

Ð Mark 16:19— “19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”

Ð Hebrews 12:2— “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.”

4. At God’s right hand, Christ poured forth the Holy Spirit.

Ð Acts 2:33— “33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”

5. Peter preached Jesus as being exalted to be at God’s right hand as our Prince and Savior.

Ð Acts 5:30-31— “30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”

6. Paul taught that Jesus is at God’s right hand, interceding for us.

Ð Romans 8:34— “34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

7. Christ is at God’s right hand waiting the destruction of His enemies.

Ð Hebrews 10:12-13— “12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.”

8. While Christ waits, He rules!

Ð Psalms 110: 1-2,5: — “1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. 2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. 5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.”

Ð 1 Corinthians 15:24-26— “24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

9. For at God’s right hand, Christ is above all other authority.

Ð Ephesians 1:20-22— “20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”

Ð 1 Peter 3:22— “22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”

Exalted to such a place of honor and authority, we truly have a “glorious” High Priest, one who is “the ruler over the kings of the earth” (Rev. 1:5)!

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

· **“A minister of the sanctuary,”** - that is, the heavenly sanctuary which is an allusion to the holy of holies, the type of it. Christ, in His exalted glory, still condescends (doing something beneath one’s rank) to exercise the office of a public minister in the behalf of His church. Heaven is here called “the sanctuary” because it is really there that dwells and actually abides all that was typically prefigured in the holy places of Israel’s tabernacle.

· **“And of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”** - The “true tabernacle” is here contrasted with the tabernacle of Israel, which was typical, shadowy, and temporary...Israel’s tabernacle was but an effigy (a crude representation) of the antitypical one (which is the humanity of Christ, in which He ministers before God on High). The “new” or “true” tabernacle is erected by God and is in fact a heavenly tabernacle.

REVIEW:

John 1 :14 says; *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.”* The word “dwelt” may better be translated “tabernacled.” The tabernacle had a typical significance...it foreshadowed God the Son incarnate. Almost everything about the tabernacle foreshadowed vaguely the Word made flesh. Here are but a few examples:

1. The “tabernacle” was a temporary appointment which foreshadowed Christ’s temporary earthly ministry where He was constantly on the move.
2. The “tabernacle” was for use in the wilderness...the wilderness strikingly foreshadowed the conditions amid which the eternal Word tabernacled among men at His first advent.
3. Outwardly, the “tabernacle” was mean, humble, and unattractive in appearance. Nothing “eye-catching” when compared to Solomon’s temple. So it was at the Incarnation...the Divine majesty of our Lord was hidden beneath a veil of flesh.
4. The “tabernacle” was God’s dwelling place. In the midst of Israel’s camp, God took up His abode. Likewise, in the thirty-three years that the Word tabernacled among men, God has His dwelling place in Palestine. The holy of holies received its antitypical fulfillment in the Person of the Holy One of God.
5. The “tabernacle” was therefore, the place where God met with men. It was termed “the tent of meeting.” The place where the Israelite could draw near to God. How perfect is this type...Christ is the meeting-place between God and man.

Ⓐ John 14:16— “16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;”

6. The “tabernacle” was the center of Israel’s camp...it was the great gathering center. As such, it was a beautiful foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus. He is our great gathering center.

Ⓐ Matthew 18:20— “20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

7. The “tabernacle” was the place where the law was preserved.

Deuteronomy 10:2-5— “2 And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. 3 And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. 4 And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me. 5 And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the LORD commanded me.”

Christ, throughout His perfect life preserved in thought, word, and deed, the Divine Decalogue, honoring and magnifying God’s law.

8. The “tabernacle” was the place where the sacrifice was made...it was there that blood was shed and atonement was made for sin. So it was with the Lord Jesus. He fulfilled in His own Person the typical significance of the brazen altar, as well as every piece of the tabernacle furniture.

9. The “tabernacle” was the place where the priestly family was fed.

Leviticus 6:16, 26— “16 And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it... 26 The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

These Scriptures speak to us of Christ as the “Food” of God’s priestly family.

1 Peter 2:5— “5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

...He is the Bread of Life...He is the One upon whom our souls delight to feed.

10. The “tabernacle” was the place of worship...it was the place where the pious Israelite brought his offerings. It is in Christ, and by Him, alone, that we can worship the Father. It is through Him that we have access to the throne of grace.

Thus we see fully and how perfectly the tabernacle of old foreshadowed the Person of our blessed Lord.

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.

· **“For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices:”** - that was the specific purpose a priest was called by God to office; therefore, Christ, the “great High-Priest,” must have been ordained for that end.

· **“Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.”** - The law appointed priests to offer sacrifices to God; it hence appears that the priesthood is an empty name without a sacrifice. However, Christ, as God, had nothing to offer, or that was capable of being offered with respect to the law. Yet, an offer of sacrifice was necessary to Him as a Priest [Levitical sacrifices would not suffice]; a Levitical sacrifice could not take away sin nor was Christ of the tribe of Levi...it was necessary, that the antitype correspond to the type, therefore,

our illustrious Priest should have something to offer, for the purpose of opening His way into the “true” sanctuary. Christ offered up His human nature; and Him now being in the “heavenly” sanctuary, is proof that an expiatory sacrifice has been offered, and the sacrifice has been effectual.

4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

- **“For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest,”** - (this in no way proves that Christ was not a Priest while on earth {Socinians}). The earthly system, Judaism, had its own priests who offered gifts “according to the law.” This mere earthly, typical, inferior priesthood has already been provided for through the administration of the Levitical priesthood who fulfilled its functions ...according to these rules, Christ, therefore, could not be one of them being of a different tribe. Although the Levitical priesthood was in effect while Christ was on earth, it was put aside when Christ was seated in the heavenly places. Christ’s priesthood was perfected.

- **“Seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:”** - this states the reason why Christ would not been a perfect priest if He had not gone to heaven: there were already priests, of another tribe of which Christ was not of, that offered gifts on earth....but these priests only served as a shadow (v.5). Nothing but a real priesthood in heaven could supersede and abolish theirs.

5 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.

- **“Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things,”** - Things respecting the Person, office, and grace of Christ...the priests themselves were types of Christ; the places they ministered in were an exemplar (model; pattern) of the heavenly places. The things they ministered by were shadows of the good things which are by Christ...the shadows were mere representations, dark, obscure, and were fleeting and transitory (temporary; fleeting).

- **“As Moses was admonished of God”** - Though Moses was educated in all the wisdom of Egypt, that was of no value or avail when it came to spiritual acts. What Moses delivered to the people was from God and was to be received as proceeding from God, thus, “Moses was admonished of God.”

- **“When he was about to make the tabernacle:”** - Moses must do as Jehovah had admonished...in connection with worship...it was by Moses’ direction, and under his care and oversight.

- **“For, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.”** - While Moses was on Mount Sinai, he was given the pattern for the tabernacle and all its furnishings...it was not a device of Moses, but of God and was so designed in every particular thing with great care and circumspection being taken to the most minute thing.

Ð Exodus 25:40— “40 And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.”

The practical application to the teaching of verse 5 is: Christians ought to exercise the utmost care and diligence to ascertain the revealed mind of God in what He requires from us in our worship of Him. There was a pattern of worship established as part of the old covenant and we

must assume that there is a pattern for the new covenant.

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.

- **“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry.”** - this verse is a transition from one subject to another, namely, from the excellency of the priesthood of Christ above that of the law, to the excellency of the new covenant above the old...Christ’s priesthood and ministry is above that of the law. Christ had “a more excellent ministry” because He is designated “a Minister of the sanctuary.” The service to which Christ has been called is of a higher order and more excellent nature than any which Aaron ever discharged. The ministry of the Levitical priests was but a mere shadow of the ministry of Christ.

Ⓐ Colossians 2:16-17— “16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

- **“By how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant,”** - that is, the covenant of grace as administered under the Gospel dispensation...which is not only better than the covenant of works, that being conditional, this absolute. “He is the Mediator of a better covenant” because He was made High-Priest by Divine oath, which the Levites were not, which fitted Him to be the Surety of a better economy. As “Surety” Christ pledged (in eternity past) to see that the terms of the covenant were faithfully carried out. The “new” or “better covenant” is that order of things which has been introduced by Jesus Christ, namely the Christian economy.

“Mediator” - is a middle person between two parties entering into a covenant... this “mediator” was to reconcile the differences separating the two parties. This involved a voluntarily undertaking to serve as Mediator; as such, two things were required of Christ:

1. Christ should remove whatever kept the covenantor at a distance, taking away the cause of enmity between them;
2. Christ should purchase and procure, in a way suited to the glory of God, the actual communication of all the good things prepared and proposed in this covenant unto those on whose behalf He acts as Surety.
3. By His death on the cross, Christ has become the Mediator of the “new” or “better” covenant.

Ⓐ Hebrews 9:15— “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.”

Ⓐ Hebrews 12:24— “24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

- **“Which was established upon better promises.”** - Every covenant is established on promises...the word “established” means legally established by the law. The “covenant” to which the priesthood of Christ refers has also been established by the law...by Divine authority. However, in the new covenant the promise of spiritual blessings become the principal thing. The “better promises are described in v. 10-13: they are summed up in justification and sanctification and redemption.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 8:1-6

With this transition passage, then, we are introduced to things that will be expounded upon as we proceed through the epistle. We shall see that there is a better covenant in Christ, based upon its better promises. The better ministry that Christ renders as High Priest, in heaven, is based on His position of being seated at the right hand of God. When such things are properly understood, we can see how Jesus is truly “Our Glorious High Priest.” Christ stands ready and able to minister on our behalf and to aid us in times of temptation.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 8:7-13

Up to this point, the focus of the Epistle to the Hebrews has been on Christ’s superiority to the prophets, angels, Moses, and the Levitical priesthood. With the transition of Hebrews 8:1-6, the focus has shifted to the New Covenant. Under this New Covenant we shall see Jesus as our “surety” or “guarantor” (Heb. 7:22) and that of “Mediator” [One who intervenes] (Heb. 8:6). The question now arises, “better than what?”, or “better in what way?” This answer is obvious! The New Covenant is better because of the “promises” contained in it.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

· **“For if that first covenant had been faultless,”** - The covenant here referred to is that which Jehovah entered with Israel at Sinai.

Ⓐ Exodus 19:5— “5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine.”

Ⓐ Exodus 34:27, 28— “27 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. 28 And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.”

Ⓐ Deuteronomy 4:13— “13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.”

Israel’s response is recorded in

Ⓐ Exodus 19:8— “8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.”

Ⓐ Exodus 24:3— “3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.”

Where was the “faultiness?” It was wholly external, accompanied by no internal efficacy (that which produces the desired effect). It was set before Israel an objective standard but supplied no “power” to measure up to it. It was unable to secure actual redemption. It could not expiate moral guilt; it could not wash away moral pollution; it could not justify, it could not sanctify, it could not save.

1. The faultiness was in the priesthood.

Ⓐ Hebrews 7:11— “11 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?"

2. The law made nothing perfect, and therefore annulled due to its weakness and unprofitableness.

Ð Hebrews 7:18-19— "18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. 19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope [did]; by the which we draw nigh unto God."

3. This inadequacy has special reference to the sacrifices of the first covenant.

a) They could not make those that approached perfect.

Ð Hebrews 10:1-3— "1 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. 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. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year."

b) The blood of animals offered by the priests could not take away sin.

Ð Hebrews 10:4, 11— "4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins... 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:"

· **"Then should no place have been sought for the second."** - that is, the covenant of grace unveiled in the Gospel economy...the better covenant and the new covenant...the first was removed because there was no perfection by the Levitical priesthood...there was need for a better Priest of another order.

8 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:

· **"For finding fault with them,"** - that is, both with the covenant, which contained faults, and with the people who continued not in it, and were therefore disregarded by the Lord. It was against the people that God complained for their having broken His covenant.

1. God found fault because the people did not continue in His covenant.

Ð Jeremiah 11:7-10— "7 For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice. 8 Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of them to do: but they did them not. 9 And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10 They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers."

2. For this reason did God disregard them, allowing them to be taken away by their enemies.

Ð Jeremiah 11:11-14— "11 Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not

hearken unto them. 12 Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble. 13 For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal. 14 Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.”

· **“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:”** - The “Behold” announces the importance of what is to follow, and calls diligent attention to the same. Jeremiah 31:31, 32 is the promise of a new covenant by God, made in eternity, concerning the promises of and the grace contained therein; mediated by Christ with the promises put into His hands.

¶ Jeremiah 31:31-34— “31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

1. **“With the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah;”** - denotes the fleshly descendants called “the children of Israel” that is the Jewish nation and is applied spiritually to the whole of God’s people;

¶ Galatians 6:16: “16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.”

2. **“I will make,”** - signifies, I will consummate, or finish, or end, or fulfill it, which shows the perfection of this covenant (being finished), and the imperfection of the former covenant (temporary). What was typified in the first is fulfilled in the new covenant. The new covenant is now established and ratified by Christ; as such... “it is finished.”...as to the manifestation and administration of it, there shall be no alteration made in it, nor any addition to it.

3. **“The days to come,”** - are the last days or the days of the Messiah.

9 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.

“Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers” - that is, the ancestors of the Jews at Mount Sinai.

· **“In the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt;”** - the old covenant is spoken of as dating from the day when the Lord took Israel, “by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. “This language emphasizes the woeful and helpless condition that Israel was then in: unable to deliver themselves out of their bondage, like children incapable of walking unless supported and led. There was a weakness and inability to deliver themselves [much the same as the sinner in his fallen state]

- **“Because they continued not in my covenant,”** - they soon forgot God’s works:

1. They waited not for His counsel

Ⓐ Psalm 106:13— “13 They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel:”

2. The principal reference is to Israel’s conduct at Sinai, when during the absence of Moses in the mount, they “ thrust Him from them (Acts 7:39), and made and worshipped the golden calf.

Ⓐ Acts 7:39— “39 To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt,”

3. They promised to keep the covenant:

Ⓐ Exodus 19:8— “8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.”

Ⓐ Exodus 24:3— “3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.”

4. But their hearts were not right with God, and they were not steadfast in His covenant, and therefore their carcasses fell in the wilderness.

Ⓐ Hebrews 3:17— “17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? [was it] not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?”

- **“And I regarded them not, saith the Lord.”** - (See Jer. 31:32) this refers to God’s governmental dealings with Israel: the severity he exercised, consuming them in the wilderness. God was aggravated by the continual sin...they treated Him with contempt and were justly rewarded.

Ⓐ Jeremiah 31:32— “32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:”

10 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:

- **“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel”** - that is , this is the sum and substance of the covenant, which God promised to make with, or to make manifest and known to His chosen people.

The design of the apostle is to prove that the Lord Christ is the Mediator and Surety of a better covenant, than that wherein the service of God was managed by the high priests according to the law; for it did not effectually maintain peace and mutual love between God and the people; but being broken by them, they were thereon rejected of God.

- **“After those days, saith the Lord;”** - this is the antithesis from “in the day” of verse 9. “After those days” means, following the O. T. era. This time is know as “the time of reformation”; this is the time when the Messiah shall come and the Gospel shall be ushered in.

Ⓐ Hebrews 9:10— “10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal

ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”

· **“I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts:”** - these words have reference to the effectual operations of the Spirit in His supernatural and saving illumination of our understandings, whereby we are made habitually conformable unto the whole law of God, which is our rule of obedience in the new covenant... the renewal of the Spirit works in us a submission to the authority and revealed will of God...so in the miracle of the new birth, the Christian is given an ear to heed and a mind to perceive the holiness, justice, and goodness of God’s law.

The “heart” as distinguished from the “mind” comprises the affections of the will. First, the understanding is informed, and then the heart is reformed...and active principle of obedience is imparted which is the love for God Himself. At Sinai God wrote His commandments upon stones to represent the hardness of the hearts of the people...but at regeneration God takes away the heart of stone, and gives a heart of flesh. It is not enough to own a Bible...we must plant God’s Word in our hearts for only then can we truly be born again by the incorruptible seed, the Word of God. Compare the following verses.

Ð Ezekiel 36:26— “26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”

Ð James 1:21— “21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

Ð 1 Peter 1:22-23— “22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

· **“And I will be to them a God,”** - that is, as He is the God in Christ, and of all the elect in Him...God will act towards His people according to all that is implied in the name of God. He will supply all our needs, deliver from all dangers, and bring us into everlasting eternity.

· **“And they shall be to me a people:”** - these are a distinct (with duties and dignity) and peculiar people, a people near unto the Lord, and who are all righteous in Christ (dignity and who are made willing in the day of redemption through His power.

11 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.

· **“And they shall not teach every man his neighbour,”** - The words in verse 11 intimate that under the New Covenant there shall be a striking contrast to the ignorance which characterized the great body of those who were under the Old Covenant; that the revelation of the Divine will shall be far more extensive and clear under the new than under the old economy. They probably also are intended to suggest the idea, that that kind of knowledge which is the peculiar glory of the New Covenant is a kind of knowledge which cannot be communicated by brother teaching brother, but it comes directly from the great Teacher. The New Covenant is not entered as a result of birth; entrance into the New Covenant is a result of coming to know the Lord as a result of power of the Gospel and the working of the Holy Spirit upon the body, soul, and spirit.

Ð Acts 8:36-38— “36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the

eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.”

- **“And every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord:”** - the sense is, that men should not only teach, but the Spirit of God should teach with them, and by them; and it stands opposed to particular and pretended revelations. This denotes the abundance of knowledge that should be in the gospel times, which should not be restrained to particular persons (such as the priest).
- **“For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.”** - This “knowledge” of God cannot be imparted by any external teaching alone, but is the result of the Spirit’s operations.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

- **“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,”** - this is the great foundational promise and grace of the new covenant. This “mercy” is directed toward sin, for all unrighteousness is sin, being contrary to the justice of God, and His righteous law...this phrase is expressive of God’s forgiveness of it...”mercy” is the spring and the origin of pardon. The way and means by which God pardons, is the propitiatory sacrifice of His Son... “mercy” denotes propitiuousness...God pardons none but those to whom He is pacified, or rendered propitious by Christ.
- **“And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”** - “Iniquity” has the force of lawlessness, a setting up of one’s will against God’s, a living to please self rather than for His glory.

“Sins” the missing of a mark will be “remembered no more” by God...that is all kind of sin, original and actual...sins before conversion and afterward.

Ð 1 John 1:9— “9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

These sins God remembers no more; He casts them behind His back, and into the depths of the sea so that when they are sought for they cannot be found...those sins will not be brought to our charge.

13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

- **“In that he saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old.”** - If the second covenant is new it reasons that the first is old. The first has become old because of its faultiness and deficiency, its weakness, and unprofitableness, and especially its being antiquated, and made to give way to another.
- **“Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”** - the dissolution or disappearance of the old covenant was gradual...it was abolished at the time of Christ’s death; upon His ascension the Spirit was given, and the Gospel published among all nations.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 8:7-13

The promises of God’s New Covenant were foretold by the prophet Jeremiah and are now

fulfilled through the coming of Jesus and with His death on the cross. By such, the New Covenant is blessed with “better promises.” The New Covenant is “better” because of the better sanctuary and the better sacrifice.

[Introduction/Chapter 9](#)

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER NINE

[Introduction/Chapter 10](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

The apostle having, in the former chapter, taken notice of the first covenant, in this proceeds to shew what belonged to it, that it had service performed under it, and a place in which it was performed (v.1), and begins with the latter, which he distinguishes into two parts, and shows what was in each of them; in the first, which was the holy place, were a candlestick, table, and shew-bread; in the second, which was the holiest of all, were a golden censer, and the ark of the covenant, the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod, the tables of the covenant, and the cherubim of glory over-shadowing the mercy seat (vv. 2, 3, 4, 5). And next, he speaks of the service performed in these places; in the first, the holy place, the common priests entered every day, doing service, as offering sacrifice, &c. (v. 6) and in the second, the holy of holies, only the high priest entered into, and that but once a year, with the blood of slain beasts, which he offered for his own sins, and the sins of the people (v.7),. and this being shut up, and entered into but once a year, was an indication from the Holy Ghost, that the way into the holiest of all, which was then a figure of, was not yet made manifest, whilst the tabernacle or temple was standing, in which sacrifices were offered, which could not perfect the offeror of them, or remove guilt from his conscience (vv. 8, 9), which shows the imperfection of the priesthood, it consisting of meats, drinks, baptisms, and carnal ordinances imposed on the Jewish nation until the times of the Messiah (v.10), which are now come, and in which there is an accomplishment of all those types and figures; Christ was typified by the high-priest; and he is come as such, and the good things, the law was a shadow of, are come by him; who came into the world by the assumption of human nature, a more perfect tabernacle than the type of it was, and now having obtained eternal redemption for his people, he is gone into heaven, the most holy place, not as the high-priest, with the blood of slain beasts, but with his own blood (vv.11, 12), the efficacy of which blood is argued from the lesser to the greater, that if the blood of beasts, and water of separation, sanctified and purified externally, then much more the blood of Christ purge the conscience from sin, that it may serve God, since Christ offered himself to God without spot, through the eternal spirit (vv. 13, 14). The necessity of Christ's shedding his blood, or of his death, is proved from his being the Mediator of the new covenant, which required the redemption of transgressions under the first testament, that called ones might have the promise of the eternal inheritance (v.15). And this reasoned from the nature of testaments or wills among men, which make the death of the testator necessary, they being of no force while he lives, only after his death (vv. 16, 17). And this further illustrated by the first testament being dedicated by blood, and every thing belonging to it purged by it, the book, the people, the tabernacle, and all the vessels of it; nor is there and remission of sin, whether typical or real, without the shedding of blood (vv. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22). Wherefore, as it was necessary that the patterns and types of heavenly things should be purified in this manner; it must be more so, that the antitypes should be purified with better sacrifices, even with the sacrifice of Christ (v. 23), and accordingly Christ entered into heaven itself, of which the holy places in the tabernacle were figures there to present and plead his sacrifice on account of his people (v.24), not that it was necessary that he should offer up himself

again, or often, as the high-priest, his type, went every year into the holy place with the blood of others; for then he must have often suffered since the world began, of which there was no need, since his appearing once in the end of the world, to put away sin by sacrifice of himself, is sufficient (vv. 25, 26), for as it is the appointment of God, that men should die but once, and then come to judgment, so it was only necessary that Christ should be offered once to bear the sins of all his people, and then appear a second time without any sin at all upon him, to the salvation of those that look for him (vv. 27, 28).

Hebrews 9:1-28

III. The Superiority of Christ's Sanctuary and Sacrifice	9:1-10:18
A. Old Covenant's Sanctuary and Sacrifice	9:1-10
1. Old Covenant's Sanctuary	9:1-5
2. Old Covenant's Sacrifice	9:6-10
B. New Covenant's Sanctuary and Sacrifice	9:11-10:18
1. New Covenant's Sanctuary	9:11
2. New Covenant's Sacrifice	9:12-10:18

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 9:1-10

The main points in the Epistle to the Hebrews are rather simple. The first point is the superiority of Christ (Heb. 1:1-7:28) and the second point is the superiority of the New Covenant (Heb. 8:7-10:18). In demonstrating the superiority of the New Covenant there are three points made; (1) the New Covenant is based on "better promises"; (2) the New Covenant pertains to a "better sanctuary"; and, (3) the New Covenant provides a "better Sacrifice." In this chapter (9) our attention is now drawn to the matter of the "better sanctuary" provided by the New Covenant. To fully appreciate the argument of the "writer" we must first be acquainted with the sanctuary of the first covenant. Therefore we find a brief discussion concerning the earthly sanctuary in Hebrews 9:1-10.

1 Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

· **"Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service,"** - The apostle now prepares the way to set forth the execution of the sacerdotal office of Christ...he sets the ministrations of the one to the other (Christ's and Aaron's) and this in order to prove that Christ's was most certainly to be preferred....this was designed to show the pre-eminence of Christ, from the tabernacle, and the things in it; as well as from the priesthood and covenant...that they had become useless.

1. “Ordinances of divine service” refers to the rites, statutes, institutions of the Mosaic economy, given by God as His authoritative enactment to direct the worship of the people.
2. Notice should be given to the tense of the verb... “Had” which obviously refers to the past; which denotes that those ordinances, although divinely appointed, were no longer in force for they were but carnal ordinances or rites of the ceremonial law.

· **“And a worldly sanctuary.”** - The reference is to the Tabernacle, which Moses made in all things according to the pattern shown to him in the mount. This is “worldly” as opposed to “spiritual” and refers to that which belongs to the earth rather than to the heavens, whereby, the efficacy of its services extended only unto worldly things, and procured not that which was vital and eternal...the antithesis to worldly is heavenly, uncreated, eternal.

2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.

· **“For there was a tabernacle made;”** - {the tabernacle, and all contained in it, were typical of Christ}... by the direction of Moses, according to the pattern shown him in the Mount:

· **“The first, wherein was the candlestick,”** - “The first,” that is, the first part of the tabernacle, called the holy place, in distinction from the holy of holies, which was the second part of the tabernacle....In the Lord Jesus we have the substance of what Israel had only the shadow. The “candlestick” (See Ex. 26:35; 40:24—see below) [made of gold and had seven lamps for the burning of oil—this lamp was never allowed to go out] was a type of Christ mystical, or the church; in the general use of it, to hold forth light, so the church holds forth the light of the gospel, being put into it by Christ; in the matter of the candlestick, it was pure gold, denoting purity, worth, splendor, glory, and duration of the church (Gill)...it foreshadowed Christ (See John 1:4—see below) as the power of fellowship, as supplying the light necessary for it (A. W. P.).

⌞ Exodus 26:35— “35 And thou shalt set the table without the vail, and the **candlestick** over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side.”

⌞ Exodus 40:24— “24 And he put the **candlestick** in the tent of the congregation, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward.”

⌞ John 1:4— “4 In him was life: and the life was the light of men.”

· **“And the table, and the shewbread;”** - (See Ex. 26:35; 40:22—see below) the table was typical of Christ, and of communion with Him; in the matter of it (the table), it was made of Shittim-wood laid with gold, whereby it signified the two natures of Christ in one person; the human nature by the Shittim-wood, which is incorruptible, for though he died he saw no corruption, and is risen again, and lives forever; and the divine nature by the gold, all the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in Him (Gill).

⌞ Exodus 26:35— “35 And thou shalt set the **table** without the vail, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side.”

⌞ Exodus 40:22— “22 And he put the **table** in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward, without the vail.”

1. The “shewbread” (literally means “bread of faces”) signifies or points to the Divine presence of which the twelve tribes of Israel were always before...His eyes were continually on them...the twelve loaves were set on the table which was a type of Christ; this signifies that the tribes rested safely upon Christ because it was by or through Him that they were accepted by God.

2. The table was overlaid with gold on which were kept twelve loaves of bread, in two rows of six. Fresh loaves were brought in each Sabbath, and the old were eaten by the priests.

¶ 1 Samuel 21:3-6— “3 Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present. 4 And the priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women. 5 And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel. 6 So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.”

¶ Matthew 12:3-4— “3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; 4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?”

· **“Which is called the sanctuary.”** - all of those items in the temple were considered “holy” because of the place in which they were and the part they played in the worship of the nation, and the significance of those things to which they pointed to.

3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;

· **“And after the second veil,”** - (See Ex. 26:31-33) this was a heavy curtain which concealed the contents of the holy of holies [The Most Holy] from those in the holy place...the veil might represent the sin of man, which separates between God and men, excludes from heaven; but is removed by the death of Christ. Christ has entered into it by His own blood; and saints have boldness to enter there by faith and hope now, and shall hereafter personally enter into it (Gill).

¶ Exodus 26:31-33— “31 And thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: 32 And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver. 33 And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.”

· **“The tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;”** - this is either typical of Christ which the holiest of all (Dan. 9:34)...He being so in both natures, divine and human; or this may be heaven, for the holy places, made with hands, were figures of heaven (v. 24), for it is the habitation of God. This innermost room of the tabernacle was the holiest place in the worship of Israel.

4 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;

• **“Which had the golden censer,”** - this “censer” was used by the high-priest on the day of atonement which he entered into the holy of holies with and contained burning coals and incense and was to be taken before the altar of the Lord. The burning coals signify the very great sufferings of Christ, not only the sufferings of His body, but also those of His soul, when the wrath and hot displeasure of God was poured out on Him; and those coals being taken off the altar of the Lord, show the sufferings of Christ according to the will of God...them (the coals) being brought into the veil show the continued virtue and efficacy of His sufferings, and that our faith and hope, which enter within the veil, have to do with His blood and sacrifice carried therein. The “incense” typified the intercession of Christ in heaven, which is pure and holy, sweet, fragrant, and perpetual. That which was represented by the “golden censer” was the acceptability of Christ’s person to God and the efficacy of His intercession.

On this altar sweet spices were continually burned with fire taken from the brazen altar (which was outside of the tabernacle). The morning and evening services were begun by the high priest offering incense on this altar. Once a year, the High Priest would take a censer of burning coals from this altar along with incense into The Most Holy Place.

• **“And the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold,”** - that is, the ark of the covenant. The ark was the outstanding symbol that God Himself was present among the people and that His covenant-blessing was resting upon them. The ark was an outstanding figure of the incarnate Son of God. The wood (Shittim—a type of acacia wood) of which it was made (denoted incorruption), typified His sinless humanity...the wood was overlaid with gold (Ex. 25:10-16—see below), prefiguring Christ’s Divine glory. The two materials of which the ark was made symbolized the union of the two natures in the Godman.

Ⲑ Exodus 25:10-16— “10 And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. 11 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. 12 And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. 13 And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. 14 And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. 15 The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it. 16 And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.”

• **“Wherein was the golden pot that had manna,”** - the “manna” was Israel’s food from Egypt to Canaan: this is a type of Christ in that it represents the heavenly substance for our souls. The preservation (preserved as a memorial of the goodness, care, and power of God) of the manna in the golden pot, speaks of Christ in glory at God’s right hand.

Ⲑ Exodus 16:32-34— “32 And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt. 33 And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations. 34 As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.”

• **“And Aaron’s rod that budded,”** - (See Num. 17) the lifeless “rod” being made to blossom was a figure of God’s vindication of His rejected Son by raising Him from the dead...as Aaron’s priesthood was confirmed by the budding and blossoming of his rod, so the deity and

Messiahship of Christ are confirmed by His resurrection.

¶ Numbers 17:1-13— “1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man’s name upon his rod. 3 And thou shalt write Aaron’s name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers. 4 And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you. 5 And it shall come to pass, that the man’s rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you. 6 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers’ houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. 7 And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness. 8 And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds. 9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod. 10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron’s rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not. 11 and Moses did so: as the LORD commanded him, so did he. 12 And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish. 13 Whosoever cometh any thing near unto the tabernacle of the LORD shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?”

· **“And the tables of the covenant;”** - the preservation of the two tables of stone (on which were inscribed the ten commandments) in the ark, foreshadowed Christ’s magnifying the law and making it honorable...all that the law contained was fulfilled by the Lord Jesus.

¶ Deuteronomy 10:1-5— “1 At that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. 2 And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. 3 And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. 4 And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me. 5 And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the LORD commanded me.”

5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

· **“And over it the cherubims of glory”** - this is where the *Shechinah*, or divine glory dwelt. The “cherubim” on the mercy-seat were symbols and representations of angels and being made of gold may denote their excellency, purity, and simplicity; their being on the mercy-seat shows their dependence on Christ, the very glory of God. The Lord was said to appear in a cloud above the mercy seat.

¶ Leviticus 16:2— “2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.”

¶ Numbers 7:89— “89 And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that

was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims: and he spake unto him.”

¶ 2 Kings 19:15— “15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.”

- **“Shadowing the mercyseat;”** - the “mercyseat”, or better, “propitiatory,” was the throne upon which the high-priest placed the expiatory blood[covering the Ark of the Covenant]...it was the very place where propitiation was made. The mercy-seat was typical of Christ in that it is in Him that God shows Himself merciful to His people. All the stores of mercy are laid up in Christ...the mercy of God was glorified by Him in the redemption of His people and it is through Him that we obtain and receive mercy.

¶ Exodus 25:17-21—17 And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. 18 And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. 19 And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. 20 And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. 21 And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. 22 And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.”

- **“Of which we cannot now speak particularly.”** - that is, it would have led the apostle too far away from his subject of the high priest’s service, to give an interpretation of the spiritual meaning of the tabernacle and everything in it...such a discussion would far exceed the bounds of an epistle... nevertheless, the apostle plainly intimates that every part of the tabernacle had a specific significance as typical of the Lord Jesus and His ministry.

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

- **“Now when these things were thus ordained,”** - When the things mentioned in verses 2-5 had been made and duly ordered, they stood not for a magnificent show, but were designed for constant use in the service of God...hereby, we are taught that, for any service to be acceptable to God, it *must be* in strict accord with the pattern He has given us in His word.

- **“The priests went always into the first tabernacle,”** - that is, the priests were only allowed in the holy place but were barred from entrance into the holy of holies (in contrast with the high-priest). The word “always” signifies that the common priests were continually offering sacrifices as was required.

- **“Accomplishing the service of God.”** - The Greek word here for “accomplishing” is a compound word, which signifies to “completely finish”...rendered “perfecting” denoting the priest’s work was not done in halves...the common priests were officiating in the ministry of the sacred ceremonies...the priests entered every day into the holy place for service...but only in the time of service could they enter...while the service was being performed, the people without gave themselves to prayer. All of this was typical to the continual application of the benefits of the sacrifice and mediation of Christ unto His people here in the world.

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:

· **“But into the second went the high priest alone once every year,”** - That which the apostle here refers is the great anniversary-sacrifice of expiation (See Lev. 16). On the tenth day of the seventh month (September) Israel’s high priest, unattended and unassisted by his subordinates, entered within the holy of holies, there to present propitiating sacrifices before Jehovah. The high priest entering alone denoted that Christ alone was qualified to appear before God on behalf of His people: none other was fit to mediate for them. “Once a year,” to foreshadow the fact that Christ entered heaven for His people once for all.

¶ Leviticus 16:1-34— “1 And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died; 2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat. 3 Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. 4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on. 5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. 6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house. 7 And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. 9 And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. 10 But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness. 11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: 12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail: 13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: 14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. 15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: 16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. 18 And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. 19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. 20 And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: 21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,

putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: 22 And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness. 23 And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: 24 And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people. 25 And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar. 26 And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp. 27 And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung. 28 And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp. 29 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: 30 For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. 31 It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever. 32 And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: 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. 34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses."

The High Priest had three things to do on the Day of Atonement.

1. Offer the incense to cloud the mercy seat (Lev. 16:12-13)
2. Sprinkle the mercy seat with the blood of a bull, as a sin offering for himself and his family (Lev. 16:11, 14)
3. Sprinkle the mercy seat with the blood of a goat, as a sin offering for the people (Lev. 16:15).

- **"Not without blood,"** - In the shedding of blood and offering it by fire on the altar, there was a representation made of the vicarious imputation of guilt to the sacrifice, and the expiation of it through death. In the carrying of the blood into the presence of Jehovah and the sprinkling of it upon His throne, witness was borne to His acceptance of the atonement which had been made. In the placing of the sins of Israel upon the goat and its carrying of them away into a land uninhabited, there was a foreshadowing of the blessed truth that, as far as the east is from the west so far hath God removed the transgressions of His people from before Him (A. W. P.) [Let us not forget that God disdains sin, even little sins. As such, God will accept no sin within the camp/church. Therefore it behooves us to work diligently to rid our lives of sins of indulgence (omission or commission) and to work towards our "higher" calling. This may be accomplished through the process of sanctified growth].

- **"Which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:"** - the bullock was offered by the high-priest for himself and his family...the high-priest was a sinner also, and therefore incompetent to make real, efficacious and acceptable atonement for others; thereby

intimating that he must yet give place to Another (Christ was the antitype)...Christ, having no sin, had no need to offer for Himself, only for the sins of the people.

With this summary of the ritual of the earthly sanctuary, we are reminded of the sort of services rendered under the first covenant. But what was the true purpose of such service? And did the sacrifices provide complete redemption? Verses 8 through 10 address these questions from two basic truths.

1. It was Symbolic
2. There were Limitations

8 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:

· **“The Holy Ghost this signifying.”** - the reference is to the arrangements which obtained in the tabernacle, as specified in the preceding verses. Notice that the third person of the Trinity was immediately concerned in the original instructions given to Israel...the Holy Spirit existed under the Old Testament...the Holy Spirit made evident that the true way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. He did this by the very framework of the tabernacle: that is, by allowing the people to go no farther than the outer court, and the priests themselves only into the first part of the sanctuary.

· **“That the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:”** - The apostle is now speaking of the second compartment of the tabernacle, wherefore, to enter into these holies is nothing but to have access with liberty, freedom and boldness, into the gracious presence of God on the account of reconciliation and peace with Him. Although there was a way for God’s elect of the O.T. to enter into His gracious presence it was not yet made manifest...life and immortality were not so clearly brought to light, as now by the Gospel, even heaven itself which was typified by the holy of holies within the veil; the place where God resided.

1. The first tabernacle is here spoken of in contrast from the “true tabernacle” (Heb 8:2), namely, the humanity of Christ, which was the antitype and succeeded in the room of the type. The tabernacle and its service was a copy and a shadow of the heavenly things.

Ⓓ Hebrews 8:4-5— “4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: 5 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.”

Ⓓ Hebrews 10:1— “1 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.”

Ⓓ Colossians 2:16-17— “16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

2. Thus the tabernacle was symbolic for the present time. It symbolized what eventually would occur when Christ came and what Christ has now done in reality when He entered heaven.

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;

- **“Which was a figure for the time then present,”** - The tabernacle in general was a figure of Christ’s human nature (Heb. 8:2), and the most holy part of it was a figure of heaven itself. Here the apostle intends to give a brief summary of the imperfections of the tabernacle and all its services to demonstrate that Christ had “obtained a more excellent ministry.” By calling attention to the defects of inadequacy of the Judaic system, the apostle adopted the most effective method of exposing the unreasonableness of the rejection of the more glorious Gospel by the majority of the Jews, and at the same time showed what folly and wickedness it would be for the believing Hebrews to return to that system. (A. W. P.)

- **“In which were offered both gifts and sacrifices,”** - the Greek word for “sacrifices” is derived from a verb which means to kill, thus the reference here is to those oblations which were slaughtered.

- **“That could not make him that did the service perfect,”** - Here the apostle points out the imperfection of the whole tabernacle order of things, and its impotency unto the great end that might be expected of it....neither the priest that offered them, nor the people whom he represented, could make real and perfect expiation of sin, nor be justified by it, nor cleanse, nor sanctify...the “spiritual worshippers” had their sins expiated by the sacrifice of Christ only, and their persons were justified by His righteousness, and they were cleansed by His blood.

- **“As pertaining to the conscience;”** - when men sin, their conscience is filled with a sense of divine wrath...it cannot be pacified with anything short of what will answer the law and justice of God...which is only done by the blood and righteousness of Christ.

10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

To convince those to whom he was writing that the Levitical ceremonies were incapable of perfecting the conscience, the apostle here demonstrates the truth of this by pointing out their inadequate nature and character.

- **“Which stood only in meats and drinks,”** - these things are in respect to the body, and cannot therefore, make perfect, as to the conscience.

- **“And divers washings,”** - these were washings of the priests and of the Israelites, and of sacrifices, and of garments which only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, or what was outward...they could not reach the conscience or the inward reality of a depraved nature.

- **“And carnal ordinances,”** - these are those ordinances that belonged to the flesh and not to the soul, and therefore could not affect the soul...this probably refers to the whole system of laws pertaining to the diet and manner of life under Judaism...these rites were wholly external, there was nothing being produce that would procure spiritual and eternal blessings [unless one holds to salvation by works].

- **“Imposed on them until the time of reformation.”** - The word “imposed” is properly “lying on them,” that is, as a burden...the rites and ceremonies were a weight which was a yoke too heavy for them to bear (Acts 15:10—see below). Yet, this burden was not to continue any longer now that the Gospel was here for there are better ordinances introduced...there are no more shadows only the Antitype.

1. Hebrews 9:11-14 - The contents of these verses are now to set forth the ministry of Christ as the “Mediator of a new covenant.” They describe the following:

- * **v.11- Christ officiated in a more excellent tabernacle**
- * **v.11/14 - Christ offered to God a superior sacrifice**
- * **v.12- Christ has entered a more glorious sanctuary**
- * **v.12- Christ secured a more efficacious redemption**
- * **v.14- Christ was moved by a more excellent Spirit**
- * **v.14- Christ obtained for His people a better cleansing**
- * **v.14- Christ made possible for them a nobler service**

¶ Acts 15:10— “10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?”

2. These ordinances were designed to be temporary until “the time of reformation”, when changes in worship would be made: worship with the emphasis being spiritual; that which focuses on the inner man. Therefore we can now better understand why the first church did not incorporate the fleshly ordinances of the first covenant into their worship.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 9:1-10

The earthly sanctuary and its fleshly ordinances served God’s purpose well. It revealed the terrible nature and high price of sin and the need for the shedding of blood to provide for the remission of sin. It prepared people for the coming of the ultimate sacrifice and complete redemption provided by that sacrifice.

But as useful as it was, it was only temporary and symbolic. It was a copy and shadow of what was yet future and was designed to vanish away when what it represented came to pass. As will be shown in the remaining discussion on this particular subject, Christ has come and entered into “the greater and more perfect tabernacle.” He alone has obtained eternal redemption and has made it possible to “purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 9:11-28

In the second half of the ninth chapter, we are now introduced to “The Heavenly Sanctuary” of the New Covenant. This is the true tabernacle in which Christ is a minister and which the Lord erected, and not man. As such, it is a superior sanctuary.

11 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;

· **“But Christ being come an high priest”** - here then is a contrast between the legal high priest which began in verse 9, “*could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience*”; but Christ could...the promised Messiah had come, the promised One had come as a high-priest, which emphasizes the sacerdotal office of Christ; and because it was in the exercise of that office, that He offered Himself as a sacrifice unto God.

· **“Of good things to come,”** - such as peace, reconciliation, and atonement, a justifying

righteousness, pardon of sin, eternal life and salvation, which the law was a shadow and figure of...all of which was to come through Christ as the great High Priest.

· **“By a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;”** - “perfect tabernacle,” the reference is to the human nature which the Son of God took unto Himself...it was “perfect” as to its dignity and worth...it was more perfect than the shadow because Christ was the antitype...the humanity of Christ, in its conception, its framing, its gracious endowments by the Holy Spirit, and particularly because of its union to and subsistence in the Divine person of the Son, was far more excellent and glorious than any earthly fabric (tabernacle made of human hands) could be.

1. **“Not made with hands,”** is set in opposition to the Jewish tabernacle, which was made by the hands of men...the humanity of Christ was the product of Him that hath no hands, even God Himself.

2. **“That is to say, not of this building”** the humanity of Christ belonged to a totally different order of things than ours: there is no parallel in the whole range of creation.

a) Christ had not entered the earthly tabernacle **“made with hands.”**

b) It is **“into heaven itself”** that Christ has entered (Heb. 9:24)

1) In this heavenly sanctuary Christ serves as “High Priest of the good things to come.”

2) The good things are the forgiveness of sin.

¶ Jeremiah 31:31-34— “31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

c) He now appears “in the presence of God.”

12 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.

· **“Neither by the blood of goats and calves,”** - The design of this verse is to display the pre-eminence of Christ in the discharge of His priestly office above the legal high priest. It was by means of these (blood of goats and calves) that Aaron entered the holy of holies on the day of atonement (see Lev. 16:14, 15). However Christ was not of the order of Aaron and these offerings could not take away sin, nor would God accept of such sacrifices any longer.

· **“But by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place.”** - this shows the truth of Christ’s human nature, and the virtue of His blood, as in union with His divine Person, by which He opened the way into the holiest of all, that being heaven. Notice that Christ had to do this but “once,” which speaks to the quality of His offering as opposed to that of the Levitical high priest who had to continue to offer blood sacrifice each year. The inestimable value of Christ’s

redemptive work may be seen in that it was accomplished “by his own blood” not the blood of goats and calves.

- **“Having obtained eternal redemption for us.”** - that is, from sin. To redeem is to deliver a person from a state of bondage, and that the payment of an adequate ransom-price. This which had been sought by the O.T. saints, the longing for salvation, was now to be manifested and found in Christ.

13 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:

The apostle now exhibits the superior efficacy of Christ’s sacrifice:

- **“For if the blood of bulls and of goats,”** - neither could purge from sins. At best, the blood of animals was only able to purify the flesh of an unclean person.
- **“And the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean,”** - here the apostle refers to the red heifer where the ashes were mixed with water and used as a purifying agent for those that had become unclean (See Numbers 19)...this was deemed the “water of separation.”
- **“Sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:”** - that is, the body, or only in an external way, but did not really sanctify the heart, or purify and cleanse the soul from sin.

14 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?

- **“How much more shall the blood of Christ,”** - If the blood and ashes of beasts, under the appointment of God, were efficacious unto an external and temporary justification and sanctification—that is, the removal of both guilt and ceremonial pollution—how much more shall the sacrifice of Him who was promised of old, was the Anointed and therefore the One ordained and accepted of God, effectually cleanse those to whom it is applied...this is not the blood of a mere man, but the blood of the Son of God: and the argument is from the lesser to the greater; that if the ashes of the burnt heifer, which was a type of Christ in His sufferings, which was to cleanse the body externally, then how much more virtue must there be in the blood of Christ.
- **“Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God,”** - Christ, being a priest, offered up Himself, not His divine nature, but His human nature, soul and body, as in union with His divine person...this gives His sacrifice preference over all others and is the reason of its virtue and efficacy. “Without spot” has a double reference to Christ’s person, and to the holiness of His life...Christ fulfilled the law in thought, word and deed, having loved the Lord His God with all His heart and His neighbor as Himself.
- **“Purge your conscience from dead works”** - This is one of the effects produced by Christ’s sacrifice, an effect which the legal ordinances were incapable of securing...our conscience has been secured from the guilt of sin. The dead works point to those works done by the Levitical priest who were dead men in their own rights...they could not procure life. Therefore Christ not only removes the “legal” guilt of sin, but also the “inward” [or emotional] guilt of sin.
- **“To serve the living God?”** - this service was not in the mere participation of dead ceremonies that were outward and external but this service is one of sincerity and truth...for we

are not washed by Christ that we may plunge ourselves again into new filth, but that our purity may serve to glorify God. The word “serve” denoted all the duties which we owe unto God, not only as His creatures, but as His children.

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.

· **“And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament,”** - “for this cause” that is, because of the superior nature and efficacy of the sacrifice which Christ was to offer. God appointed Him to be the Mediator of the new covenant...Christ by His blood purged the consciences of His people from dead works, so that they might serve the living God, became the Mediator of the new testament.

Christ is the sacerdotal Mediator, that is, one who has interposed His sacrifice and intercession between God and His people in order to secure their reconciliation...Christ is, in the “new covenant” or “testament,” the Mediator, Surety, Priest, and Sacrifice, all in His own person.

· **“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.”** - “that by means of death,” that is, Christ became the Mediator of the new testament, and assumed human nature that he might die, and by dying might obtain redemption for His people (all people prior to and subsequent to His death—Christ’s death is not limited to those who lived after it became of force; or His death covers not only sinners since His death, but also those who lived under the first covenant, who were called to receive the promise of eternal redemption or inheritance!). This states one of the principal ends which God had in view when appointing Christ to be the “Mediator,” namely, to deliver His people from all the bondage they were subject to as a result of their violations of His law, and this was accomplished by the payment of a satisfactory price...the blood of His Son spent in death.

Verse 15 may be summed up thus:

1. God has designed an “eternal inheritance” unto certain persons.
2. The way in which a right or title is conveyed thereunto is by promise.
3. The persons unto whom this inheritance is designed are the “called.”
4. The obstacle which stood in the way of their enjoyment of this inheritance was their transgressions.
5. That this obstacle might be removed, and the inheritance enjoyed, God made a “new covenant,” because none of the sacrifices under the first covenant, could expiate sins.
6. The ground of the efficacy of the “new covenant” unto this end was, that it had a Mediator, a great High Priest.
7. The means whereby the Mediator of the new covenant did expiate the sins against the first testament was by death, and this of necessity, seeing that this new covenant, being also a “testament,” required the death of the Testator.
8. The death of this Mediator has taken away sins by “the redemption of transgressions.” Thus the promise is sure unto all the seed.

16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

NOTE: That which is found in verses 16 through 23 is really of nature a parenthesis, brought in for the purpose of showing why it was necessary for the incarnate Son to die.

- **“For where a testament is,”** - The covenant of grace, as administered under the Gospel economy, is a testament or will...the covenant of grace, is properly a covenant to Christ, and a testament or will to His people.
- **“There must also of necessity be the death of the testator.”** - In Christ we are made joint heirs because Christ is made heir of all things, however, for us to inherit there must be the death of the testator (Christ). EXAMPLE: the “mediator” of the “old testament” was Moses, and it was not until his death, though immediately after it, that Israel entered their inheritance, the land of Canaan. Likewise, Christ, the antitype, must die before the inheritance could be ours.

17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

- **“For a testament is of force after men are dead:”** - In this verse it is not the making of a testament which is here referred to, but the execution of it. The words “is of force” mean, is firm and cannot be annulled...it must be executed according to the mind of the one who derived it. All things belonging to Christ were inherited by the elect upon His death.
- **“Otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.”** - no claims can be made by the legatees for the part they have in it, as long as the Testator, is alive [A testament, or will, requires the death of the one who makes it. It does not become of force until the testator dies...the New Covenant with its heavenly sanctuary is like a testament, requiring Jesus’ death for it to become of force].

18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

NOTE: In verses 18 through 22 the apostle is still pressing upon the Hebrews the necessity for the blood-shedding of Christ.

- **“Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.”** - The design of the apostle here is one of reasoning with the Hebrews, in that they were not to think it strange that this new testament required the death of its Testator, because it was required of the first also. The blood that was shed under the first was typical of the blood of Christ, by which the new testament is ratified.

19 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,

- **“For when Moses had spoken every precept”** - On the part of the people, Moses was desired and chosen to transact all things between God and them because they were not able to bear the effects of His immediate presence, and this choice of a spokesman on their part, God approved. Thus Moses became in a general way a “mediator” between God and men in the giving of the law.

¶ Galatians 3:19— “19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.”

Thereby we are shown that there can be no covenant between God and sinful men, but in the hands of a Mediator.

- **“To all the people according to the law,”** - This intimates the character of the O.T....it consisted primarily of commandments of obedience.

Ð Ephesians 2:15— “15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;”

...promising no assistance for the performance of them. Moses’ reading “every precept unto the people” emphasizes the fact that all the good things they were to receive by virtue of the covenant, depended on the observance of all that was commanded by them.

- **“He took the blood of calves and of goats,”** -

Ð Exodus 24:5-6— “5 And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. 6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.”

The one was God’s part the other was theirs. Typically this foreshadowed the twofold efficacy of Christ’s blood, to make salvation Godwards and to save manwards; or to the remission of sins unto justification, and the purification of our persons unto sanctification.

- **“With water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop,”** - this was used to sprinkle the blood upon the people. In the mingling of the “water” with the “blood” was to represent the “blood and water” which flowed from the pierced side of the Savior.

- **“And sprinkled both the book, and all the people,”** - in this manner the communication of the benefits of Christ’s death unto sanctification, is called the “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”

Ð 1 Peter 1:2— “2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”

...the application of the blood to the “book” of the covenant was an intimation that atonement could be made by blood for the sins against its precepts, and the application of the “water” to it told of its purity.

20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

- **“Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.”** - In these words Moses reminded Israel of the foundation of their acceptance of the covenant, which foundation was the authority of God requiring them to do...by quoting these words of Moses, the apostle proves that not only death, but a sacrificial death, was required in order to the consecration and establishment of the first covenant. The blood was a sign, the token between God and the people of their mutual engagements in that covenant.

21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

- **“Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle,”** - (See Lev. 16:14, 16, 18) the

apostle's purpose in bringing in this additional fact was to prove that not only was the blood of Christ in sacrifice necessary, but also to demonstrate its efficacy in the removing of sins and thereby qualifying sinners to be worshippers of the most holy God.

· **“And all the vessels of the ministry.”** - this was at least twofold:

1. In themselves (“the vessels”) were holy by God’s institution, yet in the use of them by polluted men they became defiled, and needed purging.
2. This was done to teach the Israelites and us that, the very means of grace which we use, are only made acceptable to God through the merits of Christ’s sacrifice.

The tabernacle was typical of the church, and this shows that there is no coming into the presence of God, without blood...these “vessels” may denote the vessels of grace and mercy, whereby the elect of God have had their hearts sprinkled by the blood of Christ from an evil and polluted conscience.

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

· **“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood;”** - notice the “almost,” this takes into consideration the exceptions of:

1. Fire:

⌞ Numbers 31:23— “23 Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean: nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of separation: and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water.”

2. Water:

⌞ Leviticus 22:6-7— “ 6 The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water. 7 And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food.”

...but let it be noted that these exceptions were of such things as wherein the worship of God was not immediately concerned, nor was the conscience defiled; they were only of external pollution. The apostle’s intent here is to prove both the necessity for the death of Christ and the efficacy of His blood unto the purging of sins...wherefore the legal institutions under the law were types.

· **“And without shedding of blood is no remission.”** - that is, of sin; there was no typical remission without the shedding of blood and there can be no real remission but by the blood of Christ. There can be no instance in the O.T. where pardon was granted without the shedding of blood...it would not have been agreeable with the justice of God to forgive sin without satisfaction. God, in His grace, provided that there should be a testification of the remission of sins, and that the curse of the law should not be immediately executed on them that sinned. This He did by allowing the people to make atonement for those sins by the blood sacrifices.

⌞ Leviticus 17:11— “11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”

Thereby God made known two things:

1. God made known to the Israelites that, by the blood of animals there should be a temporal remission of their sins granted, so that they should not die under the sentence that the law required for their nation.
2. That a real spiritual and eternal forgiveness should be granted unto faith in the sacrifice of Christ, which was represented by the slain animals.

23 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.

In this verse the apostle brings to a head, or sums up, his previous argument concerning the typical purification of all things under the law, and the spiritual purification has been effected by the sacrifice of Christ.

- **“It was therefore necessary”** - the reference is both to the type and the Antitype...there was nothing in the nature of the typical objects themselves which demanded a purgation by sacrifice, but, inasmuch as God designed to foreshadow heavenly things by them, it was requisite that they should be purged with blood...it was necessary the types and Antitype correspond.
- **“That the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these;”** - “patterns” or “figures” were the things the apostle had been treating of, namely, the covenant, the book, the people, the tabernacle and all its vessels....which were types and patterns of persons and things in Gospel churches.

The term purification has a twofold meaning; it is the external dedication unto God and internal purification, both of which are, generally included in the term sanctification.

- **“But the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.”** - that is, all the counsel of God in Christ, in the redemption, salvation, worship, and eternal glory of the Church. The heavenly things are better sacrifices because they have been purified by the blood of Christ, otherwise, sin would enter into the heavens of God...it is a better sacrifice than the legal ones, in its own nature and in its use and efficacy to take away sin, and make perfect, which the legal ones could not...the one offering of Christ expresses its excellency, and denotes that it provides the substance of the many shadows under the law.

24 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:

- **“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands,”** - three things may be noted from this:
 1. It was the holy of holies, and that, because it had been dedicated as the chamber where the special pledges of God’s presence were given.
 2. As to the fabric, though framed by Divine command, it was but of human workmanship, “made with hands”
 3. As to the principal end or design, it was a resemblance or figure of heavenly things.
- **“Which are the figures of the true;”** - the most holy place in the tabernacle was but a figure of heaven, the truth of that type...inaccessible to the common priests, that it might be as heaven to God. Nothing unclean can enter into the heavenly sanctuary; this was shadowed in The Most Holy Place.

- **“But into heaven itself,”** - This entrance by Christ into the heavenly Sanctuary was to show that His sacrifice and the atonement made by Him for His people was immediately accepted by God. The entrance of our royal High Priest into heaven was necessary for rendering His sacrifice effective in the application of the benefits of it to the Church. Due attention needs to be paid to the fact that Christ required no sacrifice for Himself: His was solely for the benefit of the elect or His sheep.

- **“Now to appear in the presence of God for us:”** - This was an act by Christ in His sacerdotal office ...He has gone there to seek God and dispense to His people those blessings which He purchased for them...Christ pleads the infinite merits of His sacrifice for those that are His.

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

- **“Nor yet that he should offer himself often,”** - This shows the perfection of the offering of Christ for justice has been satisfied, the law fulfilled, the penalty of sin done away with, and complete salvation has been obtained at once.

- **“As the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;”** - the priest did not enter in to offer his own blood, rather the blood of goats and calves...but Christ entered into heaven with His own blood, he having been altar, priest, and sacrifice: the high-priest went into the most holy place every year, but Christ has entered into heaven once for all, where He sits down and continues, having done His work effectively.

26 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.

- **“For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world:”** - if Christ had been required to offer Himself up often [a practice of Roman Catholicism in their Mass] then He would have had to suffer...the priests offered every year but they were not required to suffer...but Christ being both Priest and Sacrifice could not “offer” without “suffering.” and herein does the force of the argument principally consist...the very nature of Christ’s sacrifice, which was by the shedding of His blood in death, precluded a repetition thereof [therefore the practice of the Catholic Church is heretical].

- **“But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”** - The “end” (or the “consummation of the ages”) or purpose of the first appearing of Christ was to “put away sin.” Christ “disannulled” (put away) sin by making a complete atonement for all sin of all His people, receiving its wages, expiating its guilt, destroying its dominion.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

- **“And as it is appointed unto men once to die,”** - That “appointment” was a penal one, being the sentence and curse of the broken law (Gen. 2:17), consisting of two parts; temporal death and eternal judgment.

Ð 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. {thou shalt surely...: Heb. dying thou shalt die}

- **“But after this the judgment:”** - Death does not make an end to man, but is subservient to something else...as death leaves men, so shall judgment find them. This “judgment” is here

opposed to the “salvation” of believers at the second appearing of Christ.

28 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.

- **“So Christ was once offered”** - Christ was “appointed” or sentenced by God, the Judge of all, to undergo the curse of the law, on behalf and in the stead of those whom He represented.

- **“To bear the sins of many;”** - Many are brought to believe in Christ, and many are justified by Him, have their sins forgiven them, and are glorified: though Christ bore not the sins of all men; for as all men have not faith, all are not justified, pardoned, and saved: what he bore were sins; all types of sin, every act of sin, and all that belongs to it, but only for His elect. If Christ would have suffered for all sin, rather than all types of sin, then, all would be saved. If Christ paid for all sin, why would any go to hell. There are two possibilities:

1. God allowed Christ to suffer and pay the price for all sin knowing that not all men would accept His Son. Therefore, God is not a just God; but a vindictive God.

2. God allowed Christ to suffer and pay the price for all who are of the elect; for all who were foreordained unto salvation. Therefore, Christ did not die for all people but, rather, all peoples (both Jew and Gentile).

- **“And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”** - When Aaron disappeared within the veil, the people waited with eager anticipation until he came out again to bless them. So Christ, having made atonement, and gone to heaven, shall yet reappear and will be seen by those who by faith, pardon, and eager expectation await Him...that is, all the redeemed, the “many” whose sins He bore...Christ’s second appearing will be without the imputed sin of man...He will reappear as a Conqueror of sin and Satan, the Savior of His people, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. At His return, the efficacy of His once-for-all offering will be openly manifested.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 9:11-28

How is the sanctuary of the New Covenant superior? First, by virtue of its nature; it is heavenly and not physical. Secondly, by virtue of its ministry in dealing effectively with sin and providing complete and final deliverance.

Why should the Christian be interested in the ministry of the superior sanctuary? First, because death is our appointed lot, and, secondly, because after death comes the judgment. We are to be prepared to stand before the judgment seat of Christ; this requires obedience, for Jesus is “the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey him (Heb. 5:9) and such preparation would be meaningless if the blood of Christ had not been efficacious.

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER TEN

[Introduction/Chapter 11](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

In this chapter the apostle pursues his argument, shewing the weakness and imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and the superior excellency of Christ's, which he closes with suitable exhortations to faith on Christ, as the alone high-priest, and to a constant profession of him. The imperfection of the Levitical priesthood is proved from the law by which it was established, being only a shadow of good things to come; from the insufficiency of annual sacrifices to perfect the comers to them, or to purge the consciences of the worshippers from sin; and from the non-cessation of these sacrifices which would have been, if the above ends could have been answered by them (vv. 1, 2), but on the contrary, by the annual return of these sacrifices, sins are afresh remembered, and very good reason there is for it, since it is a impossible thing that the blood of slain beasts should take away sin (vv. 3, 4), moreover, the apostle proves the insufficiency of such sacrifices, by a divine testimony, out of Psalm 1, 6, 7, 8, by which it appears, that they are not agreeable to the will of God, and are rejected by him as useless (vv. 5, 6, 7, 8), and this leads the apostle to discourse of the excellency of Christ's sacrifice above them; that they are taken away, and his is substituted in their room; that as they are not agreeable to the will of God, his is a fulfillment of it; that though they could not expiate sin, yet by the offering up of the body of Christ, once for all, his people are sanctified, or their sins were expiated (vv. 9, 10), and this is further illustrated by a comparison between the priests under the law, and Christ; they were many, he but one; they daily offered the same sacrifices, he offered but on sacrifice; theirs could not take away sin, by his offering he has perfectly expiated the sins of his people; they stood daily ministering, their work being never at an end; he is set down at the right hand of God, expecting his enemies to be made his footstool, having done his work to perfection (vv. 11, 12, 13, 14), and that legal sacrifices are ceased, and no more to be used, is proved by a testimony of the Holy Ghost, out of Jeremiah 33, 34, relating to the covenant of grace, among the promises of which stands that of the forgiveness of sin; from whence the apostle justly concludes, that where remission of sin is, there is, and there needs no more offering for it (vv. 15, 16, 17, 18), and from hence the apostle passes to exhortations to the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, which he strongly urges from the consideration of Christ's priesthood, and the efficacy of it: and first, he presses them to the duty of prayer, to draw nigh to God to the throne of his grace. The manner in which he would have them approach to God is the sincerity of their hearts, in a plerophory (to bring to full measure or fulfill) of faith, an high and full exercise of it, and in purity of soul and body; the motives or encouragements to it are taken from their having boldness and liberty to enter by faith, into heaven itself with their prayers, through the blood of Jesus; from there being a new and living way opened for them through the flesh of Christ; and from their having such and high-priest over the house of God as he is (vv. 19, 20, 21, 22) and next he exhorts them to a constant and steadfast profession of their faith, to which he animates them by the faithfulness of a promising God, who will never leave nor forsake his people (v. 23), and then to consider one another in their church-relation, and to stir up one another to the exercise of the grace of love, and to the performance of good works (v. 24), and also not to

forsake their public assemblies, as was the custom of some, but to exhort each other to greater diligence in attending there, especially since they might observe that a time of great tribulation was at hand (v. 25), and in order to deter from apostasy, which is expressed by a sinning willfully, after a man has received and professed the knowledge of the truth, the apostle observes that the destruction of such is inevitable; since there never will be another propitiatory sacrifice offered up, and therefore there can be no other than a dreadful expectation of an awful judgment, and of the wrath of God, which, like a consuming fire, will destroy such adversaries of Christ (vv. 26, 27), the justice of which is argued from the less to the greater; that if the transgressors of the law of Moses had no mercy shewn them, but died when there were proper and sufficient witnesses of their crimes, then such must be deserving of a far greater punishment, who treat with the greatest rudeness the person of the Son of God, and his precious blood, and with the greatest contempt the person and grace of the Holy Spirit (vv. 28, 29), and such persons have reason to expect the vengeance of God will fall on them, since it is threatened them in the word of God, Deuteronomy 35, 36. and a dreadful thing it is to fall into his hands (vv. 30, 31). But in order to encourage these believing Hebrews to hold on and out unto the end, the apostle puts them in mind of their good beginning, how well they set out, and how bravely they behaved, by bearing afflictions and reproaches themselves; by being the companions of those that were afflicted and reproached; by having compassion on the apostle when in bonds; and by cheerfully suffering the loss of their goods upon this consideration, that they had in heaven a better and a more enduring substance (vv. 32, 33, 34), wherefore it would be exceeding wrong and very unbecoming, after all this, to drop their faith and a profession of it, which otherwise would issue in the enjoyment of the great recompense of reward (vv. 35), and a patience is necessary, it is right to exercise it under sufferings for Christ's sake, partly because it is doing the will of God, and partly because that after that is done, such shall receive the promised happiness; and what may serve the more to engage to the exercise of it is it is but a little while and Christ will come and put an end to all the sufferings of his people (vv. 36, 37), and that faith should be in exercise, is proved from a divine testimony, Habakkuk 4. and so must be pleasing to God, when the contrary is highly resented by him (v. 38), and now, lest the believing Hebrews should conclude from all this that the apostle suspected them as going into apostasy, he declares his belief, that he and they were not in the number of apostates, but of believers, whose souls would be saved (v. 39).

Hebrews 10:1-39

Part Three: The Superiority of the Christian's Walk of Faith (10:19--13:25)

I. Exhortation to Full Assurance of Faith	10:19-11:40
A. Hold Fast the Confession of Faith	10:19-25
B. Fourth Warning: Danger of Drawing Back	10:26-39

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 10:1-18

In showing the superiority of the New Covenant, we have seen the “writer” discuss the better

promises (Heb. 8:7-13) and the better sanctuary (Heb. 9:1-28). The “writer” now reaches a climax in his discussion with a look at the “better sacrifices.” Although this has already been mentioned (Heb. 7:26-27; 9:11-14, 24-26) he now contrasts the sacrifices of the Old Covenant with that of the New Covenant. Therefore, in this section we will find the “writer” bring together the main ideas he has alluded to earlier and add a further thought not stressed before.

NOTE: That which is exhibited in the first twenty verses of Hebrews 10 is the perfect standing before God which the regenerated believer now has, and his blessed privilege as a worshipper of entering in spirit within the heavenly courts while waiting down here for the promised return of his Savior.

1 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.

· **“For the law having a shadow of good things to come,”** - The apostle now says, that inasmuch as the Levitical sacrifices could not effect those ends which Christ’s sacrifice had accomplished, they must be taken out of the way...the reference is to the whole of the Mosaic economy.

“Shadow,” that is the ceremonial law, was only a shadow of the substantial and eternal blessings promised...a shadow has no substance.

▷ Hebrews 8:4-5— “4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See [that] you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.”

“The good things to come;” has reference to all those blessings and privileges which have come to the church in consequence of the incarnation of Christ and the discharge of His office. These “good things” would include:

1. His better sacrifice
2. The better hope we have as Christians.
3. The eternal redemption and the eternal inheritance.

· **“And not the very image of the things,”** - that is, the law, not the actual accomplishment of the promise of good things...it had not Christ exhibited in the flesh; it had not the true real sacrifice of perfect expiation...Christ is the “very image” of all that the shadows pointed to.

· **“Can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually”** - if the law contained nothing in it but a “shadow,” it is obvious that its sacrifices could not possibly make perfect those who offered them...the law by its sacrifices could not perfect forever, or unto the uttermost, those that came there unto. The very fact that the sacrifices were to be offered “continually” indicates that they were not perfect in themselves and could in no way expiate sin.

· **“Make the comers thereunto perfect.”** - The perfection that God requires is absolute conformity to His moral law....the “comers” are defined as “the worshippers;” therefore they could not be made perfect by approaching God by means of the law.

1. Reasons for the Levitical offerings although they failed to secure eternal redemption:
 - a) They served to keep in the minds of Israel the fact that God is ineffably holy and will not tolerate evil.
 - b) By means of these types and shadows God was pointing out to them the direction from which true salvation must come.
 - c) There was an efficacy in the O.T. sacrifices to remove temporal judgment, to give ceremonial ablution, and to maintain external fellowship with Jehovah.
2. Remember: Animal sacrifices did not provide remission for sin.

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.

· **“For then would they not have ceased to be offered?”** - This verse is added as proof of the reason concerning the impotence of the aforementioned legal sacrifices. The argument is, that which makes perfect stops when it has made perfect; but the sacrifices which were offered year by year, ceased not; therefore, they could not have made perfect.

· **“Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.”** - if those that had been “once purged” that is, if they had been “once purged” from sin by legal sacrifices and purification, they would have had no more conscience of sins, and so have no need to repeat such sacrifices...**“no more conscience of sins,”** signifies freedom from an apprehensive or terrifying sense of what they deserved...it means complete deliverance from the fear of God’s ever imputing them to us. What the apostle is here insisting upon is that the Levitical sacrifices were unable to lay a foundation for permanent rest and abiding peace. Therefore,

1. The “worshippers” were not made “perfect in that:
 - a) They were not perfect in regard to the conscience.
 - b) Hebrews 9:9— “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;”
 - b) The repetitive nature of the sacrifices prevented this.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

· **“But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.”** - God appointed nothing in vain, and He had not only prescribed the repetition of those sacrifices, but also that in each offering there would be a “remembrance” made of sin, as that which was to be expiated. Let us remember that although the apostle is here contrasting the inadequacy of the Levitical system to Christ, he here makes it plain that there need be a “remembrance” of sin...a “remembrance” and confession of sin bring about the application of the efficacy and virtue of the perfect Atonement which has been made once for all.

Every year there was the constant reminder of sins. This was in addition to the daily and monthly sacrifices; these were the annual sacrifices on the Day of Atonement. The constant sacrifices were designed by God as a reminder to the people of their sin and the need of cleansing.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

· **“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”** - there is a necessity of sin being “taken away,” yet, the blood of beasts could not effect this necessity. The blood of animals offered in sacrifice was designed of God to represent the way in which sin was to be removed, but not by itself to effect it...such blood was external, earthly, and carnal; but to take away sin was an internal, Divine, and spiritual matter...while such offerings may usefully represent spiritual truths, they have no spiritual value of their own, and cannot of and by themselves secure spiritual results.

This verse teaches the impossibility of the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. The blood of animals could not really take away sin; their purpose was to impress upon the people their need, and to foreshadow what would one day be accomplished in Christ. The sacrifices of the Old Covenant accomplished their purpose; they served as “*a shadow of the good things to come.*” Those “good things” involved the sacrifice found in the New Covenant.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

· **“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith,”** - (See Psalm 40:6-8)
“Wherefore,” Christ, did not come with the impotency of the Levitical sacrifices but He came to do the will of God in the stead of such sacrifices. Here we see the attitude of Christ when He came into the world.

Ð Psalm 40:6-8— “6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, 8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”

· **“Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not,”** - that is, not the sacrifices of wicked men, or such that were offered up without faith in Christ...but God willed that His Son would offer Himself up.

· **“But a body hast thou prepared me:”** - Christ had a true body prepared for Him that, along with His willing mind, offer it up to God as a fitting sacrifice...the body of Christ is placed over against, substituted in the stead of, replaces, the Levitical offerings. Christ’s body did meet the desire of God and God Himself thus proclaimed it so.

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

· **“In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.”** - In these words Christ, comprehended all the sacrifice under the Mosaic economy which had respect to the expiation of sin and also the worship of God. This declares that God had never designed the Levitical offerings to make a perfect satisfaction unto Himself. Christ recognized (Psalm 40:6-8) that burnt offerings and sacrifices did not meet His Father’s ultimate desire.

This reminds us that propitiation for sin was provided by God, not man!

Ð 1 John 4:10— “10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

· **“Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.”** - These words express the readiness and willingness of the Son to do all that had been ordained and prophesied unto the making of a full satisfaction to God and the salvation of His people...the “will of God” was to remove that which provoked His judicial hatred of us and to provide for and give to us such a righteousness as would cause Him to love us more than ever, finding delight in us.

“The book” primarily regarded the archives of God’s eternal counsels, the scroll of His eternal decrees, the Son being perfectly cognizant of all that was written therein. Christ in the doing of God’s will was not merely performing that which was laid upon Him due to God’s counsel, but also that *He desired* to actively perform the work which had been allotted to Him.

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; 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

· In these words we have the perfect obedience of Christ placed in direct contrast from the whole of the Levitical offerings...His accomplishing what theirs could not. The words “taketh away” means that Christ has “made old” and “vanished away” the old covenant...those things that are dead are useless and can prove to be harmful if not properly and quickly disposed of, thus it was with the Mosaic shadows.

1. Here is a striking difference between the willing sacrifice of Christ and the animal sacrifices that were offered against their will...Jesus freely offered Himself in accordance with the Father’s will.

Ⓐ John 6:38— “38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”

2. In doing the will of His Father, Jesus Has taken away the first covenant.

Ⓐ Colossians 2:13-17— “13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

3. Jesus made it possible to establish the second covenant, of which he is the mediator.

Ⓐ Hebrews 9:15— “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.”

So what animal sacrifices could not accomplish, God did by the sending of His Son who freely accepted the task of offering Himself for sin. But was His sacrifice adequate?

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

· This verse is a commentary upon the whole of the preceding passage. “By which will we are sanctified,” that is, by the sacrifice of Christ, which was willingly offered up by Himself, and

was according to the will of God...it was the will and purpose of God that Christ should be crucified and slain on behalf of the people that God had given to Him.

The “sanctified” are those that are positionally restored to God’s favor, standing accepted before Him...it is the full expiation of sin, a complete dedication to God, a real purification of our natures, a permanent peace of conscience unto which belongs the privilege of immediate access to God. In reality, we have been sanctified by the body of Jesus Christ.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

- Once again the Holy Spirit emphasis is on the contrast between the all-sufficient offering of Christ and the non-efficacious offerings under the law. Notice that the apostle here refers to those daily offerings that were required of the priests. It is his design to show that these offerings are just as insufficient as those offered once a year.

Notice should be given to the fact that the Levitical priest stood...no chair or seat was provided for them in either the tabernacle or temple, for their work was never ended. They could not meet the infinite demands of justice, expiate sins, nor provide a permanent resting place for an exercised conscience.

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

- Here the Holy Spirit places in antithesis the one perfect and efficacious offering of Christ from the unavailing sacrifices of the law... it is the sacerdotal work of the Mediator which is here in view ...Christ came and once for all laid Himself on the Divine altar as an atonement to God.

- **“For ever sat down on the right hand of God,”** - denotes the seat of sacrificial acceptance, God’s witness to the value of Christ’s satisfaction. Christ has done His work effectively and with acceptance ...Christ’s work is finished and accepted as such by the Father...Christ’s work was once and forever.

Ð Hebrews 1:3— “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;”

Ð Hebrews 8:1— “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;”

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

- The suffering Savior has been invested with unlimited power and dominion, and nothing now remains but the accomplishing of all those effects which His sacrifice was designed to procure. “Expecting” means that God in His own time will consummate that which He alone has planned.

Ð Psalm 110:1-7— “ 1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. 2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. 3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. 4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. 5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. 6 He shall judge among

the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. 7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.”

¶ 1 Corinthians 15:25-26— “25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”

- The Design of Christ’s sacrifice is twofold:

1. The saving of the elect;
2. The subjugating of all revolvers against God...Christ’s final triumph is still postponed, because He calmly awaits that day which God has appointed.

¶ Acts 17:31— “31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

- The word for “perfected” literally means “completed” or “consummated.” By His eternal sacrifice Christ has procured for His people the full pardon of sin and possesses such infinite merits that it has wrought out a complete expiation and secured for “His own” personal acceptance with and access to God, a priestly standing and covenant nearness before Him. Christ has done this by means of His priestly office...He has perfectly fulfilled the law for them.

- Those perfected by the **“one offering”** of Christ are **“them that are sanctified,”** or more literally, simply “the sanctified,” the reference being to those who were eternally set apart (positionally) by the Father.

¶ Jude 1— “1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:”

¶ 1 Corinthians 1:2— “2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their’s and our’s:”

¶ 1 Corinthians 6:11— “11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

- In another sense we are being sanctified (experiential) by the Holy Spirit.

¶ 1 Thessalonians 5:23— “23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- All this is made possible by the “one-time” sacrifice of Christ.

¶ 1 John 1:7-9— “7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

· **“Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us:”** - The apostle having abundantly proved and demonstrated what he designed concerning both the priesthood and the sacrifice of Christ, he now confirms the whole from the testimony of the Holy Spirit. What is the Holy Spirit a witness to?

1. Unto the fact that the one satisfaction which has been made by the Redeemer secures the eternal perfection of all who are sanctified.
2. The Holy Spirit is a witness: Thus, we may here behold the three persons of the Godhead concurring.

Ð Hebrews 10:9— “9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.”

· **“For after that he had said before,”** - that which was said “before” is, “This is the covenant that I will make with them.” The particular point to be observed is, that these Divine mercies of God’s putting His laws onto our hearts and forgiving our sins, are the immediate fruits of Christ’s sacrifice, but more remotely, are the fulfillment of God’s covenant-promises unto the Mediator...Christ is the ground of all good things which God does for His people.

Ð Jeremiah 31:31-34— “31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

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;

· **“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord,”** - Here the reference is to the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31 [“31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:”], so called not because it was new made, for with respect to its original constitution it was made with the elect in Christ their Head from all eternity

Ð Titus 1:1&2— “1 Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; 2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;”

· **“I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;”** - What is it that God will “put into their hearts” and “in their minds.” It is in regeneration and sanctification that the “image” of God, after which Adam was originally created, that is again stamped upon the Christian’s heart, so that it becomes his very “nature” to serve, obey, please, honor, and glorify God. This is much more than a bare offer being made unto men, far beyond an ineffectual invitation which is to be received. It is an invincible and miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit, which thoroughly transforms the favored subjects to it...it is the law of God that is put in our hearts...God does not change His intention for us to conform to that which He has decreed.

Notice the Divine order of operation: the mind is informed, and the heart is reformed. The heart is mentioned first before the mind because the Spirit is here giving the Divine standard for us to measure ourselves by it...**an intellectual knowledge of God's laws is no proof of regeneration, but a genuine heart acquaintance with them is.**

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

· The principal thing here is to observe God's promise of non remembrance of sin; which is none other than remission of sin, and which is not consistent with legal sacrifices, in which there is a remembrance of sin every year. The above words must not be understood to signify that the sins of God's people have vanished away from His essential mind, but rather that they will never be recalled by Him as He exercises His office as Judge.

18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

· Here the apostle draws the irrefutable conclusion from the premises he had so fully established; the conclusion is that the one offering of Christ has secured that "grace" contained in the everlasting covenant and that grace shall be communicated unto all those for whom Christ died, both in the sanctifying and justifying of those persons. With true remission of sins, there is no need for repeated sacrifices for sin.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 10:1-18

By providing complete sanctification and remission of sins, the sacrifice of Jesus is truly "the superior sacrifice." Why would anyone want to return to sacrifices that did not make the worshiper perfect and where there is the constant reminder of sin that weighs heavy upon the conscience of man? With the sacrifice of Himself, offered freely keeping with the will of God, Jesus Christ provides what the Law could not!

With verse eighteen, we come to the end of the two main arguments in this epistle. First, that Christ is superior, for He is better than the prophets (Heb. 1:1-3); better than the angels by virtue of His Deity and humanity (Heb. 1:4-2:18); better than Moses, for He is the Son who provides heavenly rest (Heb. 3:1-4:13); and better than Aaron, as His priesthood is a superior one (Heb. 4:16-8:6). Second, that the New Covenant is superior, for it is based upon better promises (Heb. 8:7-13); and a better sanctuary (Heb. 9:1-28); and a better sacrifice (Heb. 10:1-18).

The purpose of the "writer" has been to encourage his Hebrew brethren to remain true to Jesus Christ. Though one may not be a Hebrew by race, the same arguments should encourage all Christians to remain true to Jesus and abide by the conditions of the New Covenant of which He is the Mediator.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 10:19-25

The verses which are now to engage our attention contain the apostle's transition from the doctrinal to the practical part of the epistle. Having demonstrated the vast superiority of Christianity over Judaism, the apostle now exhorts his Christian readers to avail themselves of all their blessed advantages and enjoy the great privileges which have been conferred upon them. On this foundation rests a threefold exhortation: [All of this based upon what Christ has done and will do for us!]

1. Let us draw near with a true heart, in the full assurance of faith.
2. Let us hold fast the profession of hope without wavering.

3. Let us consider one another to provoke (to stimulate) unto love and to good works, laboring and waiting together, and helping one another in the unity of brethren.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

- The great privilege which is here announced unto Christians is that they may draw near unto God as accepted worshippers (Christians are now able to enter into the holy of Holies). Christians now have access unto God in spirit, and in faith; there is nothing that hinders and there is every reason and motive to induce us to draw near unto God and pour out our hearts before Him in thanksgiving, praise, and worship.

- “Boldness” gives reference of something outside of ourselves and not a condition of the heart. Our “boldness” lies in the fact that we have title to approach God through the assurance of our being in Christ...that is, “by the blood of Jesus” which is the meritorious cause which procures the Christian’s right of entrance into the Holiest.

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

- **“By a new and living way,”** - The word “new” is really “newly slain.” The avenue of approach to God has been opened unto us because Christ was put to death...it is new in that it is now that it is made fully manifest. The “way” to God is a living one because:

1. It is in opposition “to the way to God” under Judaism, which was through the death of an animal.
2. Because of its perpetual efficacy.
3. Because of its effects: it leads to life, and effectually brings the believer thereunto. It is called a “living way” because all that Christ symbolizes must be represented as possessing vitality. There is a “new way” to approach God in heaven, through Christ who lives!

- **“Which he hath consecrated for us,”** - that is, we are given to understand that Christ has made the way to heaven fit for us...Christ’s preparation to fulfill the will of the Father has enabled us to be thus fit.

- **“Through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;”** - it is through the humanity of Christ that the way to heaven has been opened, renewed and consecrated. When God rent the veil of the temple, clear intimation was given that every hindrance had been removed, and that the way was open into His presence.

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

- That is, Christ is over the house of God in His headship, lordship, and authority...it is in the heavenly sanctuary that Christ now reigns and ministers, and into which we may enter even now through our prayers and spiritual worship of which Christ now presides over as our great High Priest.

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.

- **“Let us draw near with a true heart”** - a true heart is opposed to a double, doubting,

distrustful, and hypocritical heart...by which we are to approach unto the Most High to present our praises and petitions...to “draw near” is a sacerdotal act, common to all saints, who are priests to God.

- **“In full assurance of faith,”** - “Full assurance of faith” points to the heart resting and relying upon the absolute sufficiency of the blood of Christ which was shed for my sins, and the efficacy of His present intercession to maintain my standing before God...without faith (which “the gift” of God) drawing near to God is impossible.

- **“Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience,”** - Here there is a description of the characteristics of those who are qualified or fitted to enter the Holiest...it is the individual that has been both justified and sanctified. Their consciences must not be that which accuses of guilt and oppresses because of unpardoned sin...this is done through the exercise of faith in Christ and in the belief of the sufficiency of His atoning blood. This is an allusion to the Old Testament practice of taking blood from the altar and consecrating the priests by sprinkling them with it.

Ⲑ Exodus 29:21— “21 And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons’ garments with him.”

It is the blood of Christ that is truly efficacious in purging our conscience of sin!

Ⲑ Hebrews 9:14— “14 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?”

- **“And our bodies washed with pure water.”** - this is figurative language used as an allusion to the cleansing of the priests whereby it was a type of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. However, as a Christian we need not only an internal cleansing but also the external purification. As Christ’s atonement has cleansed us internally we are to dedicate our lives to live a consecrated life to the end of sanctity of the body.

Ⲑ Exodus 29:4— “4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.

With Christ as our “High Priest,” and our own consecration as “priests” through the blood of Jesus, we should not hesitate to draw near to God in prayer and worship, looking forward to that day when we will literally enter “through the veil” into God’s wonderful presence!

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

- **“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering;”** - either in the grace or the doctrine of faith, or in the profession of both. The “confession of faith” is the solemn acknowledgment which is made by a person when he publicly claims to be a Christian and to “hold fast” or continue to press forward along the path he professes to have entered.

We are expected to “hold fast” the confession of our hope because;

1. In Christ we have a better hope:

Ⲑ Hebrews 6:19— “19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,

and which entereth into that within the veil;”

¶ Hebrews 7:19— “19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.”

2. For there is danger in apostasy:

¶ Hebrews 3:12 & 13— “12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

3. For the very reason we must “hold fast” the hope which we confess:

¶ Hebrews 3:6 & 14— “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. 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;”

¶ Hebrews 4:14— “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.”

· **(for he is faithful that promised;)**” - since God is so faithful to us, we ought to be faithful to Him...His faithfulness is an encouragement to us...because God is faithful it is a strong argument for us to “hold fast” without wavering in our own profession.

1. God will not fail us;

¶ Hebrews 13:5— “5 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.”

2. Therefore we need to emulate the faith of Sarah:

¶ Hebrews 11:11— “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.”

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

· **“And let us consider one another”** - that is, let us diligently bear in mind and continually have in view the good of our fellow saints. To “consider” signifies a conscientious care and circumspection over the spiritual estate and welfare of other Christians. As we draw near to God we are not to do so alone...we are to be mindful of each other and how we are doing...we are to “consider one another.”

· **“To provoke unto love and to good works:”** - Here is expressed the chief design or end unto the performance of our duties as Christians...we are to provoke (incite or stir-up) one another by means of a godly example of which is a holy principle of action. Love and good works are both the effects and evidence of the sincere confession of saving faith, and therefore a diligent attendance unto them is an essential means of constancy in our confession. Compare Hebrews 3:12-14:

¶ Hebrews 3:12-14— “12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;”

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.

In reality, the contents of this verse form a faithful warning against apostasy. First, the Hebrews are cautioned against forsaking public worship. Second, it is pointed out that “some” had already done so. Third, they are bidden to exhort one another with increased diligence.

- **“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,”** - The Greek word “forsake not” is a very strong and emphatic one, and signifies “to abandon in time of danger.” Thus it will appear that a total and final abandonment of the public profession of Christianity is what is here warned against. If the Hebrews were to “hold fast the confession of faith without wavering” (v.23), and if they were to “consider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works” (v.24), then they must not “forsake the assembling” of themselves together.
- **“As the manner of some is;”** - “manner” indicates “custom.” So here, some who had made a profession of the Christian faith had now abandoned the same and gone back to Judaism.
- **“But exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”** - This is another means appointed by God to confirm Christians in their confession. To “exhort one another” is a duty to which all Christians are called. This exhortation concerns the doctrines of God and our experiences as to the application of these doctrines. The imperative is that as we “see the day approaching” we must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Therefore, a forsaking of assembly by some, might be indicative of apostasy!

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 10:19-25

With a gracious “exhortation” before us we are encouraged to (1) draw near to God in full assurance of faith; (2) hold fast the confession of our hope; and , (3) consider one another to stir up to love and good works. As motivation to heed this “exhortation,” we are reminded of the “new and living way” now open to God, made wholly possible by the death of Christ. As such Christ now serves as our High Priest over the house of God for we have been consecrated by having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. God has been faithful to His promise and continues to exhort us to encourage one another and the approaching Day of Judgment draws nigh.

If we truly appreciate the blessings we now have in Christ, we will do all that we can to draw closer to God, hold fast that hope which we confess, and utilize the opportunities we have to encourage one another in love and good works.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 10:26-39

Immediately following a gracious exhortation to draw near to God and hold fast the confession of our hope, we find an ominous warning. It is a warning against “willful sin” and speaks of reaching a terrible state in which there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins and that there is a certain fearful expectation of judgement and fiery indignation. The question that may arise is; “Is this warning for Christians?”

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

The general truth here set forth is that, should those who have been converted and become Christians apostatize from Christ their state would be hopeless.

- **“For if we sin wilfully”** - this is not to be understood as to a single act, but to a course of sinning; nor sins of infirmity through temptation, or even grosser acts of sin, but rather voluntary ones, those sins done on set purpose, resolutely and obstinately; that is, those done on our own accord where no constraint is used. The reference is to a definite decision where an individual deliberately determines to abandon Christ and turn from God...a total apostasy from the truth, against light and evidence, joined with obstinacy.

- **“After that we have received the knowledge of the truth,”** - These words not only serve to identify the ones who are cautioned against apostasy, but are added to emphasize the enormity of the sin. The word “receive” the knowledge of the truth includes an act of the mind in understanding it, an act of the will in consenting, and an act of the heart in embracing it. Wherefore the sin here intended, is plainly a relinquishment and renunciation of the truth of the gospel, and the promises thereof, with all duty thereunto belonging, after we have been convinced of its truth, and avowed its power and excellency.

- **“There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,”** - the unpardonableness of this sin is affirmed in these words...those who apostatize from Christ: there is no relief appointed for them, no means for the expiation of their sin. What sacrifice is under consideration here? Christ’s sacrifice. What sacrifice no longer remains? Christ’s sacrifice. The blood of Christ is no longer available for one who persists in “willful sin.”

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

The positive punishment of apostates is here announced or that which does remain.

1. For we must answer to Christ Himself.

Ⓐ 2 Corinthians 5:10 & 11— “10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”

2. And we will be in the hands of the living God.

Ⓐ Hebrews 10:30 & 31— “30 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. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

- **“But a certain fearful looking for of judgment”** - This signifies that it will be a righteous sentence proportioned unto the crime of apostasy: there will be a full and open trial, with an impartial judicial condemnation: There is no mean between pardon and damnation.

Ⓐ James 2:13 - “13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”

Ⓐ 2 Peter 2:3 - “3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”

- **“And fiery indignation,”** - God is highly incensed against the apostates...God’s judgment will express and answer to His infinite justice, holiness, and power.

1. There will be a judgment involving fire.

¶ Revelation 21:8— “8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

2. There will be a judgment involving indignation (the wrath of God).

¶ Romans 2:5-11— “5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds: 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: 11 For there is no respect of persons with God.”

· **“Which shall devour the adversaries.”** - these are those who are actuated by a principle of hostile opposition to Christ and Christianity...

1. Such judgment will “devour” (not annihilate, but destroy)

¶ Matthew 10:28— “28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

28 He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

· If the despiser of the Mosaic law was dealt with so unsparingly (death without mercy), how much more severe must be the punishment meted out to those who scorn the authority of the Gospel!! The Greek word for “despise” means to utterly reject a thing, to set aside or cast off, to treat with contempt. There was no sacrifice available for those who broke the law of Moses wilfully, and presumptuously, therefore, this illustration indicates that there shall be no forgiveness available for those that reject the Gospel.

1. There was sin that was “deliberate”...

(a) In which one rejected Moses’ law.

(b) In which one despised Moses’ law.

2. There was sin that was “open” ...

(a) It had to be seen by two or more.

(b) For death was not rendered unless there were “two or three witnesses.”

3. While there was mercy for sins of weakness or ignorance, there was none for open and deliberate sin under the old covenant.

The popular idea in these degenerate times is that, under the Gospel regime God has acted, is acting and will act much more mildly with transgressors, than He did under the Mosaic economy. The opposite is the truth!

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot 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?

· **“Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God,”** - this verse intimates that there are degrees of punishment:

Ð Luke 12:47 & 48 –”47 And that servant, which knew his lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.”

1. One is worthy of “much sorer (worse) punishment” because a Christian that sins willfully has “trodden under foot the Son of God.” The word “trampled” comes from the Greek word *katapathsav* (from the root word *katapateo*; *katapateo*) and denotes contempt of the most flagrant kind...such a person treats Jesus like dirt!

2. If I profess to have received Christ as my Savior and have praised Him for His redeeming grace, what punishment can fitly meet my crimes if I now despise His lordship, flout His authority, break His commandments, walk with His enemies, and go on sinning presumptuously, till I end by committing the “great transgression?”

· **“And hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing,”** - the backslider and apostate does, by his conduct, treat that precious blood as though it were a worthless thing or a common thing.

· **“And hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”** - Luke 12:10; *And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven...* It is by the Spirit, the Christian is regenerated, enlightened, convicted, and brought to Christ. It is by the Spirit the Christian is led and fed, taught and sanctified. What reverence is due Him as a Divine person! How dreadful the sin then which treats Him with insolence, which scorns to attend unto His winsome voice, which despises His gracious entreaties. This type of sin is an open and deliberate insult to the grace of God.

30 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.

· **“For we know him that hath said,”** - Here our attention is directed unto the Divine character, what God is in Himself...He is known by His works of creation, by His providence, and by His Scriptures. More particularly, that what He has said He is able to perform and that He is faithful to every word that He has said!

· **“Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord.”** - God will yet pay to every transgressor the full wages to which their sins have earned...vengeance belongs to God and Him alone!! Punishment for sin belongs to God because it is committed against Him.

· **“And again, The Lord shall judge his people.”** - This God does by chastising in a fatherly way, that we may not be condemned with the world. Yet, what God says concerning those who are the enemies of His people, becomes applicable to His people should they break and reject His covenant.

Ð Deuteronomy 32:36— “36 For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.”

Our conception of the Divine character plays an important part in molding our hearts and

regulating our conduct. It is because the true nature of sin is so lightly viewed in the light of God's Divine character and holiness, that many fail to recognize its infinite demerits and its eternal punishments.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

· To "fall into the hands of" is a metaphor, denoting the utter helplessness of the victim when captured by his enemy. This is not to be understood in a good sense but in a bad sense and denotes being brought before the bar of God and there to receive the sentence of condemnation; when those that apostatize shall feel the weight of His hand and the fierceness of His wrath...this should be a "fearful thing." They shall stand before the Judge, charged with sin, naked, and without a righteousness, speechless, and no one to speak on their behalf (no Mediator). To hear the dreadful sentence pronounced, and feel the wrath of God to the uttermost, how fearful and horrible this must be. This is the "living God" that from all eternity shall mete out due recompense for crimes committed.

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

· **"But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated,"** - The Holy Spirit had revealed to them their depravity and impotency, their lost and miserable state by nature. They were exhorted to remember the days when they did not meet the demands of God's righteous law. The apostle's design in this is, to mitigate the terror the preceding words might strike with them if they should turn back. This remembrance was to encourage their faith in God as their deliverer....this will render us more active in finishing the course set before us. If God does not deliver, there is no deliverance! Study the history of the nation of Israel as given in the O.T. if one has any doubts. Each time Israel found itself in bondage, it was the God of deliverance that freed them.

Such illumination (a call to remembrance) is more than a theoretical knowledge of a truth by means of reading, it is quite another to have a real and inward acquaintance with the same...when one is tried or afflicted, he experientially learns what is "*that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God*" (Romans 12:2). The highest honor God bestows on us in this life is when He permits us to suffer a little for the sake of Christ.

· **"Ye endured a great fight of afflictions;"** - meaning that they had not fainted or given way to despondency, nor had they renounced their profession in the face of some violent persecution from their own countrymen...they had come out conquerors by the enabling power of God. Yet look what is promised in the message of the Gospel...

¶ Romans 8:35-37— "35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

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.

· In this verse the apostle mentions one or two features of what their "great fight of affliction" had consisted.

1. Some had been made public spectacles before their neighbors, by the malicious

accusations brought against them.

2. Others were the “partners” of those who were also cruelly treated.

The principle reference here is to the loss which they had sustained in their character and reputations...To be a companion of those who suffer for Christ, is an evidence of our love for His brethren, of courage in suffering, and of readiness to succor those who are persecuted because of the Gospel.

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.

· **“For ye had compassion of me in my bonds,”** - The apostle here makes grateful acknowledgment of the sympathy which the Hebrews had shown him in an hour of need. Acts 21:33 refers to this time when Paul found himself in bonds; *Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done.*

NOTICE: These words supply one of the many proofs that the apostle Paul was the author of this epistle.

· **“And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods,”** - that is, the very furniture of their houses, their worldly substance, of which they were stripped by their persecutors...this they took quietly and patiently...even joyfully...rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer the confiscation of their goods for the sake of Christ.

· **“Knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.”** - This was the ground for their joy...faith looked away from things seen to those unseen, reckoning that “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us”

Ð Romans 8:18— “18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

It is only as faith is in exercise, as the heart is really occupied with our heavenly portion, that we enjoy them, and regard all else as but “vanity and vexation of spirit.”

In heaven we are to have a better substance; an enduring substance which will make more than ample amends for any suffering that we might endure in this life. We can further know in ourselves that we shall obtain to this heavenly enduring substance because of the firm conviction of our hearts...we are heaven bound and our hearts testify to us this truth...we know that we have passed from death to life. Therefore, nothing is of greater practical importance than that the Christian should keep clean and unstained his inward evidences that his journey is toward heaven.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

The obvious intent of verses 35-39 is stir up Christians unto utmost earnestness in making their calling and election sure, to guard them against the danger of backsliding, and to bear their trials with submission to the will of God.

· **“Cast not away therefore your confidence,”** - that is, do not be discouraged and give way to despair at the approach of similar trials. The word “confidence” here has respect unto

attitude or the state of heart Godwards...this is confidence that we have in Him, which may be defined as fortitude of mind, courage of heart, and constancy of will. It is only as the mind remains convinced of the righteousness of our cause, and as the heart is assured we are doing that which is pleasing to God, that, when we are criticized and condemned by men, and are menaced by their frowns and threats, we shall be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the word.

- **“Which hath great recompense of reward.”** - From these words it is very evident that the true Christian may, and should, have his eye upon the reward that is promised those who suffer for the Gospel’s sake...he that endures to the end shall be saved. One must have a true and strong faith in Christ because everlasting salvation depends on it and the reward of the inheritance follows such faith.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise

- **“For ye have need of patience,”** - that is, that there is a need to exercise the continuance and increase in patience; in general to run the race that has been set before them...to bear afflictions from the hand of God, and reproaches and persecution from men. It was necessary that they should arm their minds with the spirit of resignation and perseverance, that having done the will of God, by cleaving to Christ and obeying Him, that they might receive the promised gift of eternal life.

- **“That, after ye have done the will of God,”** - there can be no dismissing from the discharge of this duty while we are left here on earth or in eternity that follows...that is, the will of God, as it is made known in His word, which is the alone rule by which we are to live and all our ways are to be conformed.

- **“Ye might receive the promise.”** - that is, eternal life...not the promise itself...but that eternal life is through grace, but must be patiently waited for.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

- The apostle here reminds us that the Lord will shortly come to deliver us from all evils, provided our minds faint not through want of firmness. Here the reference is to the Lord Jesus Christ (Hab. 2:3) when He shall return in visible glory and power...Christ will not tarry beyond the appoint time, therefore, patience should be exercised. Our patience is to be based on the fact that the Lord will soon return.

Ð Habakkuk 2:3— “3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

- **“Now the just shall live by faith:”** - (See Hab. 2:4) here the prophet is cited as proof that perseverance is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a child of God. The just man is not one in appearance only, but in reality; not by obedience to the law, but by obedience to Christ through faith...the “just” man is one who lives soberly and righteously and the life that he lives he lives by faith in Christ...a life of justification in Christ, a life of communion with Christ, and a life of holiness received from Christ. Perseverance is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a child of God.

Ð Habakkuk 2:4— “4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just

shall live by his faith.”

- **“But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”** - this signifies one that is prideful, haughty, a man who continues in apostasy...this is one that is swelled with pride concerning his own righteousness. This righteousness is one that deludes a person to think that he is one of God’s very elect. Yet, one who thinks that by refusing to take up his cross daily and follow the example left by Christ, can escape the world’s approach and persecution and yet go to Heaven, is fatally deluding himself...unless one maintains a steady trust in God and an obedient submission unto His revealed will, he is in grave danger of apostatizing.

The use of the future tense “shall live” announces and enforces the necessity for the continued exercise of faith. The constant exercise of faith by the saint is as essential to his final salvation as it was to his initial salvation.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

- **“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition;”** - The word “perdition” shows plainly that the “drawing back” of the previous verse is a fatal and final one. This drawing back is a rejection of Christ as Savior...when he is not held as the head, when false doctrines and damnable heresies are given into...when men draw back they can never return. However, true believers do not and can not draw back because they are held fast in the arms of Christ...they are chosen by God and given to Christ and are secured by Him through the purchase of His blood.

- **“But of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”** - by faith man lives and walks and stands in opposition to those that “who draw back unto perdition.” Faith or believing is connected to salvation and those that have been saved are secured in Christ.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 10:26-39

We can look forward with great anticipation to the “saving of the soul” if we remember (and rekindle) that confidence that we held early in our conversion and endure to the end with the faith that truly saves. But we are given warning against “willful sin” and given the example that such sin is indeed apostasy.

To fall from grace (not given of the Christian) is to fall “into the hands” of the living God which is a terrifying thing! But the Christian is rest in the promise that we are “upheld” by the hand of God as the Psalmist wrote:

Psalm 37:23 & 24— “23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.”

Such is the case of those that remain strong in their faith and trust in the Lord. Our belief is one in which there is a saving of the soul.

.Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER ELEVEN

[Introduction/Chapter 12](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

The apostle having, in the preceding chapter, spoken in commendation of the grace, and life of faith, and of its usefulness to preserve from apostasy, proceeds in this to give some account of the nature and actings of it; and which he illustrates by the examples of many of the Old-Testament saints: he begins with a definition of it, which consists of two parts (v.1), and with an account of the usefulness of it to the elders in general, who by it obtained a good report (v.2), and of the service it is of in understanding the creation of the worlds, the author and original of them (v.3), and then goes on to give particular instances and examples of faith among the elders, or ancient believers, which are reduced into several classes; and the first is of the saints before the flood, Abel, Enoch, and Noah. Abel's faith lay in offering a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, in obtaining a testimony from God that he was righteous, and in yet speaking, though dead (v.4). Enoch's faith is evidenced by his translation of God, that he should not see death, and by the testimony he received from him before it, that he was acceptable to him; by which it is clear he had faith, since, without it, it is impossible to please God: nor can any come aright unto him, without believing that he is, and has a gracious respect to all that diligently seek him (vv. 5, 6). Noah's faith was seen in preparing an ark, by the order of God, for the saving of his family, and in condemning the world by so doing, and by becoming an heir of righteousness through faith (v. 7). The next class is that of the saints from the flood, to the times of Moses, in which are Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Abraham's faith is celebrated for his obedience to the divine call, quitting the country where he was, and going he knew not where; and for his sojourning in the promised land, as in a strange one, in which Isaac and Jacob dwelt with him in tabernacles; and for looking by faith for the heavenly city built by the Lord; and for his offering up his son at the command of God, who was the son of promise, believing God was able to raise him from the dead, from whence he received him by faith (vv. 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19). Sarah's faith lay in receiving strength through it to conceive, bear, and bring forth a child when past age, which was founded upon the faithfulness of a promising God; hence from Abraham, by her, sprung a large posterity, like the stars of the sky, and the sand on the sea-shore (vv. 11, 12). Now all these patriarchs, both before and after the flood, as they lived by faith, they died in it; who, though they had not received the things promised, yet by faith saw them at a distance, were very well persuaded they would come to pass, and so, in some sense, enjoyed them; hence, whilst they lived, they lived like pilgrims and strangers, showing that they had no regard to the country they came from, and had no mind to return thither, but sought another, a better, and an heavenly one; so that God is not ashamed to be called their God, he having prepared a city for them (vv. 13, 14, 15, 16). Isaac's faith is commended in blessing his two sons with respect to things future (v. 20), and Jacob's faith is well spoken of for blessing both the sons of Joseph in his last moments, worshipping on the top of his staff (v. 21), and Joseph's faith is instanced in two things; in making mention of the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, as a certain thing; and in giving them strict orders to carry his bones along with the, when they went from thence (v. 22), the third class of men, famous for faith, is that of such from the times of Moses to the judges, in which are

the parents of Moses, Moses himself, the Israelites in general, and the harlot Rahab. The parents of Moses showed their faith in hiding him three months, seeing him to be a lovely child, contrary to the king's edict (v. 23). Moses' faith lay in refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; in preferring afflictions to the pleasures of sin, and the reproach of Christ to the riches of Egypt; he having, by faith, a respect to the heavenly glory, another instance of it; and by forsaking Egypt, without fear of the king's displeasure, by faith seeing a King who is invisible; and by keeping the Passover, with the sprinkling of blood, that so the destroyer of the first-born of Egypt might not touch the Israelites (vv. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28). The instances of the faith of the Israelites are their passage through the Red sea, as on dry land, when the Egyptians, who attempted it, were drowned; and their compassing the walls of Jericho seven days, believing they would fall, as accordingly they did (vv. 29,30). The faith of Rahab, the harlot is commended for two things; for peaceably receiving the spies that came to her; and for the salvation she believed she should have, and had, when the unbelieving inhabitants of Jericho perished (v. 31). And the last class of heroes for faith, includes the times of the judges, kings, prophets, and the Maccabees; the judges, kings, and prophets, are lumped together, and only a few of their names are observed as a specimen of the rest, the apostle not having time to mention every particular one (v. 32), and various instances of faith without reference to particular persons to whom they belong, are recorded; some which lay in doing things greatly heroic, and even miraculous (vv. 33, 34, 35), and others in suffering things the most cruel and torturing, and death itself in divers shapes (vv. 35, 36, 37, 38). And thus, by an induction of particulars, the apostle proves both his definition of faith (v. 1), and the usefulness of it to the elders (v. 2), they by it obtaining a good report, though they did not receive the thing promised (v. 39), wherefore New-Testament saints have great encouragement, and much more reason, to exercise this grace; since God has provided for them the better thing he promised to others, that the one without the other might not be perfect (v. 40).

Hebrews 11:1-40

Part Three: The Superiority of the Christian's Walk of Faith (10:19-13:25)

I. Exhortation to Full Assurance of Faith	10:19-11:40
A. Hold Fast the Confession of Faith	10:19-25
B. Fourth Warning: Danger of Drawing Back	10:26-39
C. Definition of Faith	11:1-3
D. Examples of Faith	11:4-40
1. Abel	11:4
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3. Noah	11:7
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5. Isaac	11:20
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11. Many Other Heroes of Faith	11:32-40

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 11:1-7

The central design of this chapter is to evidence the patience of those who in former ages, endured by faith before they received the fulfillment of God's promises. The apostle for the illustration and enforcement of his exhortation, brings forward a great variety of instances, from the history of the former ages, in which faith had enabled individuals to perform very difficult duties, endure very severe trials, and obtain very important blessings. The principles of the apostle's exhortation are plainly these: "They who turn back, turn back to perdition. It is only they who persevere in believing that obtain the salvation of the soul. Nothing but a persevering faith can enable a person, through constant continuance in well-doing and a patient, humble submission to the will of God, to obtain that glory, honor, and immortality which the Gospel promises. Nothing but a persevering faith can do this; and a persevering faith can do it, as is plain from what it has done in former ages" (J. B.).

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

· **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."** - Faith in the N.T. is employed sometimes to signify the act or state of the mind we call belief, and sometimes the object of the mind in this state or act—the thing believed. The contents of this verse do not furnish so much a formal definition of faith, as they supply a terse description of how it operates and what it produces.

"Faith" is the substance of... the word substance (hupostasis) may be better translated "assurance" or "stand under" which denotes that faith is the firm grasp on an unseen act or a firm foundation of assurance or a firm trust (being sure) in those things hoped for. **Of things**...strictly means, a thing done or an accomplished fact. **Evidence**...is derived from a verb (elenchos) which signifies "to convince" (by demonstration or by means of evidence) with its natural and most obvious meaning being "conviction" in things not seen.

Therefore, "faith" is a conviction in reference to things not seen. A promise is made respecting future good...I am satisfied that He who promises is both able and willing to perform His promise. I believe it; and in believing it, I have confidence respecting what is not evident either to my sense or to my reason...I believe it; and in believing it, I have conviction in reference to things which are not seen. This "confidence" or "assurance" respecting things hoped for, is the grand spring of dutiful exertion, and dutiful submission; it is this, and this alone, that can induce a man to persevere in doing and suffering the will of God, till in due time the promised blessing is obtained. Such things include:

1) The coming of the Lord.

ⲡ Titus 2:13— “13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”

2) The resurrection of the dead.

ⲡ Acts 24:15— “15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”

This is the kind of confidence that is seen in the good report of the “elders”.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

· That is, by their faith: it was not a cause yet it was a condition...by means of their faith these good men performed actions, sustained trials, and obtained blessings, of which we have an account of in the Book of God. Thus on account of their faith they have favorably testified of God, or have “obtained a good report.” This “good report” has not been obtained from their descendants but from God! This being in the passive voice (the use of the verb which denotes the subject as receiving the action) that the “good report” was given to them by God because they were the chosen of God, and were justified and accepted with Him.

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.

· **“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God,”** - The particular manner of the creation of the world is an object of faith. It is one of the unseen things; we did not witness the creation. How was this accomplished? By “the word of God.” That is, by the Word of Power or manifestation of the invincible will of God or by Christ, the essential Word of God, to whom the creation of all things is ascribed

ⲡ John 1:1-3— “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

“Framed”, that is put together; adjusted; the parts fitted together: the word expresses the manifoldness and the unity of all creation. The tense (perfect; completed in the past with abiding results) marks that the original lesson of creation remains for abiding use and application.

· **“So that things which are seen”** - as the heaven, earth, and sea, and in which the invisible things of God, the perfections of His nature, are discerned. This is an illustration of what faith is, viewed as a “conviction in reference to things not seen.” We did not see it; but God has told us so in His revelation; and by believing it, or by faith, we believe that the “ages” were “framed” by God. Even in the very existence of God Himself:

ⲡ 1 Timothy 6:16— “16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. “

· **“Were not made of things which do appear.”** - the ages were not made from pre-existence matter, but out of nothing (*exnihilo*). The world was framed by the very word of God! The practical force of this verse to us is: our “faith” does not rest upon what “appears” outwardly, but is satisfied with the bare Word of God. Since God created the universe out of

nothing, how easily can He preserve and sustain us when there is not anything (to our view) in sight!

[As expressed in verse 2, the “elders” obtained a good testimony” because of their faith. The rest of the chapter is filled with illustrations of the faith possessed by these “elders”. The first three mentioned were “antediluvians” (those that lived before the great flood)].

4 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.

¶ Genesis 4:1-5— “1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”

- **“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,”** –(Ref. Gen 4:3-5) the question here is one that the reader must answer; What made Abel’s sacrifice more excellent? It was “by faith” that Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. “The superior excellency of Abel’s sacrifice to Cain’s, lay both in the matter, and in the manner of it; the one was offered heartily to the Lord, the other only in show; the one was offered in faith, the other not; Abel looked through his sacrifice to the sacrifice of Christ, not so Cain” (J. Gill). The superiority of the one sacrifice to the other lies in the fact that God gave acceptance to one and not another. Although there is no prior evidence of required sacrifice, it should be noted that sacrifices were of Divine institution to express or foreshadow Christ. Cain knew what was expected of him, yet, he chose not to render the proper sacrifice towards God. Whatever works do not spring from faith are unacceptable to God.
- **“By which he obtained witness that he was righteous,”** - not righteousness by his offering, nor by his faith, but by the righteousness of Christ, which his faith in his sacrifice looked unto.
- **“God testifying of his gifts:”** - God testified of the excellency of the sacrifice by probably consuming the offering with fire sent from heaven.
- **“And by it he being dead yet speaketh.”** - Although Abel died a death at the hands of his own brother, such was his faith, or because of his faith, though he is dead, he is yet spoken of, as the Word of God is read, preached, and studied.

Through an act of faith Abel “obtained witness” that he was righteous. God certainly testified to his righteousness in showing respect to his offering. Jesus also bore witness to the righteousness of Abel in Matthew 23:35, “*35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar*” and the apostle John in 1 John 3:12, “*12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.*” Through his faith Abel still speaks and his faith is given for our learning; Romans 15:4— “*4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*” Abel’s example of faith continues to warn us in regards to worshipping God.

5 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.

¶ Genesis 5:21-24— “21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: 22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: 23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: 24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.”

An Example of “Faith Walking”:

- **“By faith Enoch was translated”** – (Ref. Gen. 5.21-24) “translated” means to change, to transpose, to transfer, to remove from one place to another...to carry across, to bear up. A good example for the Christian may be found in Colossians 1:13; “13 *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*” Yet, this is spiritual in nature as all converted persons are translated...but this speaks of a translation from earth to heaven there to continue living with the saints brought about by a change from mortality to immortality (Enoch was a pledge for the resurrection from the dead).

- **“That he should not see death;”** - Why did Enoch not see or taste death? Because of his belief; because of his faith...Enoch obtained a great benefit from God, translation to heaven without tasting death because of his belief. Notice that none but a believer can be an object of the divine favor of God.

- **“And was not found, because God had translated him:”** - that is, he was not to be found among men or in the land of the living, for God had removed him from earth to heaven.

- **“For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”** - Enoch did those things that pleased God...**he walked with God by faith** in the ways of his worship and service and thus was acceptable to God in Christ. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Enoch’s example of faith, “walking with God,” illustrates the value of walking with God throughout life.

6 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.

- **“But without faith it is impossible to please him:”** - The argument is framed thus: God Himself had translated Enoch, who before his translation had pleased Him (as his translation evidenced); but without faith it is impossible to please God: —therefore Enoch was by faith translated. The argument is drawn from the impossibility of the contrary: as it is impossible to please God without faith, and as Enoch received testimony that he did please God, then he must have had faith...a justifying and sanctifying faith. Faith is that which alone obtains acceptance with God.

- **“For he that cometh to God”** - that is, to the throne of grace, to worship, to prayer, for assistance and to service to Him...such a coming ought to be spiritual and with the heart which would presuppose a spiritual life in Christ.

¶ Hebrews 4:16— “16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

- **“Must believe that he is,”** - that is, “exists”...one must believe in God, as the God of all grace, love and mercy; and one must believe in Him not only as the God of nature (creation) and

providence, but as his covenant God and Father in Christ.

- **“And that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”** - that is, those that seek Him in Christ through faith, where He is only to be found. To seek God is to forsake, deny, go out of self, and take Him for our Ruler and satisfying portion. What is our reward? Heaven, or completed salvation, is spoken of as a “reward”...to intimate the character of those to whom it is given, namely, the diligent laborer. Note: that which God rewards is the work of His own Spirit within us, so that we have no ground for boasting.

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.

¶ Genesis 6:13-22— “13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. 14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 15 And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. 16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. 17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. 18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons’ wives with thee. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. 20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive. 21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. 22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.”

The facts are these: “Noah was warned of God of things not seen as yet;” in consequence of this, he was “moved with fear,” and built an ark; he obtained the salvation of his family; “he condemned the world, and he became an heir of the righteousness that is by faith.”

- **“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet,”** - the approaching deluge was the event of which Noah was warned. The circumstances of that event are termed “things not seen as yet;” because, though in their own nature sufficiently apprehensible by the senses, they were then unseen, because future, and because nothing in the appearance of nature indicated their approach. Noah’s confidence (faith) in what God said would happen (unseen) prompted him to act in reverence toward God.

- **“Moved with fear,”** - When it is said that Noah was “moved with fear,” we are not to suppose that he was in any degree afraid that he or his family were to perish in the approaching deluge...but with an awful sense of the judgments of God upon the wicked; and with reverence of God by whom he had received the warning or with a religious fear by which he offered worship to God. A reverential awe of God is a sure fruit of saving faith.

- **“Prepared an ark to the saving of his house;”** - the building of the ark was to secure his family from the flood which he believed would shortly come upon the world, according to the Word of God...in this his faith was seen...true faith is attended through or by means of obedience.

· **“By the which he condemned the world,”** - as a preacher and through his actions he declared that the world would be condemned...by his works, as well as his words, he reproved, and condemned them, by building the ark he declared his own faith and condemned their unbelief.

· **“And became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”** - “the righteousness which is by faith” is the justification by believing or faith in Christ and eternal life through that. All righteousness is of Christ and is received by means of faith. Noah received a right standing in God’s eyes because his faith pleased God...Noah demonstrated that faith and works are not necessarily contrary to one another.

From the examples of these antediluvian saints we learn that faith is a strong conviction that “worships” God properly, “walks” with Him in life, and “works” as He directs.

Without faith it is impossible to please God! We have seen how Abel, Enoch, and Noah “obtained a good testimony” by their faith. Of Enoch in particular it is said “he pleased God.” Whether we are “worshipping”, “walking”, or “working”, faith must be the motivating factor behind it all...without faith then, we can never please God.

There is but one type of faith that is pleasing to God and includes the following:

1. Includes conviction “that believes that God is.” We must believe there is a God, and that he is the God of the Bible; though we do not see Him, we have faith in “things not seen.”
2. Includes confidence “that He acts on the part of those who diligently seek Him.” We must believe that God acts on the part of those seeking after Him.

Ð 1 Chronicles 28:9— “9 And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.”

Ð 2 Chronicles 7:14— “14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

Ð 2 Chronicles 16:9— “ 9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.”

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 11:1-7

The faith which leads “to the saving of the soul” is one that includes a strong conviction that God is and a strong conviction that He will reward those who diligently seek Him. It is the same type of faith in Abel, Enoch, and Noah.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 11:8-22

Another aspect of our faith pertains to “the promises” in which we hope; we are warned not to fall short of what’s been promised [Hebrews 4:1— “1 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.”] and along with faith (patience) is necessary to inherit the promises [Hebrews 6:11-12— “11 And we desire that every

one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: 12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”]

The faith that pleases God, then, is one that “embraces” God’s promises. In verses 8-22, we learn of the faith of those who “embraced” the promises and because of their faith, God is not ashamed to be called their God.

8 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.

- **“By faith Abraham, when he was called”** - Note: The individual, internal, and invincible call of God is an act of sovereign grace, accompanied by all-mighty power, quickening those who are dead in trespasses and sin, imparting to them spiritual life. This Divine call is regeneration, or the new birth, when its favored recipient is brought “out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

Ð 1 Peter 2:9— “9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”

Abraham was called out of his own country, kindred, and father’s house; which was an emblem of the call of God’s people out from among the men of the world, friends, acquaintances, relations, and even out of themselves...out of darkness and bondage. Those that are called are those that are chosen for the raising up as fit instruments to propagate the interest and cause of God.

- **“To go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance,”** - that is from Ur of the Chaldees, to the land of Canaan {a complete break from the old is required for the regenerated person...a practical separation from the world is imperative}. The inheritance was not to his own person but to his seed and posterity. A saving faith is one which heeds the Divine commands as well as relies upon Divine promises.

- **“Obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went”** - in the word “obeyed” there are at least two things there: “obeyed signifies the consent of the mind, “and went out” tells of his actual performance. Abraham obeyed not only in word, but in deed. When God called him to go forth, and Abraham prepared to obey the call to go forth, he knew not what land he was to go into which demonstrated the reality and power of his faith. Note: even if God’s commands appear severe or unreasonable, we must obey them...how many there are who profess to be God’s people yet only obey Him so long as they consider that their own interests are being served...unqualified obedience is required from us. This is another example of “conviction or faith in things not seen.” Here we can see that faith and obedience are not contradictory terms. And the Lord said;

Ð Luke 6:46— “46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

9 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:

- **“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise,”** - that is, the land of Canaan, so called, because it was promised to Abraham, and his seed and is typical of heaven which is obtained by the free promise of God.

- **“As in a strange country,”** - here Abraham sojourned by faith, believing that as it was

promised it would be given to him, and his seed. This being a demonstration of faith on the part of Abraham because if it were not by faith that Abraham sojourned “in a strange country,” he might just as well returned to the comfort of the land that he had departed from where his relatives had possessions and fixed places of abode.

- **“Dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:”** - Abraham dwelt with them in tabernacles, or tents, which they pitched as they moved from place to place.

Nothing but continued faith could enable Abraham to continue as pilgrim and a sojourner in Canaan, waiting for the fulfillment of the promise (took 400 years; See Genesis 13:14-17; 15:13-21). Continued faith enabled Abraham to do so. Note the practicality of such a lesson; nothing but continued faith could enable the Christian Hebrews to continue “steadfast and unmovable” in the profession and practice of Christianity during the season of privation and suffering, of undefined length, which might intervene before the full accomplishment of the promises which had been made to them. Persevering faith would enable them to do this.

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

- **“For he looked for a city which hath foundations,”** - [this may indicate that the “promises” may have included more than the land of Canaan] This “city” is one prepared by God in the heavenly country in which the “foundations” are the everlasting love of God, eternal election, the covenant of grace, the promise of it and the preparation of it by God secured by the blood of Christ. Abraham was looking for this heavenly city by faith...he looked through and above temporal things, to spiritual things.

- **“Whose builder and maker is God.”** - God the Father has prepared this glory from the foundations of the world, and has promised it before the world began, and has chosen His people to it; whereby, the Spirit of God has made it known to His people and has prepared them for it. Our faith requires us to live as in a foreign country.

¶ 1 Peter 2:11— “11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;”

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.

- **“Through faith also Sara herself”** - (Not Abraham’s faith)

¶ Genesis 17:17— “17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?”

Both Abraham and Sara doubted at first but Sara perceived that the promise was the word of Him who was able to do as He had said, however inconsistent with the ordinary course of nature; she no longer laughed at the promise, but believed it, reckoning that He who had promised was faithful.

¶ Romans 4:17-22— “ 17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. 18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years

old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness."

Though Sarah laughed when she was first heard God's promise, she later "judged Him faithful who had promised."

- **"Received strength to conceive seed,"** - that is, received strength from the power of God to retain seed, received from men, and conceive by it...considering Sarah's condition she could not have conceived without the power of God...she was able to conceive by the grace of God.

- **"And was delivered of a child when she was past age,"** - though there were great difficulties in conception due to nature itself, Sarah was enabled by the power and grace of God to something contrary to nature. It was "by faith" that Sarah "received strength," and it was also "by faith" that she was now "delivered of a child." It is the constancy and perseverance of her faith which is here intimated. True faith not only appropriates his promise, but continues resting on the same till that which is believed be actually accomplished.

- **"Because she judged him faithful who had promised."** - that she should have a son at this stage of her life. Sarah fixed her mind not on the promise but on Him that had made the promise. Through her faith she understood God as being faithful, able, willing, sure to perform His word.

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.

- One should regard this verse as setting forth the fruit of Sarah's faith, namely the numerous posterity which issued from her son, Isaac. The double reference to the "sand" and the "stars" calls attention to the twofold seed: the earthly and the heavenly, the natural and the spiritual Israel. From her faith there issued Isaac, and from him, ultimately, Christ Himself.

13 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.

- **"These all died in faith,"** - To die in faith one must live by faith; and for this there must be, first, diligent labor to obtain a knowledge of Divine things...the understanding must be instructed before the path of duty can be known. Those that are here referred to are all those believers of the preceding verses with the exception of Enoch. These all died a corporeal death, which is common to all, to the righteous and to the wicked, but saints die in faith, having the grace of God which once implanted can never be lost.

- **"Not having received the promises,"** - The word "promises" is a metonymy (Greek for "other name" and means use of the name of one thing for that of another associated with it), for the things promised. Literally they had "received the promises," for that which they had heard from God was the basis of their faith. The Greek word for "received" signifies the actual participation in and possession of; faith, then, relies upon and rests in that which is not yet ours. The present spiritual happiness of the Christian consists more in promises and expectant anticipation than an actual possession, for "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." They did not receive the promises in their lifetime but through faith they could see them "afar off."

· **“But having seen them afar off,”** - that is possible because the eyes of their understanding had been Divinely enlightened...Thus they were able to perceive in the promises the wisdom, goodness, and love of God.

Ð Ephesians 1:18— “18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,”

· **“And were persuaded of them, and embraced them,”** - This announces the soul’s satisfactory acquiescence in the veracity of God as to the making good of His word. They had a full assurance of faith, that what was promised would be fulfilled. They “embrace” these promises warmly...such is the nature of true faith when one lays hold of the promises of salvation...this is the effect of assurance.

· **“And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”** - They who really embrace the promises of God are suitably affected and influenced by them: their delight in heavenly things is manifested by being weaned from earthly things.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

· **“For they that say such things”** - that is, that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth. They sought a homeland...a heavenly country.

· **“Declare plainly that they seek a country.”** - the country that they were seeking was heaven itself, the promised rest...for them to seek a earthly rest would have been carnal and not the result of faith. To “seek” the promised Inheritance denotes that earnest quest of the believer after that which he supremely desires

Ð Psalm 27:4— “4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.”

To seek after heaven must be the chief aim and supreme task which the Christian sets before him: laying aside all that would hinder, and using every means which God has appointed.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

· **“And truly, if they had been mindful of that country”** - that is, Chaldea:

· **“From whence they came out,”** - as Abraham and Sarah did along with their posterity.

· **“They might have had opportunity to have returned.”** - The patriarch’s remaining in a strange land was quite a voluntary thing on their part. Yet, they could have returned...this is an important lesson for the Christian. God does no violence to the will of man, that through exercising His sovereignty man also retains his freedom. Conversion itself is wholly brought about by the mighty operations of Divine grace, nevertheless it is as a free act on the part of the creature. However, once lead out of the bondage of sin and to the obtaining of the knowledge and belief in the truth, the Christian is content to sojourn here rather to return to that which is now detestable to his very nature.

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.

- **“But now they desire a better country,”** - This is not to be understood of that present time, they were not then in heaven...but this is the desire of the saints that are at present, still on earth, whose desire is a better “country” which the earth is not capable of providing.
- **“That is, an heavenly:”** - One of the evidences that we are truly seeking Heaven, is the possession of hearts that are weaned from this world. He who finds his satisfaction in temporal things is woefully deceived if he imagines he can enjoy eternal things...we can not be fixed to the things of this world...the soul of every wise man has heaven for his country, and earth as a strange place.
- **“Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God:”** - Because the patriarchs were willing to renounce all worldly prospects so as to follow God in an obedient faith, for the sake of an invisible inheritance, God did not disdain to be known as their Friend and Portion. This was the grand reward for their faith. So well did God approve of their desire and design, He was pleased to give evidence of His special regard unto them. “Not ashamed” literally signifies that God had no cause to “blush” because He had been disgraced by them...He made a joyous acknowledgement of them. The wider reference is to the elect, who have a special interest in God.
- **“For he hath prepared for them a city.”** - Here is the crowing evidence that He is their God. The “City” is Heaven itself. It is spoken of as “prepared” because God did, in His eternal counsels, appoint it:

Ð Matthew 20:23— “23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.”

Ð 1 Corinthians 2:9— “9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

This proves that God is not ashamed of the relation He has with His people because He has made provision for them to dwell with Him to all eternity.

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

Ð Genesis 22:1-24— “1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. 2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. 3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. 4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. 9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in

order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. 14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. 15 And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. 19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba. 20 And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor; 21 Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram, 22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. 23 And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother. 24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah."

- **"By faith Abraham, when he was tried,"** - "tried" or tested, that is by God...the word "offered up" is the same that is used for slaying and offering up sacrifices. Although this offering up of his son by Abraham might present a problem for some, it was done in faith by Abraham because he had the firm foundation to rest upon, for the Lord Himself had commanded him to do so. Also, this lays no charge against God for tempting man to sin...God is under no law, but is absolute Sovereign; for God's will is the rule of justice and good; and though His creatures are bound by the laws He prescribes them, He Himself is not...He is the Lord of life, both Giver and Preserver of it; and He has the right to dispose of it in what manner He thinks fit. It may be added, that the "secret" will of God was not that Isaac should die, but a command was given to Abraham to offer him up, for the trial of his faith and love.

- **"Offered up Isaac:"** - Abraham showed the greatness of his faith in the offering up of his son...notice should be given to the preparation that Abraham went through to fulfill the command given to him by God. Yet, Abraham closed his eyes to all the difficulties, and steadfastly counted upon the power of God that He would fulfill the promise that He had made to him. **This is the very nature or character of a spiritual faith: it persuades the soul of God's absolute supremacy, unerring wisdom, unchanging righteousness, infinite love, almighty power. In other words, it rests upon the character of the living God, and trusts Him in the face of every obstacle.**

- **"And he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,"** - Abraham had a promise made to him that he should have a son, and that a numerous issue should spring from him, which would inherit the land of Canaan...yes, even the Messiah should be of his seed. Abraham firmly believed that these promises would be fulfilled, yet, he was commanded to offer this very son up to the Most Holy God. A demonstration of faith on the part of Abraham.

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

- This is brought in by the apostle to show wherein lay the greatest obstacle before Abraham's faith... He was called to offer up his son and heir after he had received the promises that his only-begotten, the one in which he dearly loved, was to be slain at his own hand; by which the special seed of the Messiah would issue from.

19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

- **"Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead;"** - Here we learn what was the immediate object of Abraham's faith on this occasion, namely, the mighty power of God. He was fully assured that the Lord would work a miracle rather than fail in the performance of His promise. Here we see exhibited another of faith's attributes, namely, the committal of events unto God. If Abraham had used carnal reasoning he would have been unable to rest until a solution was in sight...but faith rests the burden upon God...Abraham's reasoning was the reasoning of faith; and the conclusion of it was, not that he believed that God would raise his son from the dead, but that God was capable of doing it.

- **"From whence also he received him in a figure."** - Abraham had, as to his purpose, sacrificed Isaac, so that he considered him as dead; and he thus received him back from the dead. This prefigured the death and resurrection of Christ. As Isaac had long been waited for, was born in a special manner, was the only-begotten of his father, was offered up as a sacrifice, and was raised again to life (after the three day journey in which in the mind of Abraham he had offered his son up).

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

D Genesis 27:33-39— "33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed. 34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. 35 And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. 36 And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? 37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? 38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. 39 And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;"

- **"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau"** - Jacob the younger of the two brothers received the blessings of his father Isaac...the younger was blessed because he was taken into covenant with God because Jacob would be the issue of the spiritual seed of all those that were chosen of God.

- **"Concerning things to come."** - Isaac passed on the blessing to his son Jacob of the promised land. Isaac disposed of Canaan as if he already had possession of it. Yet, in fact, he owned not an acre of that Land. However, Isaac demonstrated his faith in that he passed on the blessing of the inheritance to his son Jacob for a land in which he had not yet taken hold of...his faith had taken hold of the promise of God that He would be faithful to the promise He had made

to his father Abraham.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

- **“By faith Jacob, when he was a dying,”** - That is, when he was about to die...he saw his death as imminent, Jacob passed a blessing on Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph. This was done in faith because there was no appearance of the fulfillment of the promise and it was not likely that Jacob would see these things fulfilled.

- **“Blessed both the sons of Joseph;”** -

⌞ Genesis 48:15-16— “ 15 And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, 16 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. This was done in faith and can be seen by the placing of Ephraim before Manasseh...Genesis 48:13, 14, 17, 18, 19; 13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them near unto him. 14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim’s head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh’s head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn. 17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father’s hand, to remove it from Ephraim’s head unto Manasseh’s head. 18 And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. 19 And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.”

- **“And worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.”** - the sense is, that Jacob, having blessed the two sons of Joseph, being sat upon his bed, and weak, he leaned upon the top of his staff, and worshipped God, and gave praise and glory to Him, that he had lived to see not only his son Joseph, but his seed also. The meaning then is, “By faith when about to die he blessed the sons of Joseph; and by faith also he reverently bowed before God in the belief that when he died his remains would be conveyed to the promised land, and expressed his gratitude in an act of worship, leaning reverently on the top of his staff.”

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

- **“By faith Joseph, when he died,”** -

⌞ Genesis 50:24— “24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

- **“Made mention of the departing of the children of Israel;”** - Joseph predicted the exodus of the children of Israel. He believed the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that Canaan should be the possession of their posterity. This shows the strength of his faith, and that it was about things not seen.

- **“And gave commandment concerning his bones.”** - the commandment was a very strict one concerning his bones, not his body, which shows that he believed their departure out of

Egypt was at a great distance, when his flesh would have already been consumed (200 yrs. after his death). He had such a firm belief that they would possess the land of promise, that he, exacted an oath of them that they would remove his remains with them, and that he might be buried in the land of his fathers. He could not have exacted this oath, nor could they have taken it, unless both he and they had a sure confidence that what God had spoken would be performed...this is indeed a confidence of faith.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 11:8-22

What kind of faith pleases God? The kind of faith demonstrated by Abel, a “worshipping faith”, and by Enoch, a “walking faith”, and by Noah, a “working faith.” Yet, there is also a “waiting faith” seen in the picture of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

The faith that pleases God is one that “embraces the promises” made by God. It is one that patiently awaits for the ultimate fulfillment, even if it doesn’t happen in one’s lifetime. However, with conviction and confidence of “things hoped for” and “things unseen” we must obey His calling, sojourn here on earth, offer up whatever He requires, and understand that we shall receive the necessary strength to do whatever He may bid us to do.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 11:23-40

In the last half of this chapter we are reminded how in the Old Testament those with faith were able to “overcome the world.” How such faith overcomes the world may vary. Notice what the Apostle John says;

Ð 1 John 5:4 & 5— “4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

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.

· **“By faith Moses, when he was born,”** - that is, the faith of the parents of Moses did not obey the edict of the Pharaoh that every male child was to be cast into the river but they instead;

· **“Was hid three months of his parents,”** - It was by faith that Moses’ parents were led to preserve his life by the confidence in God. The child was concealed in the hope that some way might be found out by which his life might be spared.

Ð Exodus 2:1-3— “1 And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. 2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. 3 And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river’s brink.”

Ð Acts 7:20— “20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father’s house three months:”

· **“Because they saw he was a proper child;”** - not only of a beautiful countenance, but that he was peculiarly grateful and acceptable to God (not an ordinary child)...the parents perceived something remarkable in him, which to them was a token that he would be the deliverer of God’s people, therefore, they hid him.

· **“And they were not afraid of the king’s commandment.”** – they did not observe it...that is, they were not so alarmed, nor did so dread the king, as to be induced to comply to the command. This command was contrary to their nature and to the laws of God and to the promise of God as to the multiplying of His people. The faith of Moses’ parents demonstrates that they could withstand the king’s edit. Their faith overcame the ruler of the strongest nation then on earth!

Ð Exodus 1:22— “22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.”

The history of Moses’ infancy, as an illustration of the faith of his parents, is thus admirably fitted to serve the Apostle’s object. It illustrates this general principle: “Persevering faith will do what nothing else can: it will enable you to do and suffer all the will of God, and, after having done so, to receive the promise...you may be called to what will expose your life, and what may be dearer to you than your life, to extreme danger; but a faith in the Gospel will prevent you from shrinking from the task assigned to you” (J. Brown).

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter;

· **“By faith Moses, when he was come to years,”** - Moses, when he had arrived to great knowledge, being a nobleman in the court of Pharaoh, had confidence in God when he called him to be the leader of his people.

· **“Refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter;”** - Moses (which means “out of the water”) chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Moses voluntarily renounced the honors and advantages connected with the title of “the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.” He saw his kinsman enslaved and oppressed; he knew that by renouncing all connection with them (his people), he might retain all that he possessed as son of the daughter of Pharaoh.

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

· **“Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God,”** - Moses chose to be with the Israelites, who were God’s chosen and peculiar people, and were the true worshippers of Him. These people were then oppressed and down-trodden; but they were the descendants of Abraham and were those that had designed to be God’s peculiar people. Moses chose these people because God was with them. Moses knew that when he cast his lot with them that he was subject to the same trials.

· **“Than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;”** - either the pleasures of Pharaoh’s court (which would include denying himself as a Hebrew) or sinful lusts in general. He chose to suffer affliction with God’s people rather than enjoy sin’s temporary pleasures.

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

· **“Esteeming the reproach of Christ”** - that is, on account of Christ or the approach which Christ suffered or the sufferings of Christ which may be common to all that proclaim Him as Savior. This is proof that the O.T. saints knew Christ and believed in Him...He was typified by sacrifices which they offered; and they were reproached for His sake, for the sacrifices they

offered, and for the worship they performed...the sufferings endured in the cause of religion.

- **“Greater riches than the treasures in Egypt:”** - Moses counted reproach itself riches, even greater than all the riches that Egypt might have to offer.
- **“For he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.”** - The recompense of reward, cannot refer to the possession of Canaan, for Moses was never to enter that country...the meaning seems to be this...Moses expected that all the sacrifices he made in the cause of God and His people would be far more than compensated in a future state. Such was the faith of Moses. His reward was “in things unseen”...”things hoped for”...that heavenly reward!

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

- **“By faith he forsook Egypt,”** - Moses’ fleeing to Midian was consistent with great courage and was a point of prudence, and in obedience to the will of God...his departure shows that he would not desist from the work he was called to, but that he waited for God’s time, when he should be again employed...Moses waited patiently for God to call him again to service [this is a good example of a man waiting of God’s timing and not forcing his timing on God. God is a God who expects and even demands preparation before the man of God enters the work of God].
- **“Not fearing the wrath of the king:”** - that is, Pharaoh...such are those that are called by grace, from a state of bondage and darkness, and out of a strange land, forsake this world and the powers of this world, and leave their situations in it, their sinful lusts and pleasures, everything that is in competition with Christ must be left in the past life. By faith Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king.
- **“For he endured,”** - that is, afflictions, reproach, Moses endured with patience and courage. His mind was not broken by them or overcome by them...Moses persevered by the grace of God trusting in the “things unseen”.
- **“As seeing him who is invisible.”** - that is, God...Moses had no doubt that God had called him to this work, and that He would sustain him, than if he would have saw him with is bodily eyes. This is a most accurate account of the nature of faith.

28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

- **“Through faith he kept the passover,”** - that is, Moses made or instituted or observed...he ordained the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood...it was appointed by divine direction...but Moses kept it and caused all the people to observe it which he did in faith of the speedy deliverance of the children of Israel, from the house of bondage; and of faith in the Messiah, of whom the Passover was a type.
- **“And the sprinkling of blood,”** - of the paschal lamb whose blood was spread on the door-posts and lintels of their dwellings and this according to divine appointment. This received the name of “Passover,” because while Jehovah visited in wrath every other house of the Egyptians, He passed over the dwellings of the Israelites, and did not suffer the destroyer to come into their houses to smite them.
- **“Lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.”** - the “sprinkled blood” allowed the destroyer to pass over the dwelling but remember that it was by faith that the Passover was observed. This was typical of the blood of Christ being sprinkled upon the hearts

and consciences of His people; whereby they are purified through faith...by the blood of Christ the justice of God is passed over if but we observe through faith.

29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

See Genesis 14:

- **“By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land:”** -That is only by confidence in God were they able to do this. It was not by the power which they possessed to remove the waters and to make passage for themselves, and it was not by the operation of any natural causes...and it is not to be supposed that all that passed through the Red Sea had saving faith but that they had faith that God would provide for them a passage.

ⓓ Exodus 14:21 & 22— “21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.22 And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.”

- **“Which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.”** - these were Pharaoh and his army who by observing the Israelites pass through the sea on dry ground thought they could do the same; but every one of them were drowned...possible their due for drowning the male infants of the Israelites, of which Moses was spared. This is evidence of lack of faith in the One that is able to deliver; this is living by sight and trust in what would seem to be evident.

ⓓ Exodus 14:23-28— “23 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.24 And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, 25 And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.26 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.28 And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.”

The Apostle’s object is to show the power of real faith in God, whatever be its object. The nature and extent of that efficacy will depend on the nature and extent of the revelation believed. A faith in a revelation respecting the safe passage of the Red Sea enabled the Israelites fearlessly to entrust themselves in the strangely formed valley between two mountainous ridges of tumultuous waves, and to reach in safety the opposite shore. A faith in the revelation of salvation from guilt and depravity, and death and hell, will enable the Christian to perform all duties, that are involved in obtaining complete possession of this salvation, and will in due time bring him into the enjoyment of all its blessings, in all their perfection.

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

(See Joshua 6:1-20)

- **“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down,”** - that is, it was not by natural causes, or by any

means that were in themselves adapted to secure the result...it was not by any natural tendency of the blowing of the horns...it was by the faith of Joshua, and the Israelites, who believed the walls would fall as God said they would. The strength of their faith can be seen in the fact that there was no natural tendency that would have caused this to happen by the actions of the Israelites.

- **“After they were compassed about seven days.”** - this was a trial of their faith and patience. Faith can even bring down the walls of unbelief if it rests upon the word of God as it accomplishing power. This may be an emblem of the fall of the walls of the hearts of unregenerate men; of their unbelief, hardness, enmity, and vain confidence; and of the conversion and subjection of them unto Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel.

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

(See Joshua 2:1-24)

- **“By faith the harlot Rahab”** - When Joshua crossed the Jordan, he sent two men as spies into the land and she saved them by concealment from the enemies that would have destroyed their lives. This woman was a wonderful and singular instance of the free, sovereign, distinguishing, powerful, and efficacious grace of God. She was one from the nation of Canaan...one that was to be abhorred...but being called by grace became an eminent believer. She believed that the true God had given the land of Canaan to the Israelites...she received the spies and hid them through that faith...she caused them to swear by the Lord that they would have mercy on her, and her family.

- **“Perished not with them that believed not,”** - that is, the inhabitants of Jericho, who were unbelievers and disobedient...they evidenced no such faith as Rahab had, and they were therefore destroyed...but Rahab perished not, neither temporally, nor eternally; her temporal salvation (not dying by the sword) was an emblem of a soul's receiving the Gospel...the scarlet thread that was hung out, was an emblem of the blood of Christ and the saving of her family was an emblem of complete salvation of all the elect.

- **“When she had received the spies with peace.”** - that is, by Christ...she hid them in her house for some time, lowered them down the wall, and during the taking of the city they saved her according to the promise and oath.

This was an important lesson to the Hebrew Christians that the Apostle was addressing. They, like Rahab, were called on to do violence to their patriotic feelings, to separate themselves from their unbelieving kindred and country, and to follow a course which exposed them not only to “spoiling of their goods,” but to imminent hazard of their lives. Nothing but faith could enable them to act properly in these circumstances.

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:

- **“And what shall I more say?”** - this intimates that the apostle had said enough to prove the definition of faith he had given; and that all the examples that he had used had gained a good report concerning their faith.

- **“For the time would fail me”** - yet, the apostle by no means had said all that he could on the subject of faith but due to the very time restraints for writing this epistle to them limited him...to enumerate all the instances of faith, and enlarge upon them, would take up to much of

his time and make the epistle long and tedious.

- **“To tell of Gedeon,”** – (Gedon was a Judge) Gedeon demonstrated his faith in ascribing former mercies and present afflictions to the Lord; in destroying the altar of Baal; in crediting the word of the Lord, that Israel would be saved by Him; which he showed in marching against a large army, with only three hundred men.
- **“And of Barak,”** – (a Judge) when the word of the Lord came to Barak, he showed some diffidence, yet acted in obedience to it, under the sole direction and counsel of a woman; he engaged Sisera’s vast army with a small number of men, and gave the glory and victory to the Lord.
- **“And of Samson,”** – (a Judge) was a child of promise, and devoted to the Lord...famous for his great strength, he had his infirmities, but was, without doubt, a good man; the last of his life being a demonstration of great faith; he did it with calling upon the Lord...he was strengthened for it by the Lord...he acted not for himself but as a type of Christ using his great strength in the total destruction of his enemies.
- **“And of Jephthae,”** – (a Judge) was remarked for his faith in ascribing the conquests of Israel in the wilderness to the Lord; in fighting with the Ammonites whom he conquered; and in his conscientiousness, in observing his vow (See Judges 11).
- **“Of David also,”** – (a King;) a man after God’s own heart, raised up to fulfill God’s will; whose faith appeared in his dependence on God, when he fought with Goliath; in encouraging himself in the Lord his God in all the times of distress he would encounter.
- **“And Samuel,”** – (a Prophet) a child of prayer, and early devoted to the Lord, who ministered to him...was always ready to hearken to his voice; was used very familiarly by him, and behaved with much uprightness.
- **“And of the prophets,”** – from Samuel to John the Baptist, who were famous for their trust in God, their faith in the Messiah, and for their honorable walk and conservation.

These, and multitudes of other similar events in the history of the prophets, attest the power of faith. They are events of which no rational account can be given on any principle but this: A revelation of the divine will was made to them; they believed it, and this produced its appropriate effect. They were enabled to do what otherwise they could not have done.

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

- **“Who through faith subdued kingdoms,”** – that is, those specified in the previous verses, and others like them...faith makes use of means to do it...believers have no reason to be afraid of kings or kingdoms...this being a lesson that we might fight against the powers of darkness.
- **“Wrought righteousness,”** – carried the laws of justice into execution, particularly on guilty nations. They executed the great purposes of God in punishing the wicked, and cutting off his foes.
- **“Obtained promises,”** – that is, they obtained as a result of their faith, promises of blessings on their posterity in future times...the promise of the land of Canaan; promises of victory over their enemies; promises concerning the Messiah

- **“Stopped the mouths of lions,”** - that is, Daniel, when cast into the lions den for his fidelity to his God. God sent his angel to shut the lion’s mouths, that they did not hurt him. And this was done by faith...”because he believed in his God.”

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

- **“Quenched the violence of fire,”** - As Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did...believers are delivered out of the fire of afflictions, and are not consumed thereby.
- **“Escaped the edge of the sword,”** - Lot, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, the Judges, David, Elijah, Elisha, and others were not destroyed by the sword.
- **“Out of weakness were made strong,”** - enabled to perform exploits beyond their natural strength, or raised up from a state of bodily infirmity, and invigorated for conflict.
- **“Waxed valiant in fight,”** - that is, they became valiant as Barak, Gideon, and David...examples to believers that through faith they may “wax valiant” in the face of adversity because they are engaged in a good cause and under the Captain of their salvation...being well provided with armor, and assured of victory, and a crown.
- **“Turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”** - the Canaanites, the Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and the Assyrians...who were put to flight by those already mentioned...men of faith!

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

- **“Women received their dead raised to life again:”** - As in the case of the woman of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:19-24) whose child was restored to life by Elijah and the son of the Shunamite woman whose child was restored to life by Elisha (2 Kings 4:18-37)...these were restored at the hands of the prophets by way of faith and resurrection...by the faith of the prophets.
- **“And others were tortured,”** - tympanize refers to a severe form of torture.
- **“Not accepting deliverance;”** - when it was offered to them, that is, on the condition that they would renounce their opinions, or do what was required of them.
- **“That they might obtain a better resurrection:”** - that is, the resurrection of the saints, which is unto everlasting life which is for those that died in the faith...a better resurrection was thought to be obtained because they already thought themselves dead at the hands of those that tortured them. The consideration of the better resurrection is of great use to strengthen faith, under sufferings, for righteousness sake, and this is obtained by suffering...all that live godly lives must expect such sufferings for the sake of righteousness.

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

- **“And others had trial of cruel mockings”** - this refers to the scorn and derision which the ancient victims of persecution faced. This has been often experienced by martyrs, and doubtless it was the case with those who suffered on account of their religious beliefs.
- **“And scourgings,”** - that is, whipping...this was a common mode of punishment, and was

usually inflicted before a martyr was put to death.

- **“Yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:”** - chains and prison.

37 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;

- The description of the hardships suffered by believers continues in this verse. As seen in the Gospel of John, the Jews were apt to stone people in mob action (a punishment common to the Jews), and many of God’s servants died before an angry crowd. The “sawn asunder” refers to the tradition that the prophet Isaiah was placed inside of a log and sawed in half. Execution by sword was common in the ancient world. In 1 Kings 19:10 there is a reference to Elijah’s words that Israel had slain many of the Lord’s prophets with the sword.

1 Kings 19:10— “10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”

The declaration that God’s people “were tempted” (*epeirasthesan*) the apostle here, among other sufferings which they were called to endure, may have referred to the temptations which were presented to the martyrs when about to die to abandon their religion and live. It is very possible to conceive that this might have been among the highest aggravations of their sufferings.

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

- Before finishing the list of indignities and horrors suffered by the prophets, the apostle injected an editorial comment that “the world was not worthy” of these heroes of the faith. The people of power, influence, prestige, and wealth who persecuted these saints were in no way equal to them. These persecuted ones understood the invisible and eternal word...they knew it through faith. They knew that its value was far beyond the wealth of the entire world which surrounded their senses. While they hid from their oppressors in the wilderness and in caves, they trusted God and kept their eyes fixed upon the unseen realities of God’s kingdom...a demonstration of faith.

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

- **“And these all, having obtained a good report through faith,”** - they were all commended and approved on account of their confidence in God.
- **“Received not the promise:”** - they did not receive the fulfillment of the promise or did not receive all that was promised...like the patriarchs before them, the judges, kings, and prophets who believed God gained a reputation for righteousness by faith while they lived, but they all died without seeing the Lord fulfill His promise. As was previously argued in Hebrews 4:8, 9, God’s promised rest did not arrive when Israel entered Canaan; it is still future for His people.

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

- The lack of fulfillment of promise was not a failure on God’s part. It was part of the divine plan. God actually predetermined this situation, that is, that there was “some better for us.” According to God’s eternal plan, the age in which He began to fulfill His promise would follow

the times of the patriarchs, judges, kings, and prophets. That time began when the eternal Son of God became flesh..."in these last days: (Heb. 1:2). The Lord spoke His final word through His Son Jesus Christ.

The conclusion is obvious. Since the first coming of Christ, believers live not in the promise but in the age of fulfillment. It was in God's purpose to make the O.T. saints wait for the coming of the messianic Son, before He establishes His eternal kingdom at the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ....the unity between the O.T. saints and the N.T. saints is Jesus, "the author and finisher of our faith"

▷ Hebrews 12:2— "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."

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 11:23-40

Through faith the examples listed above truly overcame the world. Sometimes their victory was miraculous; often it was not. Yet, their ultimate victory was that they died in their faith and now enjoy the fruit of that faith: bliss in the presence of the Lamb. May this great chapter and the examples of the heroes of the faith, serve to motivate us to grow in the faith which pleases God, embraces the Promises, and overcomes the world. We may not win the praise of the world, but we will receive the praise of God, for such is the faith which leads "to the saving of the soul."

[Introduction/Chapter 12](#)

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER TWELVE

[Introduction/Chapter 13](#)

OVERVIEW:

Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill

In this chapter the apostle presses to a constant exercise of faith and patience, amidst the various afflictions the saints are exercised with; delivers out several exhortations useful in the Christian life; and shows the difference between the legal and Gospel dispensations. Having in the preceding chapter given many illustrious instances and examples of faith, he makes use of this cloud of witnesses, as he calls them, to engage the Hebrews to drop their unbelief, and run with faith and patience the race set before them (v. 1), and which he further urges from the example of Christ; from his concern in faith, being the author and finisher of it; from what he suffered when here on earth, both the contradiction of sinners, and the death of the cross, for the joy of having his people with him in heaven; and from his glorious state, being set down at the right hand of God. Whereas, as yet, they had not been called to shed their blood in their warfare against sin (vv. 2,3,4). And that they must expect chastisement, and should bear it patiently, he cites a passage of Scripture out of Proverbs 3:11,12. which suggests, that those who are the children of God, and are loved and received by him, are chastened and scourged (vv. 5, 6). Wherefore this was no other than dealing with them as children; and should they not be thus dealt with, it would be an argument they were bastards, and not sons (vv. 7, 8). And next the apostle argues from the right of parents to chastise their children, and the subjection that is yielded to them; that if the corrections of them, who were the fathers of their bodies, were quietly submitted to; then much more should those of the father of their souls; and the rather, since the chastenings of the former are only for temporal good, and according to their fallible judgments; whereas the latter are for spiritual profit, and an increase of holiness (vv. 9, 10). And though it must be allowed that no chastening, for the present time, is matter of joy, but of grief; yet the effects of them are the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to them that are exercised by them (v. 11). Wherefore the apostle exhorts the believing Hebrews to encourage themselves and others under afflictions; and to behave in such manner, and carry it so evenly, that they might not be an occasion of stumbling to weak believers (vv. 12, 13). He exhorts them in general to follow peace with all men, and particularly holiness; which is absolutely necessary to the beatific vision of God (v.14), and to take care that no heresy or immorality spring up among them, and be connived at, and cherished by them, to the troubling of some, and defiling of others (v.15). and particularly, lest the sin of uncleanness, or any sort of profaneness should be found among them; of which Esau, the brother of Jacob from whence they sprung, was guilty; whose profaneness lay in selling his birthright for a morsel of meat, and whose punishment was, that he should be deprived of the blessing; which decree was irrevocable, notwithstanding his tears (vv. 16,17), and to enforce these exhortations, the apostle observes to these believers, that they were not now under the law, but in a Gospel church-state. The terror of the legal dispensation they were delivered from is described by the place where the law was given, a mount burning with fire; by circumstances attending it, blackness, darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet; by the matter of it, a voice of words, which they that heard, entreated they might hear no more; and by the effect the whole had upon Moses-himself, who quaked and trembled at what he saw and heard (vv. 18, 19, 20, 21).

The happiness of the Gospel dispensation, or of the Gospel church-state, is expressed by the names of it, called Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem; and by the company the saints have there, and their fellowship with them; angles innumerable; elect men, whose names are written in heaven, and whose spirits are made perfectly just; God the Judge of all, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; whose blood being sprinkled on their consciences, spoke peace and pardon to them; such as neither Abel's blood nor sacrifice could speak (vv. 22,23,24). From whence the apostle argues, that care should be taken not to neglect and despise the voice of Christ, who is now in heaven, and speaks from thence in his Gospel and ordinances; seeing they escaped not who rejected him that spake on earth, at Mount Sinai, which was shaken by his voice; and the rather, since it appears from a prophecy in Haggai 2:6, 7. that under the Gospel dispensation, not only the earth but the heavens would be shaken (vv. 25, 26), which is an emblem of the shaking and removing the ordinances of the ceremonial law, that Gospel ordinances might take place, and remain for ever (v. 27). Upon the whole, the apostle exhorts the believing Hebrews, that seeing they had received the immovable kingdom of grace, and were admitted into the Gospel dispensation, or church-state; that they would hold fast the Gospel of the grace of God, and serve the Lord, according to his revealed will, with reverence and godly fear, which would be acceptable to him; or otherwise he would be consuming fire; as he is to all the despisers and neglecters of his Gospel and ordinances (vv. 28,29).

Hebrews 12:1-29

Part Three: The Superiority of the Christian's Walk of Faith (10:19-13:25)

II. Endurance of Faith	12:1-29
A. Example of Christ's Endurance	12:1-4
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INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 12:1-3

The apostle having illustrated the nature and power of faith in the previous chapter, proceeds in this to exhort those to whom he wrote to apply the same principles to their own case, and to urge them to manifest the same steady confidence in God and perseverance in their holy walk.

Throughout this study, we have noted the emphasis in being steadfast in our faith. Here the emphasis continues, with our own life of faith described as a race in which we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses as mentioned in the previous chapter. These great heroes of the faith "bear witness" by their exemplary lives and encourage us in running the race of faith.

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,

- **"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about"** - the apostle represents those whom

he had referred to in the previous chapter.

- **“With so great a cloud of witnesses,”** - here the apostle takes for granted that he has already proved this fact...the witnesses here referred to are plainly the worthies under the former economy ...the O. T. saints, the instances of whose faith and patience and suffering for the cause of true religion bore a noble testimony to God, by which they received a good report from Him and will hereafter be witnesses for Him...their “witness” recorded their achievements, and sufferings, and attainments, attend in the most satisfactory way the power of faith, its necessity, and its sufficiency for the purposes of duty and trial.

- **“Let us lay aside every weight,”** - or burden or sin which is a weight...the word “weight” usual meaning is that of weight of burden and there is allusion here, doubtless, to the runners in the games who were careful not to encumber themselves with anything that was heavy. Sin is a burden for the Christian running the race set before him...every transgression is to be laid aside as a burden...it is to be laid of Christ. Such as,

¶ Luke 21:34-36— “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. 35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

- **“And the sin which doth so easily beset us,”** - meaning the corruption of nature in general or some particular sin...these types of sin shall encumber, if not make impossible, the race that is to be run by the true Christian.

¶ Colossians 3:8— “8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”

¶ 1 Peter 2:1 & 2— “1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”

¶ James 1:21— “21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

- **“And let us run with patience the race that is set before us,”** - the race that we are to run is in the world; the prize run for is the heavenly glory; the mark to direct in it, is Christ. Many are the runners, but it is only the overcomers that shall receive the prize, which being held by Christ is given to them. The mark set is given to the Christian by means of the Gospel. This race is to be “run with patience” because of the many exercises in the way and because of the length of the race always remembering the prize that is set before us. This race does not require one quick burst of energy but rather, this race is one of endurance. It requires a sustained effort over a period of time. Jesus often taught his disciples the need for patient endurance.

¶ Luke 8:12— “12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.”

¶ Matthew 10:22— “22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”

¶ Matthew 24:13— “13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

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.

· **“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith;”** - Jesus is, the beginning, perfecter, and rewarder of our faith. He is to be looked upon with the eye of understanding, that is, the eye of faith...faith is the spiritual sight of Christ...the Author of eternal salvation and it is to Him that we are to look for salvation. As the “finisher of our faith,” Christ is the author or the sufficient cause of it. He is the fulfiller and the fulfilling of all scripture-promises and prophecies. Christ is the finisher through the very power of God...Christ gives the very blessings of God to all that are His...He carries on the work of faith, and He will perform it with power. We are to focus on Christ if we are to run the race.

1. Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith:

℟ Hebrews 2:10— “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. He is the beginning and the end:

℟ Revelation 1:8 & 11— “8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. 11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.”

3. He has blazed the trail for us:

a. As our forerunner:

℟ Hebrews 6: 19 & 20— “ 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

b. He has opened a “new and living way.”

℟ Hebrews 10:20— “ 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;”

4. He now helps us finish it:

℟ Hebrews 7:25— “ 25 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.”

· **“Who for the joy that was set before him”** - Christ, instead of being in the bosom of the Father, came into this world; and suffered shame and disgrace of the cross for the sake of the salvation of all the elect, who are His joy, and on which His heart is set or determined.

· **“Endured the cross,”** - This joy lead Christ to bear the opposition that they made to Him, both in their words and behavior...this is not to be understood as only the cross of wood on which His body was to hang, but all the sufferings He had to endure from the cradle to the cross...yet, Christ did endure the tortures and sufferings of the cross (Why should the Christian wear a cross

about his neck? This was an instrument of torture; it signifies that Christ had to suffer and pay the penalty for which we were unable to pay...what is there to be proud of here that we should wear it as an emblem of victory?...a victory of which the very blood and life of the Son of God was necessitated to win [this is a personal commentary by the writer of this study guide. Each person must decide such things for themselves; but we are to praise God through His Son and not through the cross). ...Notice the next statement...

- **“Despising the shame,”** - that is, of the cross, for it was an ignominious (shameful, disgraceful, despicable, degrading) death as well as a painful death. He endured with patience and as such we are not to be ashamed of the reproach of Christ, but count it an honor to be worthy to suffer reproach for the sake of Christ.

- **“And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”** - that is, in heaven which is an expression of His majesty and glory of God...an honor due Christ as an equal to God and having completed His work of salvation.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

- **“For consider him”** - that is, attentively reflect on His example that you may be able to bear your trials in a proper manner...we are to consider the greatness of Christ’s person, as God, the Son of God, the heir of all things, as the Savior of all lost sinners....we are to consider the vast difference between Him and ourselves...if He suffered reproach in His greatness, what should we expect.

- **“That endured such contradiction of sinners against himself,”** - the Jews of the day denied His deity, His sonship, His person, His offices, and they treated Him with contempt as a priest and as Savior. They were against His actions, plans, perverted his sayings, and ridiculed His claims. Yet, regardless of their opposition, Christ persevered in the course that He had marked out, and went patiently forward in the execution of His plans. The idea is, that we are to pursue the path of duty and follow the dictates of conscience...let the world say what they will about it. In doing this we cannot find a better example than Christ, our Savior.

- **“Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”** - The meaning is, that there is a great danger of being disheartened and wearied out by the opposition which one will meet with if he be Christian. But with the shining example of One who never disheartened, who being appointed and sent by God to be a Savior, came to be the author of salvation, and to Him only should we look for so great a salvation.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 12:1-3

Running the race of faith requires both negative and positive elements. Negatively, we must lay aside things which would hinder us; positively, we must keep our focus on Jesus who has made our salvation possible. In both cases, the Word of God (the Bible) is crucial for in it we learn what sort of things we must lay aside and, we learn about our Lord, what He endured, and as such, His example should be an inspiration for us to run the race with all diligence. If we are not now running the race of faith, then it is incumbent on us to lay aside the excess baggage of the world and the sin that weighs us down.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 12:4-11

In encouraging his readers to “run the race that is set before them,” the “writer” of this Epistle

mentions the need for endurance. The suggestion is made that the race will not be an easy one and as proof it is shown that the “forerunner” Himself had to endure hostility from sinners and eventually the cross.

They will now be reminded that they have yet to endure what the Lord endured; They had “not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin,” and the possibility that decisions for Christ bring with them persecutions that were likely to intensify. To help them in this regards, the “writer” reminds them of “the chastening of the Lord by quoting from well known passages from Proverbs. Here he expounds upon the purpose of the Lord’s chastening showing them how the Lord might use such hardships, even persecutions, to “chasten” them for their good.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

- The Jewish believers to whom the Epistle was written were reminded that even though they had “resisted” (stood against) the sin of unbelief because of their identification with Jesus, they had not yet been asked to die while struggling (wrestling against) with the temptation to apostatize. Jesus and the O.T. saints were to be reminders to all believers that it is possible to endure such persecution even to the point of dying. The eternal nature of the reward is far superior to anything that can be gained by “giving up in the struggle.” To continue living in the present age at the expense of forsaking Christ and His eternal kingdom is to squander the greatest treasure for a mere pittance. Resistance may require the shedding of blood unto death for the Christian...can we expect less than that which our Lord suffered. We must strive against sin which is our principal antagonist.

5 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:

- **“And ye have forgotten the exhortation”** - (See Prov. 3:11-12) the object of the apostle introducing it here is, to show that the afflictions were designed on the part of God to produce some happy effects in the lives of His people, and that they ought, therefore, to bear them patiently. Those that are loved of God, are chastened by Him, and loved while they are chastened...their chastening is in love...that we might be more and more partakers of holiness, and not be condemned with the world.

Ð Proverbs 3:11 & 12— “11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: 12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.”

- **“Which speaketh unto you as unto children,”** - that is, as the children of God, or of Christ...there is a sense as to the application...the correction is designed and is given in love by God for our instruction...it is grace in exercise for correction for the good of them that are loved by the Father...this correction is not to be despised but understood as something useful and profitable that will be for our good.

- **“My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord,”** - literally, do not regard it as a small matter or as a trivial thing...the kind of correction here designed is to correct us of our faults of which the nature is discipline...the idea here is that God will correct His children in general and when they wander in their faults in order to bring them back to Himself.

What does the word “chastening” mean? The Greek word is *paideia* (*paideia*) and in the KJV it is variously translated as “chastening, nurture, instruction, chastisement.” Thayer defines the word saying that it is “the whole training and education of children which relates to the cultivation of

mind and morals, and employs for this purpose commands, admonitions, reproof, and punishment.” In adults this same “chastening” cultivates the soul by correcting mistakes and curbing passions. This instruction is aimed at increasing virtue and turning men from their evil ways.

- **“Nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:”** - we are not to faint when we are rebuked of the Lord because these rebukes are not in a way of wrath, but love. We are to take notice of the affliction because it has a definite purpose and therefore we are to bear up patiently under them and study the design of the rebuke so that we may grow by it in our walk.

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Herein is an important truth. Some deny the truth that chastening is of the Lord believing that a loving God would never bring suffering to His children. Many believe that any suffering is due solely to the influence of Satan which they interpret from the Book of Job. Yet Satan himself could not do anything unless God allowed it; Job’s adversity came ultimately from the Lord.

Ⓐ Job 42:11— “11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.”

- **“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,”** - all men are not the objects of God’s love, only His special chosen people in Christ...God loves those that He quickens and calls by His grace, justifies, pardons, and accepts in Christ...those that He causes to love Him. Yet, as a universal rule, God sends trials on those whom He truly loves...He sends chastisement that is deserved, this is deemed a chastisement of love. The very fact that He corrects us shows that He has towards us a father’s feelings, and exercises towards us a paternal care. If He did not, He would let us go on without attention, and leave us to pursue a course of sin that would involve us in ruin.

- **“And scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”** - that is, whom He receives or acknowledges as His child...those that He has predestinated to the adoption of children, and in the covenant of His grace has declared Himself a father to. The meaning is the same as in the former part of this verse, that every one who becomes a child of God is treated by Him with that watchful care which shows that He sustains towards them a paternal relationship.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

The Bible clearly teaches the chastening is of the Lord.

1. In the Old Testament:

Ⓐ Deuteronomy 8:5— “5 Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.”

Ⓐ Proverbs 3:11-12— “11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: 12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.”

2. In the New Testament:

Ⓐ 1 Corinthians 11:31-32—31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.”

Ⓐ Revelation 3:19— “19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

Ⓐ Hebrews 12:7 & 8— “7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.”

- **“If ye endure chastening.”** - that is, in faith, with patience, with courage and constancy, with humility and reverence...we are called to undergo or to experience correction. Chastening should be considered from where it comes and the purpose for why it is sent.

- **“God dealeth with you as with sons;”** - God does not cast us off and regard us as if we were not related to Him...chastening is owing of them that are His children. God only chastens when it is necessary and when He does it is in love and mercy, and for our good.

- **“For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”** - that is, He evinces towards His son the care which shows that He sustains the relation of a father. If we deserve correction, He corrects us; and He aims by all proper means to exhibit the appropriate care and character of a father. As we receive such attention from an earthly parent, we ought to expect to receive similar notice from our Father in heaven.

The “fact” of the Lord’s chastening cannot be questioned by anyone who accepts the Bible.

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

- **“But if ye be without chastisement,”** - If one has never met with anything that is adapted to correct their faults, to subdue their temper, to chide their wanderings, it would prove that they were in a condition of illegitimacy.

- **“Whereof all are partakers,”** - that is, all the true children of God can be expected to receive such correction...we are all in a state of imperfection and prone to sin; therefore, God does not exempt any where correction is required.

- **“Then are ye bastards, and not sons.”** - all are not sons that claim a profession of religion; and if they are not chastised, they are not the children of God...if a professed Christian should pass along through life without any occurrence that would indicate the paternal care and attention designed to correct their faults, it would show that they never had been God’s children, but were cast off and wholly disregarded.

9 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?

- **“Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh”** - this is given as an additional consideration to induce us to receive chastisement with submission. The argument in this verse is derived from the difference in the spirit and design with which we are corrected by God and an earthly parent. When God corrects it is without passion or improper feelings...it is just in all cases....without temper.

· **“Which corrected us, and we gave them reverence:”** - our own fathers corrected us in due season, in love and in instruction to prevent our ruin and as such “we gave them reverence,” that is, we submitted to them; honored them; loved them. Painful at the time as correction might have been, yet when we have fully understood the design of it, we have loved them the more. The effect of such discipline, properly administered, is to produce real veneration for a parent.

· **“Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?”** - that is, since God’s government is so much more perfect; since He has a better right to control us; and since His administration is free from all the defects which attend parental discipline on earth, there is a much higher reason for bowing with submission and reverence to Him. We should bow to His sovereignty, resign to His will, be humble under His mighty hand, be still and quite, and bear all patiently; the advantage arising from such subjection is life. “And live,” means that His fatherly chastisements are adapted to secure our spiritual life...He corrects us that He may promote our final happiness, and His afflictions are the means of saving us from eternal death. We shall “live” more comfortably, and more to the glory of God, in communion and fellowship with him here, and in heaven to all eternity.

The how of the Lord’s chastening is seen in the form of instructive discipline. There is both “instructive” and “corrective” chastening or discipline. “Instructive” chastening is designed to prevent the need for “corrective” chastening. “Instructive” discipline is seen most often in the form of teaching, in the form of warnings and admonitions.

Ð John 15:2 & 3— “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”

One way that God chastens us is through is Word. But “instructive discipline can also be in the form of tribulation. In the case of Job his suffering was not because he needed correction; yet God allowed knowing it that it would make Job better.

Ð Job 1:1 & 8— “1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. 8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”

In the case of the early Christians, their persecution was a form of chastisement (Heb. 12:4-6), their persecution was for the cause of Christ and not because of their wickedness. Nevertheless, God allowed it, knowing that it would make them stronger and serve as an instrument in the spreading of the Gospel.

Ð Romans 5:3 & 4— “3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:”

Ð James 1:2-4— “2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

Ð 1 Peter 5:8-10— “8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle

you.”

10 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.

- **“For they verily for a few days chastened us”** - parental correction is but for a few days...it is temporal in respect to time spent on earth. This verse contrasts the correction of the parent to the correction of God. One of the circumstances is, that the corrections of earthly parents had a much less important object than those of God...His correction is for the end of our eternal bliss.
- **“After their own pleasure;”** - as seemed good to them, in the best way and manner; to the best of their judgments, which are but fallible.
- **“But he for our profit,”** - God never acts from passion, from caprice, from the love of power or superiority, but always for our good...we do not lose the love of God...we gain a greater degree of spiritual knowledge and a larger stock of experience through God’s correction.
- **“That we might be partakers of his holiness.”** - that is, become so holy that it may be said that we are partakers of the very holiness of God.

Ð 2 Peter 1:4— “4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

This is the elevated object at which God aims by our trials....it is, that He may make us more pure and holy, and thus promote our own best interest.

Chastening comes in the form of corrective discipline.

When “instructive” discipline is not heeded, “corrective” discipline follows. Note the example of Judah and Israel: failure to heed God’s word would bring judgment upon Judah.

Ð Amos 2:4-5— “4 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked: 5 But I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.”

God made repeated efforts to bring Judah back to Himself:

Ð Amos 4:6-12— “6 And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. 7 And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. 8 So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. 9 I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. 10 I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

11 I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. 12 Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.”

Such efforts included famine, drought, pestilence, plague, war, and earthquakes. These were not supernatural events, but acts of nature brought on by the providential working of God. Yet, there were some that understood the value of such affliction.

Ⓟ Psalm 119: 67 & 71— “Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. 71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.”

What about corrective discipline today?

If God would use Providence to encourage Israel to repent before it was too late, would not the same God use Providence to chastise His erring children today? Does He love us any less? I know of no scriptural reason why God would not use His providence to bring about events in our lives which would serve to, wake us up, cause us to reflect on our lives and our relationship to God, and encourage us to repent and turn back to Him if we are straying.

There are several passages that suggest that God might bring some form of “corrective” discipline if we do not heed His “instructive” discipline. Some of the Corinthians had already begun to experience God’s chastisement, which they could have avoided if they had “judged” themselves (by heeding His word).

Ⓟ 1 Corinthians 11:30-32— “30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.”

Jesus spoke of some way in which He would punish some at Thyatira that would be evident to all.

Ⓟ Revelation 2:20-23— “20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. 21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. 22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”

11 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.

· **“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous,”** - these words anticipate an objection, taken from the grief and sorrow that comes by afflictions; and therefore how should they be for profit and advantage? However, all chastisement is intended to produce pain, and the Christian is sensitive to pain as others are. But such affliction, when viewed by faith, and judged of by sanctified reason, are seen as tokens of the love of God and Christ; are evidences of sonship; and work together either for temporal, or spiritual. or eternal good of the saints.

¶ Romans 8:28 & 35-37— “28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

- **“But grievous:”** - for the present, and with carnal sense and reason, they are not a matter of joy.

- **“Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”** - that is, in the future life or in the effects of a pure life, and a more entire devotedness to God. It may be noted that when the Christian is in the midst of affliction it is often difficult to understand the reason that we are grieving. Yet, when this time does pass one may look back and often understand the need and reason for the hand of God being extended in correction. “Fruit” takes time to ripen and the fruit of righteousness takes time to mature. There is no Christian who is not ultimately benefited by trials, and who is not able at some period subsequently to say, “It was good for me that I was afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word.”

The why of the Lord’s chastening:

The Lord does chasten but not because that He delights in doing so. God found it necessary to bring judgment upon Israel.

¶ Lamentations 1:3-5— “3 Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits. 4 The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness. 5 Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.”

It was not something that He wanted to do.

¶ Lamentations 3:31-33— “31 For the Lord will not cast off for ever: 32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. 33 For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.”

When necessary or for our good or to correct us (Heb. 12:9) our human fathers corrected us, should we not expect the same from the “Father of spirits”, and submit to it? The result is that we are made partakers of His holiness (Heb. 12:10). Our human fathers do it for what seems best to them; our heavenly Father does it for a reason that far excels any earthly purpose: that we may yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:11). In the short term, the experience is unpleasant and often difficult to understand as to the reason such discipline has entered our life. But in the long term, we benefit by such “training” and come to an understanding of the causes of such discipline.

Whether “corrective” or “instructive,” chastisement is always for our good; it may be grievous (Heb. 12:11a), but it will still produce “the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it” (Heb. 12:11b).

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 12:4-11

It is incumbent on the Christian to daily search the Scriptures that we may conform our lives to the instruction therein given. God has given His divine design as to the manner and mode He expects our lives to conform. Yet, ignorance of His word is no excuse and such ignorance often brings about His providential chastisement.

God is always a just God and will chastise His people as He sees the need. Let us carefully weigh His instructions as given in His word. But let us not forget those that God has so graciously led into our paths as instructors. We should never kick against the goads when we are being corrected; but, we should diligently seek instruction from God in such a way as to further our walk with Him.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 12:12-17

In “running the race of faith” (Heb. 12:1-3), we saw the need to lay aside things that would hinder us, especially the sin of unbelief. We are instructed to have endurance, even as Jesus endured hostility and the cross. We are further to focus our gaze on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, whose own example should encourage us not to become weary and discouraged.

After reminding his readers of the value of the Lord’s chastening, the “writer” of Hebrews returns to the metaphor of “running.” We are called to “run with style” (Heb. 12:12-13); we are given instructions to pursue peace and holiness (Heb. 12:14); and with a word of caution, we are appealed to examine the example of Esau (Heb. 12:15-17). One way to describe the Christian “race”, then, is “the pursuit of peace and holiness.”

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

- **“Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down,”** - In view of the facts that have been stated, that afflictions are sent from God, and are evidences of His parental watchfulness we are to “lift up the hands that hang down.” The Hebrews, during prayer, would lift up the palms of their hands to God; hands that hang down are weary and exhausted (by sin...the weight of a burden). Here we are exhorted to bear with courage the afflictions of God and exhorted to make every effort to bear them; we are to be strengthened by the God that cares enough to correct us.

- **“And the feeble knees;”** - let us bend in prayer; let us show courage and resolution...the hope of victory will do much to strengthen one almost exhausted in battle...confidence in God, and the hope of heaven, and the assurance that all is for our good, will reinvigorate the enfeebled frame, and enable us to bear what we once supposed would crush us to dust.

Ⓐ Job 4:3-4— “3 Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. 4 Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.”

Ⓐ Isaiah 35:3— “3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.”

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

- **“And make straight paths for your feet,”** - The word here used for “straight” means in the sense of horizontal, that is level, plain, smooth. The meaning is, that we are to remove all obstacles out of our way, so that we need not stumble or fall. We are to walk in the paths of truth,

of the word and worship of God, of faith and holiness and these paths are made “straight” by the word of God which is our rule of faith and that which we should model our walk after. We are exhorted to “Turn not to the right nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil.” We are to walk in a measure worthy of our calling...we are to attend constantly to the ordinances of Christ. While God will help us, we must make an effort.

¶ Philippians 2:12-13— “12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

- **“Lest that which is lame be turned out of the way;”** - the idea here is, that everything which would prevent those in the church who were in danger of falling, the feeble, those that were not well established, the weak, should be removed. The lame need a straight, smooth path to walk; we are not to hinder them by inconsistency in our own walks.

- **“But let it rather be healed.”** - whatever is defective we should endeavor to restore to soundness, rather than to suffer the defect to be increased. The fallen believer must be restored, the weak brother confirmed, the halting professor strengthened, all are to be built up and established upon the most holy faith, and in the pure ways of the Gospel.

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

- **“Follow peace with all men,”** - those that are in a natural and domestic relation to one another...do not give indulgence to those passions which lead to litigations, strife, wars: When trials arise from outside the community of believers we are exhorted to manifest a spirit of kindness towards all, even though outsiders are engaged in persecuting us...this is the temper of the Gospel...we are to make war against sin, but not with men. We are to “Pursue peace.”

1. Our Part in the pursuit of peace:

- a. We are to “pursue peace” by first seeking peace with God.

¶ Proverbs 16:7— “7 When a man’s ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”

- b. We must first make our relationship right with God; through Jesus we can find such a peace with God.

¶ Romans 5:1— “1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- c. We must let the peace of God rule in our hearts.

¶ Colossians 3:15— “15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”

2. God Part in our pursuit of peace.

- a. Through His word.

¶ Psalm 119:165— “165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.”

- b. Through Prayer.

¶ Philippians 4:6 & 7—’6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. 7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.”

· **“And holiness,”** - this is the whole of holiness; both inward and outward holiness...true holiness not ceremonial holiness. This means perfect holiness which should be the great pursuit of our life...the spirit of the true Christian is in the pursuit of holiness. As God is holy, so His children must be.

¶ 1 Peter 1:14-16— “4 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

¶ 1 Thessalonians 4:7— “7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”

How can one pursue holiness?

1. True holiness comes by faith in Christ.

¶ Acts 26:16— “18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”

2. The work of the Holy Spirit.

¶ 1 Corinthians 6:11— “11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

¶ Titus 3:5— “5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”

How do we cooperate with God in the pursuit of holiness?

1. By offering ourselves as “slaves of righteousness.”

¶ Romans 6:19-22— “19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

2. By perfecting holiness in the fear of God; which includes cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit and by putting on the new man in true righteousness.

¶ 2 Corinthians 7:1— “1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

¶ Ephesians 4:24— “24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

¶ Colossians 3:9-14— “9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of

him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. 12 ¶ Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. 14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”

In many respects this is what the Christian life is all about: pursuing peace and holiness!

- **“Without which no man shall see the Lord:”** - to be in communion with God, both in this life and the hereafter, a sight of holiness is necessary...as God is holy, as Christ is holy, so is heaven, and so must we be for no one has been or will be admitted to heaven in his sins.

15 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;

- **“Looking diligently”** - it is here implied that we should give careful attention to those things that are evil...in the temptations of the world...we are not to consider or participate in false doctrines or live immoral lives but we are to watch over one another.

- **“Lest any man fail of the grace of God;”** - every man is in danger of failing to some degree, not from the free favor of the love of God which is everlasting, but that danger is found in that they were deficient on that which was necessary to save them...they never had it. This should be the concern of every man that calls himself Christian...to inquire diligently whether there is not reason to apprehend that when he comes to appear before God he will be found to be wholly destitute of religion. Without God’s grace, none can be saved, pursue peace, or have the holiness necessary to see God.

- **“Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;”** - this is an allusion to the one that may enter into the fold in sheep’s clothing but in fact is a false prophet. They that would sow the seeds of bitterness, that would lead away from the faith and corrupt the very elect if possible. One wicked man, and especially one hypocrite in the church, may be the means of destroying many others...they are rooted in evil, their pride is their vain glory.

Bitterness can also be a stumbling block in our pursuit of peace for it destroys the peace within the person that harbors it and it can destroy the congregation where it becomes manifest. It also becomes a stumbling block in one’s pursuit of holiness, because the problems that it creates cause many to become “defiled” (unholy).

16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

- **“Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person,”** - the sin referred to is one of those which would spread corruption in the church, and against which they ought to be especially on their guard. The word “profane” here refers to one who by word or conduct treats religion with contempt, or has no reverence for that which is sacred...the one that neglects religion or openly renounces the privileges that are connected with salvation. The allusion here is to one who should openly cast off all the hopes of religion for indulgence in temporary pleasure, as did Esau, who gave up his birthright for a trifling gratification (fornication is a generic term for any sort of sexual immorality including pre-marital sex, adultery, homosexuality, etc.). Notice should be given to the picture here painted concerning Esau. Esau was deemed a fornicator because he

prostituted himself for something that was pleasurable to the flesh; the sin of self-indulgence.

We, also, must not become a “profane person.” A worldly person who profanes holy privileges by placing on them a “worldly estimate” as to their importance and worth. Remember, one does not have to be overtly wicked; one can displease God by simply devaluing that which is important to Him!

- **“As Esau,”** - It is clearly implied here that Esau sustained the character of a fornicator and a profane person. Esau was a “profane” person because he did not properly estimate the value of his birthright. Though he would later want the blessings of his birthright, it was then too late to change his father’s mind (he found no place for repentance).

- **“Who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.”** - for food Esau gave up the first ranking in the family and the privileges of all which that entailed. The birthright was typical of the primogeniture (the right of inheritance) of Christ, of the adoption of the saints, and of the heavenly inheritance belonging thereunto...all of which were despised by Esau...his contempt is shown by his selling of it. Once again, the “writer” shows the Hebrews the penalty of selling their birthright.

17 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.

- **“For ye know how that afterward,”** - when Esau came to his father, he earnestly besought him to reverse the sentence which he had pronounced (See Gen. 27:34-40). The birthright was obtained dishonestly on the part of Jacob; but so far as Esau was concerned, it was an act of righteous retribution for the little regard he had shown for the honor of his birth.

- **“When he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected:”** - by his father, who refused to give him the blessing, but confirmed what he had given to Jacob and it was given by God

Ð Romans 9:11-13— “11(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

- **“For he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”** - that is, “no place of repentance” in the mind of Isaac...he had no place of repentance for his sin in selling his birthright. Tears are not the infallible sign of repentance...many are concerned about their sin but such concern is not true repentance...it is not a turning from...it does not spring from God or is it concerned for the glory of God...it does not render the appropriate fruits that accompanies salvation.

This passage, therefore, should not be alleged to show that a sinner cannot repent, or that he cannot find “place for repentance”...it should be used to keep us from disregarding our privileges, from turning away from the true religion, from slighting the favors of the Gospel, and from neglecting our responsibilities as a child of God...when God has pronounced a sentence excluding us from His grace, no amount of tears will render that invalid.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 12:12-17

As we run the race of faith, peace with others and holiness before God should be our goal. To run the race with “style”, we need to get in the proper form with the lifting of the hands and the

strengthening of the knees as we seek to help one another. We need to be ever watchful for pitfalls that can hinder us in our pursuit such as not utilizing God's grace to help in the race, not allowing bitterness to become a stumbling block, and not becoming a fornicator or a profane person. As we run the race we should keep in mind the words of the Apostle Paul;

¶ 1 Corinthians 9:24-27— “24 ¶ Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 12:18-29

Further encouragement is now provided in the running of the race that Christians are called to compete in. With the reminder of the “mountain” to which they have come and with a warning to heed “Him who speaks.”

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

- **“For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched,”** - the design of the apostle in this verse is, in general, to engage the Hebrews to adhere closely to the Gospel...they were exhorted to guard against apostasy. The Gospel contained the revelation of higher truth...there are more affecting motives that lead to obedience...the former was but the type or the emblem (Mt. Sinai; a mountain that seemed like a huge volcano and was in itself frightening to the people of Israel)...here was contained a clear revelation of the glories of heaven, and the blessed society which abides therein. The mount under the old might be touched but the mount of the new is spiritual and is touched through faith only. We have not come to such a mountain, that forces us to stand “afar off.”

- **“And that burned with fire,”** - this sets forth the majesty of God and points out the end of those that were the transgressors of the law.

- **“Nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,”** - the basic thrust then is that disobedience to the heavenly realities will bring a far greater judgment than rejection of the earthly realities that accompanied Moses' institution of the Law. The effect of this contrast is spectacular because of the experience of Israel at Sinai where they were terrified by the fire, smoke, impenetrable darkness, and howling winds. This should raise the consciousness of the sinner.

19 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:

- In a rising crescendo of trumpets, the thunderous voice of the Lord spoke to Moses, and the people of Israel were filled with dread. In their fear they cried out to Moses, “*Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die*” (Ex. 20:19) It was fearful and overpowering that the people earnestly prayed that if they must be addressed, it might be by the familiar voice of Moses and not by the awful voice of the Deity.

20 (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:

- **“(For they could not endure that which was commanded,)”** - they could not sustain the awe produced by the fact that God uttered his commands Himself. The meaning is that they could not bear up under the commands of the holy God, they requiring perfect obedience.

- **“And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:”** -nothing less than death by stoning was required if someone would but touch the mount...the contrast is to the difficulty in approaching God under the old economy versus how we may approach Him with boldness now.

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

- **“And so terrible was the sight,”** - that is, of the smoke, fire, and lightnings...or of God Himself...he was greatly afraid of the anger of the Lord on account of the sin of the people when he descended the mount.

- **“That Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)”** - this circumstance (nowhere else recorded in Scripture) is mentioned by the apostle, to aggravate the terror of the people...that Moses, a great and good man who had much familiarity with God; who was the general leader of the people of Israel and the mediator between them and God, feared and quaked when in the presence of God...not even the best men can stand before the most holy God...for there is no righteousness of his own that allows a man to do so and there is no such thing as doing it without a Mediator and the Mediator can not be a mere man but must be the Christ.

22 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,

- **“But ye are come unto mount Sion,”** - the idea here is to contrast those that are true Christians to the Jews of the O.T., and to show that their excellencies and advantages are far superior to the religion of their fathers. This is now called “mount Sion”, because, like the Zion, it is beloved of God, chosen by Him as His place of habitation from whence proceeded the worship of Him and His ordinances were administered (of which the holy city of Jerusalem was an emblem). When the apostle says “But ye are come,” intimates that as Christians we already reside in the heavenly place of Mount Zion.

- **“And unto the city of the living God,”** - the Gospel church is a city, built on Christ, the foundation and its true inhabitants are true believers for it is the city where the “living God” dwells. There we have access to God, freedom from arrests of justice, and from condemnation and the right to our heavenly inheritance.

- **“The heavenly Jerusalem,”** - the Christian’s residing place is in “the heavenly Jerusalem.” As such, we are to conduct ourselves accordingly...it is not a place where we shall reside in the future, but rather, the place where we now reside...we are born from above, or conversation is now in heaven, we are designed for this place and the doctrines and ordinances that we adhere to are from above.

- **“And to an innumerable company of angels,”** - the Greek is, to myriads [for ten thousand] of angels in assembly or joyful convocation.” This refers to the angels assembled around the throne of God celebrating His praises. The meaning is that Christians in their feelings and worship become united to this vast host of holy angelic beings...therefore, from the Hebrew’s standpoint, they should not apostatize from such a true religion, for they should regard it as honorable and glorious to be identified with such a heavenly host.

23 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,

- **“To the general assembly”** - the word here for assembly signifies a large collection and convention of men and is here used by the apostle, for the church of God, consisting of all His elect which have been meeting together in the infinite mind of God in Christ from all eternity.
- **“And church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven,”** - that is, we are united with the church of the first-born which consists of only God’s elect from all times. The meaning is, that by becoming Christians, we have become in fact identified with that happy and honored church, all of whose conservation is in heaven...once enrolled as a citizen we are entitled to the privileges of citizenship of the heavenly world.
- **“And to God the Judge of all,”** - Christ, shall be the Judge of all in the last day, however, here it seems to be God that is here spoken of...the design of which the apostle seems to be to give a rapid glance of what there was in heaven, as disclosed by the eye of faith to the Christian...the idea is, God will do right by all that are citizens of the heavens...it is their privilege that they have complete access to Him, as Father, the God of all grace, and as the righteous Judge and that we may approach Him without the sense of terror.
- **“And to the spirits of just men made perfect,”** - that is, all the saints on the earth that were made perfect in heaven...the object of God’s grace made perfect by the imputed righteousness of Christ and justified being perfectly expiated of our sins.

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

- **“And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,”** - that is, of the new covenant of which Christ is the Mediator thereof...it is the coming to Christ by faith and not by the flesh...it is coming unto Him with a sense of want, the seeking of fullness that is produced through the efficacious grace of God. We are to persevere in piety because Christ has come to save His people from their sins.
- **“And to the blood of sprinkling,”** - that is, the blood of Christ which is an allusion to the blood of the Passover.
- **“That speaketh better things than that of Abel.”** - (Abel, “by he being dead yet speaketh) was a type of Christ in his death...Christ’s blood is far superior than that of Abel’s for Christ’s sacrifice was efficacious not for Himself but for those that He came to die for. The blood of Abel, shed by his brother Cain, still cries out in condemnation of Cain; the blood of Christ, shed for His brethren, still cleanses the consciences of sinners and covers them in righteousness.

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:

- **“See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.”** - that is, refuse not Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant...it is through His blood by way of His Spirit that He now speaks to the elect...He is not to be refused when He speaks due to the excellency of the matter spoken of, the great and only salvation (given in the Gospel).
- **“For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth,”** - that is, at Mount Sinai, those that did not listen died in the wilderness due to their lack of faith...they did not

escape the divine judgment of the thrice holy God.

- **“Much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:”** - that is of Christ...there have been, and are some, that turn away from Him; from a profession of Him, and His Gospel and ordinances, and draw back unto perdition...such shall not escape divine wrath and vengeance...the worst of all punishment shall be inflicted on them.

26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

- God thundered from Sinai and the earth shook, but the days of dread and doom are not all past. The promise of future judgment of heaven and earth, referred to here, was spoken to the remnant Jews who were building the temple after they had returned from Babylon (Hag. 2:6). They were discouraged because some of the old-timers remembered the glory of Solomon's Temple and thought the new temple was insignificant in comparison. But through Haggai, the Lord promised the future glory of their temple and His judgement of their enemies. This same promise was fulfilled in the Messiah on earth as well as in heaven.

⌘ Haggai 2:6— “6 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;”

27 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.

- **“And this word, Yet once more,”** - that is , this is reference to a great agitation or commotion in some future time, so in a very little time, and at once, something very marvelous and surprising would be effected.

- **“Signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made,”** - the apostle is here contrasting the things which are fixed and stable with those which are temporary in their nature, or which are settled on no firm foundation. The former he speaks of as if they were uncreated and eternal principles of truth and righteousness. The latter he speaks of as if they were created and therefore liable, like all things which are made, to decay and to change.

- **“That those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”** - such as, the kingdom and priesthood of Christ, which are everlasting as is our salvation which are wrought by Christ through the remission of our sins, justification, adoption, and sanctification...as is the Gospel and the doctrines pertaining to it.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

- Since Christians are citizens of God's eternal kingdom, they are exhorted to “keep on holding on” (echomen) to God's grace. His grace will see them through their current trials. More importantly, it will enable them to worship and serve God as priests (latreuomen) whose sacrifices, like those offered by Abel, are acceptable to the Lord, because they are offered out of an attitude of reverence through faith (recognition of God's greatness, righteousness, and sovereignty).

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

- The alternative to pious service and endurance by God's grace is apostasy which incurs

God's wrath. His wrath shall be poured out against His enemies and it will devour everything in its path. Therefore, we are to worship God and Him only of which He has the sole right in the manner of which such worship is to be rendered, both as to the external and internal parts of it. God is an absolute God, is full of wrath and vengeance but He is a God of love to those that are in Christ, He being a consuming fire to them in manner of protection towards their enemies.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 12:18-29

God has indeed spoken: He has spoken through His Son (Heb. 1:1-2), He has spoken from Mount Zion, that heavenly city, the New Jerusalem. By such, we have come through an obedient faith in Jesus (Heb. 5:9) where we can enjoy the fellowship of angels, the redeemed in heaven and on earth, and of God and Christ Himself. All this made possible by the better covenant, based on the better sacrifice of Jesus' blood.

But with such wonderful blessings comes the responsibility of giving heed of the fact that we are not to neglect our great salvation and we are not to refuse Him who speaks from the heavenly "mountain." Therefore, our goal should be that as expressed by the author himself:

▷ Hebrews 12:28b— "let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

[Introduction/Chapter 13](#)

Hebrews
Instructor's Notes

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

[Introduction](#)

OVERVIEW:

[Commentary on Hebrews, by John Gill](#)

The apostle having finished the doctrinal part of this epistle, closes it with practical exhortations to these Hebrews, puts up prayers for them, and sends salutations to them. The exhortations are to brotherly love and the continuance of it (v. 1), to hospitality, by which some have entertained angels unawares (v. 2), to sympathy with those that are in bonds, and in afflictions (v. 3), to purity and chastity in the honorable state of marriage, urged by the judgment of God on unclean persons (v. 4), to avoid covetousness, and to be content with present things, enforced by the promises of God, which give boldness and strength to faith (vv. 5, 6), to remember their spiritual guides and governors, the preachers of the Gospel to them; to follow their faith, and consider the end of their conversation, which is Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, today and forever (vv. 7, 8). And then he cautions them from being carried about with the doctrines of men, which are divers and strange; which he urges from the profitable effect of the Gospel to establish the heart, and from the unprofitable effect of the Gospel to establish the heart, and from the unprofitableness of meats to legal worshippers, and from the Christians having an altar, which is Christ, which those who are seeking life by the service of the law have nothing to do with (vv. 9, 10). And this he illustrates in the type of burnt-offerings, which were burnt without the camp, and there was nothing left for the priests to eat of (v. 11). In like manner Christ, the antitype, suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for the sanctification of his people, by his blood; and who only, and not those who seek for righteousness by the law, have an interest in (v. 12). However, it becomes the saints to quit everything, and all dependence on themselves, and fellowship with others, and go forth to Jesus, believing in him, whatsoever reproach they suffer on his account; for here is nothing permanent and durable in this world; but there is a state of happiness to come, which will last for ever (vv. 13, 14). And since Christ has offered himself for his people, they ought to offer up the sacrifices of praise to God by him, and to do acts of beneficence and goodness, which are sacrifices well-pleasing to God through him (vv. 15, 16). And to these exhortations the apostle adds others; as to obey their spiritual rulers and governors, and submit unto them; since they watch for their souls, and must give an account, which to do with joy, and not with grief, is best and profitable (v. 17), and to pray for the apostle, and other ministers, since they had a good conscience, and were willing to live honestly; and the rather, that he might be restored to them the sooner (vv. 18, 19), and to engage them to this their duty, he sets them an example by putting up prayers for them (vv. 20, 21), and desires them to take in good part the letter he had wrote unto them (v. 22), and acquaints them that Timothy was set at liberty, and with whom he hoped to see them in a short time (v. 23), and then closes the epistle with his own, and the salutations of others, and with his usual benediction (vv. 24, 25).

Hebrews 13:1-25

Part Three: The Superiority of the Christian's Walk of Faith (10:19-13:25)

III. Exhortation to Love	13:1-17
A. Love in the Social Realm	13:1-6
B. Love in the Religious Realm	13:7-17
IV. Conclusion	13:18-25

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 13:1-3

As with many epistles in the New Testament, this letter ends with various exhortations. The first is regarding the objects of the Christian's love. Here we find the author practicing what he preaches to stimulate love and good works.

1 Let brotherly love continue.

- This implies that such love now existed among the Hebrews...there was a love that existed between them because of the same spiritual relation to God as their Father...there existed a love between them in that they shared each others burdens, they were able to forgive one-another, in the building up of one another in the faith and in the stirring up of each other to religious duties. There exists a bond of love between those that have been regenerated because of their mutual love of Christ.

- The importance of brotherly love is seen in that it is a true mark of discipleship and is an indication of true spiritual life.

Ð John 13:15— “ 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

Ð 1 John 3:14— “ 14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.”

- The Hebrews had manifested brotherly love. Note that the text says their love was to “continue.” They had demonstrated brotherly love in the past in their ministry to God and His saints (Heb. 6:10) and even in their service to the “writer” of this epistle (Heb. 10:32-34).

Ð Hebrews 6:10— “ 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.”

Ð Hebrews 10:32-34— “ 32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; 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. 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.”

The need for brotherly love never diminishes:

Ð 1 Thessalonians 4:9 & 10— “9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. 10 And indeed ye do it toward all

the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;”

Ð Philippians 1:9— “ 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;”

Ð 2 Peter 1:7— “ 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.”

Even now the “writer” of Hebrews says, “Let brotherly love continue”! No matter how much we may have manifested love towards one another as brethren in the past, it is imperative that such love continues in both the present and in the future.

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

· **“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers:”** - that is, all strangers in distress and all hospitality is to be exercised towards them by providing food, raiment, lodging, etc., and comforting, counseling, and directing them in all matters in which they may stand in need thereof. Those that are to exercise such hospitality are not just ministers of the Gospel, but all saints which is to be extended without grudge and in a friendly and loving manner. Hospitality, means “love of strangers,” (philoxenia) according to Jesus’ Parable of the Good Samaritan, is included in love of neighbor. In many ancient cultures, hospitality was a solemn duty and was regarded as a sacred obligation by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Hospitality is one form of “worship” and was to be extended by the following:

1. Traveling evangelists:

Ð 3 John 5-8— “5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; 6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: 7 Because that for his name’s sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. 8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.”

2. Elders or Bishops:

Ð 1 Timothy 3:2— “ 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;”

Ð Titus 1:8— “ 8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;”

3. All Christians:

Ð Romans 12:13— “ 13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.”

Ð 1 Peter 4:9— “ 9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.”

· **“For thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”** - (See Gen. 18:1-8) The motive here urged for doing it is, that by entertaining the stranger we may perhaps be honored with the presence of those whose society will to us an honor and a blessing

Ð Genesis 18:1-8— “ 1 And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; 2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, 3 And said, My LORD, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: 4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your

feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: 5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. 6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. 8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

The point is not that we should expect angels to literally come our way but that some that we may entertain may serve to be His messengers in a providential sense. The key idea is that one never knows what hospitality might bring; one often receives unexpected benefits from his/her guests and there is always blessedness in giving. The physical need for hospitality today may not be as great as it was in ancient time, but the spiritual need is just as important in the development and strengthening of spiritual ties.

3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

- **“Remember them that are in bonds,”** - those that are in bonds for the sake of Christ and the Gospel...those that are imprisoned for righteousness’ sake.

Ð Acts 26:9-11— “ 9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. 11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.”

- **“As bound with them;”** - that is, they were consider themselves, in the same bonds (as if chained with them)...religion teaches us to identify ourselves with all who are oppressed, and to feel what they suffer as if we endured it ourselves...Christianity unties all hearts in one; binds us to all the race.

- **“And them which suffer adversity,”** - that is, outward afflictions of body, distress for the want of food and raiment and persecution by enemies or even spiritual corruptions. If one member suffers all the members suffer.

Ð 1 Corinthians 12:26— “26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.”

- **“As being yourselves also in the body.”** - as being yourselves exposed to persecution and suffering, and liable to be injured. That is, we are to extend to them the same mercies that we would wish extended to us if we were suffering. By their awareness of their own vulnerability they should be sensitive to the sufferings of others.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 13:1-3

In providing a “new and living way,” it is true that Jesus, made possible a close relationship between man and God. But the purity we experience through obeying the truth is not just that we may have fellowship with God but also that we may have fellowship with each other in sincerity and love. Thus it naturally follows that as we draw near to God, we should also draw near to one another; this we do when we manifest love toward the brethren, toward strangers, and toward

prisoners and the persecuted.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 13:4

In today's society, the honor and sanctity of marriage is under constant attack. Divorce is acceptable and made easy through "no-fault" laws. Adultery is considered normal and faithfulness to one's spouse is deemed unrealistic. Among religious and political leaders, many say that the standards against sexual immorality are antiquated. Even in the church, sexual immorality is a major problem evidenced by the high number of divorces among Christians and the frequent reports of sexual failings among preachers, elders, and other Christians.

In truth, our culture today is not much different from the society of the first century where divorce and remarriage was rampant (women were known to date events in their lives by what husband they were married to; e.g., "Yes that happened during husband #5."). Fornication was acceptable and adultery was barely frowned upon. But Christianity offers a true contrast of standards regarding morality through clear and unequivocal teaching:

¶ 1 Corinthians 6:9 & 10— "9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

¶ Galatians 5:19-21— "19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

¶ Ephesians 5:3-5— "3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

The same sort of teaching is needed today, which is the reason that this verse 4 needs to be carefully examined.

4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

· **"Marriage is honourable in all,"** - the object here is to state that honor is to be shown to the marriage relation...it is honorable because it was instituted by God (Gen 2:22,24); whereby the ends of it is to procreate children and to prevent fornication.

¶ Genesis 2:22 & 24— "22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

The verb "is" is not in the Greek, leading some to translate the first phrase to read: "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled." Why? Because God will judge those who violate it!

· **"And the bed undefiled:"** - the bed will remain undefiled by not letting others into it by

the act of adultery...this is fidelity to the marriage vow. The Christian is to value his relationship with his spouse so highly that he will avoid defiling the marriage bed by keeping himself from any kind of sexual relationship while married.

· **“But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.”** - that is, all violations of the marriage covenant, will be severely punished by God.

Let us define some terms:

1. Fornicators; the Greek word is *pornos*, from which we get pornography. It is a general word for unlawful and immoral sexual relationships and includes any kind of sex outside of marriage: pre-marital, extra-marital (adultery), homosexual and various others.
2. Adulterers; the Greek word is *moichos* and it means to have unlawful intercourse with another's wife or husband. This may be while they are still married or even after they are divorced if the divorce is not for the biblical reason:

Ⓐ Matthew 5:32— “32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.”

Ⓐ Matthew 19:9— “9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

A person can be guilty of adultery either by having relations with another's spouse or by marrying someone who either did not put their first spouse away for fornication or was put away for any other reason short of death. Therefore, marriage should be held in honor, because the Bible makes it clear that God will condemn and somehow inflict penalty on those who are fornicators and adulterers who do not repent!

Why will God judge fornicators and adulterers? Because they destroy the lives of others through the destruction of marriages. This can be either their own, by infidelity within the marriage and even the marriage of the other party. Sexual immorality is a major cause of divorce, which God hates.

Ⓐ Malachi 2:16— “16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.”

When God's highest creation (man), because of purely selfish reasons, destroys marriages, families, friendships, even their own selves, we can understand why God will judge such, and why Paul wrote what he did to the Corinthians:

Ⓐ 1 Corinthians 6: 9 & 10— “9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.”

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 13:4

There are many good reasons to honor marriage and keep the “marriage bed” undefiled. The bond between a man and a woman whose relationship is built upon trust and love, joy and peace

of children, and the value of a strong family is that which God expects and demands. Here a warning is given, and need be heeded, that God's judgment will fall on those that destroy this important fabric of our society. Marriage is that which God instituted to eliminate immorality and as such, we are to value this institution and remain pure in our commitment and obligations.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 13:5-6

In these verses we now find a warning against covetousness. The previous verse spoke a warning against the "lust of the flesh" (immorality), here we find a warning against the "lust of the eyes" (materialism), both of which are contrary to the word of God.

¶ 1 John 2:15-17— "15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Covetousness is a strong desire for material things and is strongly condemned by the Bible.

1. Jesus said that it defiles man, and we should be alert to it in our lives:

¶ Matthew 7:21-23— "21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

¶ Luke 12:15— "15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

2. Paul taught that covetousness will keep people out of the kingdom of God; and like fornication, should not even be named among us; and is nothing less than idolatry:

¶ 1 Corinthians 6:9 & 10— "9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

¶ Ephesians 5:3— "3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;"

¶ Colossians 3:5— "5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:"

The antidote to covetousness is contentment and is found in verses 5 and 6 of this chapter. If we are content, then we won't be covetous, therefore, contentment is an important virtue for Christians to develop.

5 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.

· **"Let your conversation be without covetousness;"** - that is, an immoderate desire of riches, an over-anxious care for worldly things, attended with a dissatisfaction, and discontent

with their present state.

- **“And be content with such things as ye have:”** - the particular reason is that God has promised never to leave His people...we are to be content with our present riches or with our present poverty, afflictions, reproaches...being content therein shows itself by thankfulness for every mercy and submission to God in His acts of providence.

The English word “content” means “desiring no more than what one has.” The Greek word is *arkeo* which means “to be satisfied.” When one is content, they are satisfied with what they have; with no desire for more, covetousness is no longer a problem. Paul wrote,

▷ 1 Timothy 6:6— “6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.”

Godliness, which is godly living expressed in devotion to God, is of great value only when accompanied with contentment. Contrawise, covetousness or a lack of contentment, would render any service to God of no value.

- **“For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”** - God will not leave His people in the hands of their enemies, nor forsake them in their time of distress, nor withhold any good thing from them in their time of need, but will supply them with the necessities of life, with which we are to be content. Also, God will not leave His people to live in their own corruptions which in the end will overpower them...He will not forsake them in salvation...regeneration, sanctification, and glorification. With the Lord as our helper, what can man do?

▷ 1 John 4:4— “4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

- **“So that we may boldly say,”** - that is, confidently assert, without hesitation or doubt, in all times of perplexity and threatening want, we may trust in God, and be assured that He will not leave us to suffer....because;

- **“The Lord is my helper,”** - He is able to help, and does help, when none else can (See Ps. 27:1 and 118:6)...what can we fear if we have the assurance that the Lord is on our side, and that He will help us...our help is ONLY in the Lord, who helps us out of the pit of sin and misery; out of the hands of our enemies, out of all afflictions, and out of all the dangers we are exposed unto by Satan.

▷ Psalm 27:1— “1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”

▷ Psalm 118:6— “ 6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?”

- **“And I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”** - men are not to be feared, when opposed to God. Nothing that they can do to us is to be feared...even to the killing of the body...nothing can be done to us more than God allows.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 13:5-6

The virtue of contentment is a wonderful blessing, one that comes from God Himself. As such, God’s word reveals to us the temporary nature of material things, the inadequacy of material

things to satisfy man, and the things that are truly essential in life. Furthermore, it promises that God will never leave us or forsake us and will continually provide the true essentials in and for life. God Himself will fill our soul with that which can truly satisfy and He will enable us to enjoy the material blessings we do acquire in life. However, what God has promised is contingent upon what Jesus said:

Ð Matthew 6:33— “33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 13:7-14

As this epistle nears its end, we find some of the final exhortations that appear to encourage steadfastness which is sprinkled throughout verses 7-17. There also warning given concerning the danger of “various and strange doctrines (Heb. 13:9). The need for such exhortations is, I believe, given as warning about the various and strange doctrines that the church will be confronted with throughout its life. If we are not to be carried about with various and strange doctrines, then “stability in our service to God,” must be founded on solid and well defined doctrine. Notice what Paul says to Timothy:

Ð 1 Timothy 1:3-7— “3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, 4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. 5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: 6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; 7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”

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.

· **“Remember them which have the rule over you,”** - those that have rule over us is here meant, the pastors of the churches, teachers...those appointed to lead and guide us to eternal life...our guides into the understanding of the Scriptures, and the truths of the Gospel.

· **“Who have spoken unto you the word of God:”** - that is, the Scriptures, given by the inspiration of God in Christ...of which He is the author of...which will enable us to persevere in the Christian course and will not faint or fail therein.

· **“Whose faith follow,”** - that is, whose faith we are to emulate...we are to stand fast in the faith due to those that have left such a witness...we are to hold fast to the end our profession of faith and follow as an example those whose faith sustained them unto the end.

Ð Philippians 3:7— “17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.”

· **“Considering the end of their conversation.”** - or the faithful discharge of their duties of their several offices.

8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

The direct meaning of this verse in the original Greek text is that Christ is unchangeable (immutable)...He is unchangeable in His person, perfection, and essence, as God; and in the love to His people; and in fullness of His grace, and in the efficacy of His blood, and in the virtue of

His sacrifice and His righteousness. The effect of this verse is, to encourage us to persevere by showing that our Savior was, is, and shall always be the same...the argument here, therefore, for perseverance is founded on the immutability of the Redeemer. The very doctrine that Jesus gave us is unchangeable because He that gave it is unchangeable. Therefore, as a rule, when we hear of a strange new doctrine, the question that need be asked is, "Did Jesus or His apostles teach this?"

Ð Galatians 1:8 & 9— "8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

9 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.

- **"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines."** - that is, the Hebrews should have settled and fixed points of belief, and yield to every new opinion which would come along...there being a variety and multitude of other doctrines...doctrines that are not taught by God. Probably the principal reference here is to the Judaizing teachers, and to their various doctrines about their ceremonial observances and traditions (a return to the law).
- **"For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace;"** - that is, with the doctrines of grace, which is food for faith, and does not leave men at uncertainties about things, but establishes the heart, with respect to the love and favor of God...this being true religion, wherefore we shall love the truth, and love it in the right manner...if the belief of the truth has its seat in the heart, it will be accompanied by acts of faith which spring from pure religion.
- **"Not with meats,"** - our religion or belief in the truth is to be established on sound doctrine and not on ceremonial law that is unable to secure forgiveness from sin.
- **"Which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."** - which have been of no real benefit to the soul, they being only profitable to the body...they were established as a type or shadow that would point to Christ.

10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

- **"We have an altar,"** - By which is meant, not the cross of Christ, on which He was crucified; nor the Lord's table, where His flesh and blood are presented to faith; but Christ Himself, who is a refuge of His people who believe in Him...these are preserved and protected by His power and grace...all that come to Him in belief are allowed to eat thereof.
- **"Whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."** - to eat from the altar is to believe that Christ came in the flesh and that He offered His flesh up for the forgiveness of our sins...we thereby, receive, embrace, and possess the blessings procured by His offering; which is done by means of faith (none but the priests were allowed to eat from the altar under the previous economy).

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

- **"For the bodies of those beasts,"** - that is, the bullock and the goat on the day of atonement, which were typical of Christ, in the bringing of their blood into the most holy place

by the high priest for sin...atonement was made through the sprinkling of the blood which was a type of the death of Christ by which reconciliation is made for the sins of all God's people.

- **"Whose blood is brought into the sanctuary"** - that is, into the holy of holies.
- **"By the high priest for sin,"** - to make atonement for "sin."
- **"Are burned without the camp."** - all of the sacrificed animal was carried outside of the camp and burned and the men that performed this task were deemed unclean, though, being washed they were received; which was typical of the sorrowful sufferings of Christ outside of Jerusalem...reaching to all parts of His body, and even to His soul; and expresses not only the pains, but the shame and reproach He endured.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

- **"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood,"** - Jesus also did so to answer the type...that there might be conformity between His death for sin and the sacrifices which He typified...He sanctified the people, that is, those who are the objects of divine love and favor; a chosen and covenant people; a distinct and peculiar people...Christ's own special people that are sanctified by His own blood He has provided expiation of the guilt of sin, pardoned completely, and brought in a perfect righteousness.
- **"Suffered without the gate."** - that is, outside of the city of Jerusalem, which answered to the camp of Israel in the wilderness, outside of which the bodies of the sacrifices on the day of atonement were burnt.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

There is a symbolism in the location of the sacrifice of Jesus and that of the animals. Those who go to Calvary, to the altar of Jesus, can no longer serve and worship at the altar of the world. We are to leave the world and profess to be in the camp of Jesus...we must go to Christ...there must be a quitting of the world and all that is therein. We are to follow Christ with unquestionable obedience...the very act of going forth to Him is to believe in Him, to make a profession of Him.

When we bear His reproach we sympathize with Him...it is His reproach because of our union with Him and His sympathy with us in our time of reproach...there is a likeness in the reproach that Christ suffered and that which is suffered by those that profess Him as the Christ.

Ð 1 Peter 4:13— "13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Ð Philippians 3:10— "10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;"

Ð Colossians 1:24— "24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:"

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

- **"For here have we no continuing city,"** - that is, we do not regard this as our final home, or our fixed abode, and we should be willing to bear reproach during the little time that we are

to remain here...we are not of the world though we are in the world...let them drive us from our temporal homes because our permanent home is in heaven (just as the heroes of the faith; Chp. 11), we are to look beyond this world and our pilgrimage here.

- **“But we seek one to come.”** - heaven is future, yet to come, though certain, being built and prepared by God for those that are His and are called thereunto.

15 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.

- **“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise”** - that is, for temporal and spiritual mercies...for sanctification, or expiation of sin, by the blood of Christ...let us persevere in adherence to our profession which is our reasonable service and is well-pleasing to Him and glorifies Him. This is our reasonable sacrifice.

¶ Romans 12:1— “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

- **“To God continually,”** - God is to continually praised because He is constantly bestowing on us grace upon grace, and such mercies of one kind or another...God therefore, is to be continually praised even in times of trials and afflictions, in the midst of reproach and persecution.

- **“That is, the fruit of our lips”** - that is the sacrifice of praise is the fruit of our lips that brings honor and glory to name of God.

- **“Giving thanks to his name.”** - that is, to the honor of His name and to all His divine perfections and all the mercies bestowed by Him to those that He loves.

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

- **“But to do good and to communicate forget not:”** - that is, to share with others what we have which is to exercised to all men in need, even to our enemies, especially to poor saints, and ministers of the Gospel...we are not to forget this because it is a duty of importance...we are prone to think constantly of our own interests, and there is a danger of forgetting the duty which we owe to the poor and the needy. True Christian religion manifests itself in action.

¶ James 1:22-27— “22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. 26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain. 27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

- **“For with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”** - God is pleased with the sacrifices of prayer and of praise; with the offerings of a broken and contrite heart: but He is especially pleased with a religion which leads us to do good to others...He is pleased because, this shows the right state of heart and accords with the very nature of God.

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.

- **“Obey them that have the rule over you,”** - The reference here is to religious teachers and not to civil rulers. Christians must be constantly attending to those things that are taught to them and preached to them...subordination to the leaders of the church is necessary to the welfare of the church.

- **“And submit yourselves:”** - that is, to all which they enjoin that is lawful and right...the leaders of the church are ambassadors of Christ, they stand in His stead, and represent Him, by which they derive their authority. They are given oversight of the local congregation.

¶ 1 Peter 5:1 & 2— “1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”

- **“For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account,”** - they do not watch for themselves or worldly gain; but they watch for the souls of men that they might render unto them knowledge and understanding leading to salvation...they are to discharge their duty without neglect for they must stand before the *Bema* Seat of Christ and give account for their ministry.

- **“That they may do it with joy, and not with grief:”** - the meaning is, that they should so obey, that when their teachers came to give account they need not do it with sorrow over their perverseness and disobedience.

- **“For that is unprofitable for you.”** - that is, in giving up their account in a manner as unsuccessful in their efforts to save you, would not be to an advantage to you, but would be highly injurious both to themselves and to you.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 13:7-17

If we are to remain steadfast in our faith and remain stable in our service to God, then, we must remember such things as the examples that have been given to us to emulate; the doctrine given us by the immutable Christ; and the blessings of hearts established by grace; the altar of the supreme sacrifice of Christ; and, the heavenly city that awaits us whose builder and maker is God. We are further exhorted to offer the spiritual sacrifices of praise and doing good to others and we are to obey those who have been entrusted to watch for our souls.

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 13:18-25

Within the last eight verses of this epistle, we find, a request for prayer of behalf of the “writer” (H13:18-19); a benediction offered in behalf of the readers (13:20-21); and the final exhortation, comment and farewell (13:22-25). These final verses touch upon themes developed earlier in the epistle, therefore serving as a close worthy of such an epistle as we have studied.

18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

- **“Pray for us:”** - that is, those that are in the ministry as teachers and pastors since the work is of such great importance and due to the difficulty involved in the carrying out of ones duty.

- **“For we trust we have a good conscience,”** - a good conscience is one in which there is

satisfaction through the sanctification of the Spirit of God. Here the good conscience is made possible only through the blood of Christ and as such, the apostle may properly discharge the duties on the office of minister. The apostle uses this argument to illicit the prayers of the Hebrews.

- **“In all things willing to live honestly.”** - not only as men but as ministers properly dispensing the word of truth, without any regards to the favors or afflictions of men. “In all things” we are to have a good conscience towards God in the performance of our duty that all that see such ministry may be willing to live honestly.

19 But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Here it is clearly implied that the apostle was deterred from visiting them by some adverse circumstance over which he had no control. This could have been imprisonment or sickness, or the want of a convenient opportunity of reaching them. The probability is, judging from the particular statement in verse 23, that he was then a prisoner.

We now approach the conclusion of the epistle which is ended with a prayer, made up of suitable petitions for the Hebrews.

- **“Now the God of peace,”** - God is called “the God of peace,” because of His concern in the peace and reconciliation of His people...He is the promoter of peace both temporal and eternal where the saints are concerned. Such peace is opposed to all that would disturb or trouble the mind, and may refer, therefore, to reconciliation with God; to a quiet conscience; to the evidence of pardoned sin; to health and prosperity, and to the hope of heaven.

- **“That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,”** - who having died for our sins, was resurrected by His Father in the same body that He suffered and died in. Being the first fruits of His people, and their Lord and Savior, head and surety, for their justification, and as a pledge to their resurrection. Thus through His resurrection, we have peace, for it is only by Him that we have the prospect of an admission into heaven.

- **“That great shepherd of the sheep,”** - the idea here is, that it is through the tender care of that great Shepherd that true happiness is bestowed on the people of God. He is the great Shepherd of the people of God, the ones that He has chosen and given to Christ.

- **“Through the blood of the everlasting covenant,”** - the meaning is, that Christ was brought from the dead, by His blood, and denotes the particular influence that His blood had upon His resurrection, and the continued virtue of it since. Here the everlasting covenant is the covenant of grace, the new and better covenant of which Christ is the surety and the head of. Christ has been set up in eternity past to be the Mediator for all eternity of the covenant of grace.

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

- **“Make you perfect in every good work to do his will,”** - a good work is what is done in obedience to the command of God, and in faith, and from a principle of love, in the name and in the strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God...in every such work we should diligently attend to...and the will of God is the rule of every good work, both as to matter and manner. Whatever is not agreeable to the revealed will of God, regardless of the religious show of it, it is not a good work.

- **“Working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ;”** - the

good work of grace is necessary to the performance of good works...no man can do a good work unless he has the good work of grace wrought in him...all such works are pleasing in His sight even though they may not be evident to others for all the grace necessary for the beginning and carrying on, and finishing of the good work of grace, and for the performance of every good work, comes through the hands of Christ, in whom all fullness of it dwells, through His blood.

- **“To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”** - that is, either to God the Father or God the Son for He is the author and finisher of our salvation, the great shepherd of the sheep. Such glory is rendered through proper worship, prayer, obedience, and trust alone in Him.

22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

- **“And I beseech you, brethren,”** - Here the apostle addresses the Hebrews as “brethren.” He is not speaking to them in an authoritative manner, nor by way of advice, but by way of earnest request.

- **“Suffer the word of exhortation:”** - the subject matter of the request is, they listen to all that the Gospel, their ministers, their teachers, and everything within this epistle, would exhort them to be obedient unto. An exhortation to perseverance in adhering to Christianity.

- **“For I have written a letter unto you in few words.”** - meaning that the length of the epistle was short in comparison to what it could have been, as the subject matter contained in the epistle should require even greater expounding...it treating on the great doctrines of the Gospel, and mysteries of grace...things of the greatest importance.

23 Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

- **“Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty;”** - Timothy had been set free from the bonds of imprisonment of which he had been held for the sake of Christ and the Gospel.

- **“With whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.”** - evidently, Timothy was at the time of the writing of this epistle was absent from Paul, but upon his return both he and Paul would come shortly to see them.

24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

- **“Salute all them that have the rule over you,”** - that is, all the pastors and teachers or offices of the church.

- **“And all the saints.”** - the several members of the church, who were set apart for the holiness of God, whose sins were expiated by Christ; to whom Christ was made satisfaction.

- **“They of Italy salute you.”** - that is, all the Christian brethren in Italy, possibly Rome (this indicates the Paul was there in Rome).

25 Grace be with you all. Amen.

The magnificent epistle ends with the standard epistolary close used in Christian letters. The full meaning of the word “grace” was artfully presented as the case for the permanent superiority of Christ’s saving work as it was argued throughout the epistle. This is a final prayer that the Hebrew Christians would all experience such grace.

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 13:18-25

So ends “the word of exhortation,” that this grad epistle known simple as “The Epistle to the Hebrews.” Though written to Jewish Christians, with a particular need in mind, it is of great value to all Christians. It tells us more about the Old Testament and the intercessory work of our Lord as High Priest than any other book in the New Testament. Its warnings and exhortations are needed just as much today by Christians who are being tempted to leave Christ and go back into the world.

[Introduction](#)

ABOUT THIS VOLUME

The Epistle to the Hebrews presents Jesus Christ as superior to every person, institution, ritual, priesthood, and sacrifice of the old covenant - the perfect High Priest and the mediator of a better covenant established upon better promises.

These instructor's notes combine careful outlines, extensive Scripture exposition, doctrinal applications, and chapter overviews drawn from the commentary of John Gill. The studies follow Hebrews chapter by chapter, emphasizing Christ's person, priesthood, sacrifice, covenant, and call to persevering faith.

A substantial resource for personal study, classroom teaching, and sermon preparation through the Book of Hebrews.

JOHN GILL COMMENTARY OVERVIEWS

With additional instructor's study notes