

THE PATHWAY TO REST

The Brides' Purpose
Hebrews



by
Thomas M. Mitchell

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**The Brides' Purpose:
Hebrews**

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The Pathway to Rest: The Brides' Purpose Hebrews

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INTRODUCTION

The destiny of every human being depends on his relationship to Jesus Christ. It is not on his relationship to life, or on his service or his usefulness, but simply and solely on his relationship to Jesus Christ.

Oswald Chambers

We began our discovery of what it means to be the bride of Christ with the *hupa*, the marriage contract, in our book *The Doorway To Rest*. We answered Jesus' invitation to become His bride and our contract has been sealed with the "bride's price"—His blood. He promised us that He is coming back to take us as His wife and He has given us His gift, the Holy Spirit.

As we looked at the message of the *Song of Solomon* we were given a clear picture of not only who our bridegroom is, but equally important how He sees us and how we should see Him. His invitation opened the doorway to His Rest and now, as we walk out the days of our *ketubah*, we need to find out what that means and what it entails along the pathway to His Rest. For that we turn to the *Book of Hebrews*, where we learn what sewing our wedding dress means and how important it is for us to be ready and watching for His soon return as we move up the path to spiritual maturity.

We need to move on from the Cross, and within *Hebrew's* 13 chapters we are provided with our foundation along with the challenge to continue to achieve the goal of our betrothal. And as noted in *Wake Up And Rest – The Bride of Christ Sleeps At Her Own Peril*, I believe that Paul was the author of *Hebrews* and he uses this epistle to not only provide us with the path to spiritual maturity, he also reveals the steps we need to take to stay on that path. And along the way we have the incredible opportunity to live in His Rest and set aside for ourselves

unbelievable rewards for our wedding day as we fulfill our role in His kingdom. But our journey isn't without challenges and Paul clearly lays those out for us. He urges us to face them and not be satisfied with just our salvation. What we seek is nothing less than entering into the total Rest of Christ.

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HEBREWS

CHAPTER 1

The Supremacy and Sufficiency of Christ

Heb 1:1-3 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by 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; 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 made by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Verses 1-4 provide a summary of the coming argument—the *absolute supremacy and sufficiency of Christ*. The Old Covenant has prepared the way for the New Covenant; the new consummates the old. In these three introductory verses to *Hebrews* we have a treasure of divine revelation concerning Jesus Christ as we see “seven” things said about Him—the number of perfection. These are things that can only be said of Deity and they are not the words of man, they are the words of God that tell us who His Son is:

- **Inheritor**—the heir of all things.
- **Creator**—of the universe.
- **Radiator**—the brightness of the glory of God.
- **Representer**—of the same substance as man.
- **Sustainer**—of the universe.
- **Purifier**—the purger of our sins.

- **Ruler**—sitting on the throne of God.

In Chapter 1 there are seven quotes from the Old Testament that make the argument that as Son, Lord and Messiah, Jesus is superior to the angels:

Ps 2:7 thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee

2 Sam 7:14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son

Ps 97:7 worship him, all ye gods

Ps 104:4 who maketh his angels spirits

Ps 45:6, 7 thy throne O God is forever and ever... thy God hath anointed thee

Ps 110:1 the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand

“At Sundry Times”—*polumeros* (*pol-oo-mer-oce*)—means “in many portions,” “Divers Manners”—*polutropos* (*pol-oot-rop-oce*)—means “in various ways, visions, symbols and parables,” “Time Past”—*palai* (*pal-ah-ee*)—means “ancient times, a great while ago,” referring to the Old Testament record (pre-Messianic) and “Spake Unto The Fathers” refers to God speaking through creation.

The problem, however, is that although He spoke at various times and in various ways in times past the message can seemingly be inconsistent. God spoke through the prophets but what we often hear in their words seems to be incomprehensible. Even though God speaks through our conscience the message is sometimes inconclusive, requiring us to “lean in” and listen more closely.

But then God has been doing it that way since the beginning: In a burning bush to Moses (*Ex 3:2*); in a still small voice to Elijah (*1 Kings 19:12*); to Isaiah in a vision of the temple (*Isa 6:1*); to Hosea in his family (*Hos 1:2*) and to Amos in a basket of summer fruit (*Amos 8:1*).

According to the Pulpit Commentary: *These were but partial, fragmentary, anticipatory utterances, leading up to and adumbrating the one complete, all-absorbing “speaking of God to us in the Son,” which is placed in contrast to them all.*

“These Last Days”—*eschatos* (*es-khat-os*) *toon hemera* (*hay-mer-ah*)—means the latter end; the uttermost judgment days. To these Hebrew Christians it meant the Messianic Age: *Num* 24:14; *Jer* 33:14-16; *Mic* 5:12; *Zech* 9:9, 16. For us it means the present age to the end of the ages—the continuing age. And who but His Son, His “Appointed Heir,” could better solve the communication problem. And note that He did not say that He “hath appointed” Him, it’s in the aorist tense and means that his appointment is indefinite and continual. It is the full authority of the Son from the Father (*Dan* 7:13-14; *Matt* 28:18) and infers a title of dignity—exalted to the supreme place in heaven:

Phil 2:6-10 Who, being in **the form of God**, thought it not robbery to be **equal with God**: 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. 9 **Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him**, and given him **a name which is above every name**: 10 That **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

His claim to all things is also an “inherent claim”—He made them and therefore has the right to them. After all He was the one who “Made the Worlds:” *Ho aion* (*ho ahee-ohn*); the universe, literally “the ages”—*poieo* (*poy-eh-o*) *aion*; caused, brought forth, banded together, eternity, perpetuity, present and future; the world without end. The bottom line is that it means the sum of all the periods of time, including all that is manifested in them.

“Who Being the Brightness of His Glory”—*apaugasma* (*ap-ow-gas-mah*) *doxa* (*dox-ah*)—which refers to His dignity, honor, praise and

worship. It is Jesus who is the pre-existent essential being. He was there during it all:

- On Mount Sinai
- In the Holy of Holies (the Holiest Place)
- In the visions of Ezekiel
- In the vision of the shepherds
- In the transfiguration
- In the ecstasy of Stephen

The term “Express Image” is used only here in the New Testament and it doesn’t mean “reflection.” Jesus is not “reflecting” God’s glory, He is “radiating” it; it is “beamed forth” in Him. The translation is *charakter hupostasis* (*khar-ak-tare hoop-os-tas-is*), meaning an engraving, an exact copy or essence of the substance. It means that Jesus bears every feature of God’s character, revealed line for line. John Phillips says that Jesus is *God in focus*; He expresses the very heart of God.

And in that capacity he is “Upholding All Things”—*phero* (*fer-o*)—bearing or carrying forth; enduring; rushing forward; *ta panta*—sustaining in totality. Jesus is directing all things toward the consummation of all things according to God’s purpose. He spoke them into existence, He continues to sustain them and He will consummate His original purpose. It’s interesting that scientists are baffled by what is keeping positive-charged protons packed together in the nucleus of the atom. They call it “atomic glue” but we know its Jesus. He made them and He holds them all together.

*Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and **by him all things consist.***

And He does it with the “Word of His Power”—*rhema* (*hray-mah*) *dunamis* (*doo-nam-is*)—the revealed word; miraculous power. His command or order is active and powerful because it’s His glory, His person and His power. That is what “Purged Our Sins”—*katharismos*

(*kath-ar-is-mos*)—means purified, washed off. He is our redeemer and He has taken us from creation to Calvary as our true High priest.

Paul uses the word for sin—*hamartia* (*ham-ar-tee-ah*)—25 times in Hebrews and 48 times in Romans. It is used in underlying the point that he makes over and over in *Hebrews*; the Old Covenant sacrifices only “covered” sin. It was Jesus who made the ultimate sacrifice that removed sin. It was then that He “Sat Down on The Right Hand,” the position of authority and power. His work is finished and He is “sitting” at God’s right hand, in contrast to the Temple Priests who were always standing because their work was never finished. Our bridegroom is a victorious Savior, not a defeated martyr and He has entered into His inheritance of all things. He is sitting as “Majesty on High.”

It was the custom of oriental kings to put a son whom they associated with themselves in the prerogatives of royalty at the right hand of their throne. That is where the Son of God is sitting, but He will stand when He comes again to reclaim the world. There was, however, at least one moment in history when He stood up to welcome Stephen home.

Acts 7:56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

Wouldn’t you love for Him to stand when it’s your time to go home—*enter into My joy!*

Heb 1:4-5 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 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?

The argument outlined in the first four verses is now opened here in verse 5—Jesus is better than the angels.

“Being Made”—*ginomai* (*ghin-om-ahee*)—is caused to be, continues to be or ordained to be. He became; what He did in becoming man and

putting away the sins of men. What He became in His assumed humanity:

*Phil 2:6-9 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 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.** 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:*

But His was a change of state, not a change of existence. He has always existed but for a time He was made lower than the angels. Jesus was then exalted after His work on the cross was completed. But while He was made lower He was always “Better Than Angels.”

The Hebrews revered angels as they “brought the Word of God” to the people. The sect at Qumran believed Michael’s authority was higher than the Messiah’s but Paul clearly rejects that notion. Yes, the elect angels are the highest order of all created beings, but Jesus in his humanity is still above all other created beings—“better”—*kreitton* (*krite-tohn*); superior:

- *Michael*—“Who is like God;” he is glorious in might, the commander in chief of the armies of heaven.
- *Gabriel*—“Man of God;” he is glorious in ministry, the herald angel, the bearer of messages from God to man.
- *Lucifer*—“Light bearer;” he was glorious in majesty, the anointed cherub (*Ezek 28:14*), the highest of all created intelligences.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that Jesus is the brother of Michael and the Mormons teach that Jesus is the brother of Lucifer. What the Word tells us is that angels are simply “ministering spirits” and not

divine in nature. They were sent to attend Jesus' birth, His resurrection and will be sent at His return. The bottom line is that they are His servants and can't be compared with Him.

“By Inheritance”—*kleronomeo* (*klay-ron-om-eh-o*)—entering into possession without regards to the means. It didn't matter how Jesus obtained His excellent name, it was always His abiding possession as heir, the result of His atoning work. His name was always more excellent than the angels; different from. It was His by the fact that He is the Son of God (2 Sam 7:14).

“Said He”—the question is to which angel did God ever speak individually in the following terms:

“Thou Art My Son” (*Ps* 2:7; 2 Sam 7:19)—*huios* (*hwee-os*)—fully mature son. Sometimes angels are called sons of God (*Job* 1:6; 2:1) but so was Israel (*Ex* 4:22; *Hos* 11:1) and Solomon (2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chron 28:6); a partial fulfillment. David was called His son, not directly but to his posterity as the position of sonship was eternal; promised dominion. David looked forward to fulfillment in the distant future; 2 Sam 7:19.

“This Day I Have Begotten Thee”—There never was a time when the Father could not say to Jesus, thou art my son. But there was a day in His resurrection—in glorified humanity—that He was begotten into a new status as the exalted Man.

*Acts 13:33 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.***

“I Will Be to Him a Father” (2 Sam 7:14)—This was originally said of Solomon but used here in reference to the Messiah. This is the fundamental Father/Son relationship of God and Christ and no angel can claim that relationship.

*Heb 1:6 And **again**, when he bringeth in the **first begotten** into the world, he saith, And **let all the angels of God worship him.** 7 And of*

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

“Again”—*palin (pal-in)*—means anew in place, back in time, once more or furthermore. Some infer this as His first coming (in His humanity) while others infer this as His second coming (His office as creator and redeemer will then be consummated). In either case the Word tells us that angels worshiped Him when He was born and angels will worship Him when He comes to set up His kingdom on earth; they are creatures and He is the Son.

Paul’s point was that once these Hebrew Christians acknowledged Jesus as God they couldn’t possibly go back to the “empty shadows” of Judaism; their only option was to go on in Him. And there was no question in his words that Jesus was in fact God’s “First Begotten”. *Prototokos (pro-tot-ok-os)* refers to prominence of position or title and not to the order of time. Jesus was not the first to be born on earth, however He does hold the highest position of sovereignty and therefore it is proper that “All The Angels Of God Worship Him” (*Ps 97:7*). And because He is the One the angels worship that clearly makes Him superior to them.

Ex 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

God makes his angels into winds and his servants into flames (*Ps 104:4*)—they, as opposed to the Son, are nothing more than the elemental forces of nature; wind and fire. They are temporary in contrast to His eternal nature.

Heb 1:8-9 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

“Unto” speaks “of” the Son Jesus’ sovereignty as seen in His throne. The words proclaiming His deity come from no one less than the Father Himself. The throne “of” the Son is God’s throne—it is eternal (*Ps 45:6-7*). “O God” tells us that Jesus’ deity is seen in His name—and it is “Forever And Ever”—His dynasty is seen in the fact that His throne is forever.

“A Scepter of Righteousness” reflects Jesus’ authority, which is seated in His righteousness. His throne is founded in His righteousness, the very righteousness with which He has been “Anointed.” Jesus’ spirituality is in the anointing from His Father; His morality. Here Paul has in mind the Messianic offices of Prophet (verse 1), Priest (verse 3) and King (verses 3 and 8)—they all required anointing, and we know that Messiah means “anointed one.” Jesus, as Messiah, is the only one to ever hold all the offices—Prophet, King and Priest at the same time.

The reference to the “Oil Of Gladness”—*agalliasis* (*ag-al-lee-as-is*)—sets forth the meaning of jumping or leaping for joy, dancing, exultation and rejoicing. Gladness is symbolic of the blessing and joy associated with the anointing. Jesus’ happiness is what this world desperately needs and the bride of Christ carries it. Gladness is directly proportional to holiness. The extent to which you choose to be holy is the extent to which you will be happy, and likewise the converse is also true.

The term “Fellows” is used only here in the New Testament. It refers to those who occupied the throne of David on earth, and by far the happiest of them all was David himself. These other kings were Jesus’ associates in royalty but we can’t forget that God made Him—His firstborn—higher than all the others.

*Heb 1:10-12 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are **the works of thine hands**: 11 **They shall perish**; but **thou remainest**; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 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.*

Verses 10-12 are from *Ps 102:25-27* where these words applied to God. “The Works of Thine Hands” are reflective of the glory of Jesus’ power in that He founded the earth and fashioned the heavens. But the very thing that He created will “Perish.” His works—the universe—are like a clock that is slowly running down and it, along with everything in it, will eventually fold in upon itself. This is a reference to the transforming all things (the universe) as in *Isa 66:22; Rev 6:14; 21:1*. One day the One who sustains the universe is going to “let go”—but He will remain. The universe that seems so permanent to us will be rolled up, changed, and replaced by a new heaven and a new earth—like changing clothes— but through it all the Son remains unchanged.

The message here is that the universe will become obsolete, but Judaism has already become obsolete. The Law was only the way by which these Hebrew Christians made their way to the truth (the Messiah). The Law was preliminary and was only temporary, but Jesus “Remainest.” His glory is permanent; it’s the same yesterday, today and forever (*Heb 13:8*).

*Heb 1:13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, **Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?***

This is a reference to *Ps 110:1* and here Paul stresses that these words are not applicable to angels because God never said to any angel “Sit on My Right Hand.” The glory of Jesus’ position is at the Father’s right hand and no angel has ever been invited to share God’s throne. And no angel but Satan has ever tried to usurp it by trying to grasp it. The angels stand before God (*Luke 1:19; Rev 8:2; Dan 7:10*) but Jesus is sitting because it’s His destiny is to reign (*Matt 22:44; Acts 2:35*). The angels destiny is to serve the recipients of salvation—the bride; *1 Cor 6:3*.

“Enemies Thy Footstool”—Jesus occupies His throne by divine appointment and it represents our sure hope of complete triumph over His enemies; they are in utter subjection and utterly powerless. Therefore Jesus is superior in His majesty as the Son of God, the truth of which is

expressed and exemplified in the Word of God. Jesus is without peer in the universe.

Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

A more correct translation is: *Are they not all ministering spirits, for service sent forth, on account of those who are to inherit salvation?* Jesus sits on the royal throne and angels minister to the saints. The angels are no more than servants sent forth from His throne to minister to the heirs of salvation; the bride.

The term “salvation”—*soteria*—is used seven times in Hebrews; once again we see the number of perfection. Paul uses it here with no explanation because the Hebrew Christians knew what it meant; salvation “in Christ.”

So, as we move into Chapter Two this then is the first warning against disregarding His salvation—DRIFTING from the things which we have heard.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 2

A Warning Against “Drifting” From the Things We Have Heard

*Heb 2:1 **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”—*dia touto*—means on account of this and refers to the argument that Jesus is superior to the angels. Therefore —since Jesus is God’s unique Son—it is imperative that we accept the salvation He procured for us at its full face value. This puts Paul in the same class as his audience and therefore they are clearly Christians; born again believers in Jesus Christ.

“Earnest Heed”—*perissoteros* (*per-is-sot-er-oce*)—means abundant, more frequent and *prosecho* (*pros-ekh-o*) means attendance or regard. In other words it means to turn one’s mind to a thing and act upon what it perceives.

*Acts 8:6 And the multitudes **with one accord heeded** the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.*

There were three secret symbols used in the early church:

- *Fish*—Jesus Christ Son of God Savior.
- *Boat*—disciples were fishers of men.

- *Anchor*—the most frequent symbol used; our mooring.

“Things We Have Heard” most likely refers to the whole Christian Gospel with all its discoveries and directions. Paul told them that they were to read them, meditate on them and mix faith with them. It was easy for them to accept Christ because that was a free gift, but going on to maturity was another matter. Conversion is only the first step; the final goal is to be perfect like Christ:

*Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to **be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

Here is Paul’s warning that we must not “Let Them Slip.” The danger is that we will carelessly let them drift away—*pararrhuego* (*par-ar-hroo-eh-o*)—let them pass by, fall away like a ring slipping off a finger or drift like a ship that has slipped its mooring.

It’s important to remember how subtle “drifting” can be. We don’t need to be violently opposed to the message to suffer loss. Satan will slip in and steal the Word by the entanglements and snares of the world if we fail to remain vigilant. We don’t need to make a conscious decision to run away, if we don’t remain focused on our bridegroom we can easily drift away—float passively by through criminal neglect. The answer is to secure ourselves to the truth and make it our anchor.

Becoming familiar and/or consumed with “works” will also cause us to slip our anchor. The Hebrew Christians were tempted to go back because they had lost their first love, their earnest zeal, and had had become lukewarm, apathetic and fruitless in the process. They were saved by grace but they supposed they were kept by the Law—Paul spoke similarly to the Galatians:

*Gal 3:1-3 O foolish Galatians, **who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth**, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? 2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing*

*of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? **Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?***

There are two calls—two choices as a Christian—one for salvation and one to a yielded life that requires the full surrender of one’s will to Christ:

- *Salvation*—the Carnal Christian is saved by grace—alive in Christ—but defeated. They have the water of life within but there will be no rewards. They live in the Holy Place just short of the Rest of Christ in the Holiest Place.
- *Salvation Plus*—the Spiritual Christian walks in power, victory, joy, service, fruitfulness and will be rewarded; the abundant life. They have the water of life flowing out because they live in the Holiest Place, the Rest of Christ.

Where we live depends on what we do during our *ketubah*—the bride’s betrothal. It all depends on what we do with God’s gift of salvation. Do we neglect it or do we develop it (*Phil 2:15-16; Eph 5:15-16; Eph 4:14-15*). The problem in America is that the bride, in large part, is preaching a brand of cheap, shallow Gospel—believe, accept, raise a hand, sign a card and you are saved. The preaching of this “social Gospel” is done at the expense of the Cross; there is no separation from the world of sin. The problem is that there is no “change” evident in their lives. They don’t separate themselves and come out from the world and the enemies of Christ.

*2 Cor 6:17 **Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing;** and I will receive you,*

*2 Cor 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us **cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh** (and spirit Fellowship with the world), **perfecting holiness in the fear of***

God.

It is not about “ritual,” it’s about “relationship.” It’s not just cruising through the kingdom as a carnal Christian; it’s communing with The King as a Spiritual Christian. And that means we cannot afford to “run out as leaking vessels” because:

- We feel that the “revealed truths” aren’t important.
- We’re engrossed in business.
- We’re attracted to the pleasures of life.
- We don’t take advantage of opportunities God provides, we just let them slip by; often times unnoticed.
- We let favorable opportunities in our life slip by because we “intend” to do it at some other time.

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

“Word” as used here is “message”—*logos (log-os)*—the spoken thought or reasoning concerning the doctrine. The fact that it was “Spoken by the Angels” (*preached, told, uttered*) refers to the divinely “given Law. In the Old Testament God spoke through the angels and Israel believed that all revelation was delivered by them from Yahweh. But the Gospel was spoken by God alone and it is “Steadfast”—*bebaios (beb-ah-yos)*—firm, sure, binding, fulfilled. The Word will abide and have its force whether man obeys it or not.

It’s certain that every “Transgression” and “Disobedience” will receive its “Just Recompense of Reward;” its proper punishment. If man trifles with the Law of God, the Law will not trifle with him. It has done so with sinners in the past, is doing so now and will in the future.

*Heb 2:3 **How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation;**
which at the **first began to be spoken by the Lord,** and was
confirmed unto us **by them that heard him;***

“How Shall We Escape”—If disobedience to the Law brought swift judgment, how much more severe will be the judgment of disobedience to the Gospel of salvation. Israel and the Law are but a shadow of the Christian and Grace. Those who despise salvation are condemned already by the sin of Adam and by their actions have strengthened their bonds. Their only escape is by accepting the salvation that is in Christ; the message of hope carried by the bride.

*John 3:18 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.*

“Neglect” as used here is *ameleo* (*am-el-eh-o*) and it means to be negligent or pay no regard to. In essence they are making light of it. How can they expect to escape just recompense if they neglect to mature spiritually? Neglecting our responsibility as it relates to our salvation isn’t an option, it’s our responsibility to receive it by faith and embrace it by faith. Sometimes we allow ourselves to get so busy that we neglect our salvation and at the root cause you will always find Satan.

*Luke 14:18 And **they all with one consent began to make excuse.**
The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.*

“So Great a Salvation” is an awesome statement. Just stop for a few moments and reflect on what that means and what neglecting it means:

- Deliverance from foes and death.
- Temporal blessings.
- Grace of the Spirit.
- Forgiveness of sins.
- Promise of glory.

First—it's a "great salvation" because it was first announced by the Lord; *Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord* (Hebrew translation). He was the first to bear witness that:

- Its author is great.
- It saves from great sins.
- It saves from great dangers.
- It exalts people to great honors in heaven.
- It was affected by infinite displays of power, wisdom and love.

Second—it was confirmed by those who heard Him; the witness of the disciples. They confirmed that it is firm, sure, binding and fulfilled. The message of salvation was guaranteed to us and of that there cannot be the slightest doubt.

Third—God has testified to it (verse 4). Carnal Christians are not living all-out for Christ and therefore they are neglecting this great salvation. They are wasting time, life, energy and money that belong to Christ in selfish gratification. They have lost sight of the fact that there is more to salvation than just being saved from "hell" and going to heaven. In living this life, carnal Christians are passing up the "rewards" the Lord has promised for faithful, obedient service.

And why is He setting rewards for us in heaven? Because He knows we struggle with our old nature and become weary so He promises an extra reward for faithfulness. But we can't forget that it isn't "payment" for service—it's "grace." The carnal Christian is saved but there is a penalty for disobedience, and that can come in continued chastening, sickness, weakness and at last resort death.

1 Cor 11:30-32 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.

There may come a time when God ceases to deal with them and wait to fully judge them at the Judgment Seat of Christ (not the White Throne Judgment for unbelievers). *Heb 6:6* says that these cannot be renewed again unto repentance but become God's castaways.

1 Cor 9:27 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.

They will see all their works burned up (wood, hay and stubble) and they will suffer the loss but will be saved "so as by fire."

1 Cor 3:13-15 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Our position, our place, and our authority in the coming Kingdom will be determined on how we lived and served Him after we were saved with what He has given us:

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

2 John 8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

2 Peter 1:10-11 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The question we need to constantly ask ourselves is how far have we come in confessing everything of our self and our flesh (our old nature)?

*2 Tim 2:21 **If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.***

*Heb 2:4 **God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?***

“God Also Bearing Them Witness”—God has gone on record and there can be no higher record.

*John 5:37 And **the Father Himself**, who sent Me, **has testified of Me**. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.*

And He has done it with “Signs”—*semeion* (say-mi-on)—“Miracles” were significant spiritual meaning and “Wonders”—*teras* (ter-as)—were the marvelous aspects of signs; they were not explicable and no man could reproduce them. God provided these signs and wonders to convince the Jews who were always requiring a sign.

*1 Cor 1:22 For the **Jews require a sign**, and the **Greeks seek after wisdom**.*

“Divers Miracles”—*poikilos dunamis* (poy-kee-los doo-nam-is)—refers to the manifold mighty, superhuman miracles that Christ performed to convince the Gentiles along with “Gifts of the Holy Ghost.” Or better stated, the “gifts” that the Holy Spirit gives (*1 Cor 12:11*) or the gift “of” the Holy Spirit (*Gal 3:5*). Either way, there were manifestations of the Holy Spirit in believers that were to confirm the message to the Christian.

And all of this was according to “His Own Will.” God does this as He wills because He is supreme. It’s His sovereign will that we should

have sure footing for our faith and a strong foundation for our hope; therefore He has given us the “gift of the Holy Spirit” and His gifts.

Heb 2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

“Unto the Angels Hath He Not Put”—God hasn’t put the world under the subjection of angels. He didn’t do this in the past, He isn’t in the present nor will He in the future. The angels were used to give the Law—they did not give the Gospel. Christ has the administration of the Gospel and the coming new world will be in subjection (under obedience, subdued) to Him.

“The World to Come”—*oikoumene* (*oy-kou-men-ay*)—is the inhabited earth during the millennial kingdom. At the moment, not all things are subject to Him but that day is coming (*Ps 8*). Although we are “in His Kingdom” we still pray “Thy Kingdom come” because the manifestation of it is in the future. We belong not to this world but to the “world to come” and by faith we make it an “internal reality.”

Heb 2:6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

These are the words of David from *Ps 8:4-6* as he asks what God sees in man (same as son of man) that He would send His Spirit to visit him to convince him of his sin. Why are you mindful—*mimnesko* (*mim-nace-ko*)—why do you remember him and “Visitest”—*episkeptoimai* (*ep-ee-skep-tom-ahee*)—care for or look out for him? In David’s time God visited man but in our time Jesus has visited us. So David wonders why God would even bother with man. Why was one so feeble and so comparatively without strength placed over this lower world and the earth made subject to his control? Those are pretty imposing questions!

Heb 2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

God made us just “A Little Lower” than the angels. God placed us above all creation but just a little “inferior to” in rank to the angels. And He “Crownedst” us—greatly honored or exalted us with “Glory And Honor”—*doxa (dox-ah)*—brightness, splendor, dignity, praise, worship and honor—*time (tee-may)*—meaning precious, which stress the supreme place God has placed man in creation. He set us over “The Works of Thy Hands.”

Man’s supreme place in creation is over all that God created. The original appointment was made in the Garden of Eden where man was to tend and keep The Garden for God. He was to stand between the world of the beasts and the world of the angels. But at the same time he was to be lower than the angels for a short time. This was a probationary period during which man failed, but the time is coming when we will no longer be lower than the angels.

Heb 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

“In Subjection”—dominion over all things—and “Under His Feet”—puts everything in complete subjection to man; complete supremacy. But “Not Yet” shows Paul’s optimism about the future; one day this subjection will be fully realized. The frustration of life, those thorns and thistles that make life difficult will one day be removed (*Gen 3:18*).

In the interim, the problem is that man can’t control himself. No matter what great discoveries he makes he still can’t prevent war. No one has ever used more than 2% of their mental capacity and yet God has given us an incredible potential. Had Adam not sinned we may very well have tapped into that potential, but that didn’t happen and now we have to wait for the “new creation.”

*Heb 2:9 **But we see Jesus**, who was **made a little lower** than the angels **for the suffering of death**, **crowned with glory and honor**; **that he by the grace of God** should **taste death** for **every man**.*

The tremendous price at which our salvation was purchased involved Jesus stepping off the throne of the universe to become man. No wonder Paul says, “But We See Jesus.” He uses Jesus earthly name—he uses it 9 times in Hebrews—to place the emphasis on Christ’s humanity. He calls our attention to the fact that we don’t see the fulfillment in man “in general” but in “the” man, “Jesus.” We see the fulfillment in One who was made “For the Suffering of Death”—*dia* (*dee-ah*)—for or on account of death. On account of the sufferings of death He was crowned with glory and honor. In death He was crowned with thorns but now we see Him crowned in glory and honor in a place of supremacy. And for what purpose? “That He by the Grace of God” would die for all mankind. It was by the grace of God that Christ’s atoning work was accomplished by tasting death for every man, and it was only by the grace of God and not by any claim by man.

The word used for tasted is *geuomai* (*ghyoo-om-ahee*) and it means to taste with the mouth, experience or come to know (*Matt 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27; John 8:52*). In terms of the Old Testament, Jesus is our “cup-bearer;” He tasted death so that we might live.

*Matt 26:39 And he went a little further, 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.*

*Heb 2:10 For **it became him**, for whom are all things, and **by whom are all things**, in **bringing many sons unto glory**, to make the **captain of their salvation** perfect through sufferings.*

“It Became Him”—*prepo* (*prep-o*)—It was befitting the character of God or it was “becoming” of Him, which infers that it harmonizes with His love, justice and wisdom. The way of salvation was befitting, it was not arbitrary. Jesus’ suffering didn’t take place by random chance; it was “as it should be.” There was a correctness that the whole plan should

bear the mark of the infinite wisdom of its author, the author of “All Things;” the universe.

And that correctness was in “Bringing Many Sons Unto Glory”—*ago* (*ag-o*)—Having not just brought but having determined to bring many. In other words, His sufferings were fruitful for many; His bride.

*John 1:12 But as many **as received him**, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name:*

*John 17:10 And **all mine are thine**, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

It was for her that He became the “Captain of Their Salvation.” The word captain is *archegos* (*ar-khay-gos*) and it means “author.” He authored our salvation by fulfilling the office God consecrated and appointed Him to hold. And it was His personal participation that made His sacrifice “Perfect Through Sufferings”—*teleioo* (*tel-i-o-o*)—consecrated, perfect, finished, consummated. He was perfectly “God” and perfectly “man,” but this verse is referring to Jesus as “redeemer.” His sufferings are the foundation upon which all His present ministry rests. He perfected the work of our redemption by shedding His blood and He consecrated us by being a consecrated offering for us; perfecting our consecration by His death. He filled up all that was necessary; everything was completed by means of His suffering. Jesus was wholly qualified for His work by overcoming His earthly limitations. He attained perfection by actually having suffered, and as a result He knows human life in all its joys, sorrows, temptations, and trials.

And think about this. If He had been unable or unwilling to die in our place He would have been an imperfect Savior, even though He would remain perfectly God and Man. He would not have lost His divinity nor could it have been said that He didn’t live a sinful life. Yes, He could have failed us but He didn’t because, first and foremost, He didn’t fail His Father.

*Heb 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and **they who are sanctified are all of one**: for **which cause** he is not ashamed to **call them brethren**.*

“They Who Are Sanctified” are the bride of Christ, whom God already sees perfectly sanctified in Jesus; perfect as He is perfect. The truth is, however, that we are sanctified but we are still working out our sanctification this side of heaven.

*Jude 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:*

“All of One” refers to the fact that the bride is of the same heavenly Father. God is the spiritual Father of His human sons, therefore Christ is not only our bridegroom, He is our elder brother and we are members of the family. We are of the same earthly father, so to speak, because we have the same human nature. And Jesus is qualified to be our Priest and Savior because He shares our nature—not because He is some remote being.

He has become one of us—“For Which Cause”—because He is united with us by undertaking our redemption. And He is “Not Ashamed” of us. By adoption we have a like dignity to Christ so His majesty is not compromised by our brotherhood with Him. Our imperfection does not drag down His perfection.

God makes sons of men the sons of God because He has made the Son of God the Son of man. And that’s why Jesus is not ashamed to “Call Us Brethren,” because He shares our lineage from Adam.

*Heb 2:12 Saying, **I will declare thy name** unto **my brethren**, in the **midst of the church** will I sing praise unto thee.*

“I Will Declare”—This is a Messianic Psalm and therefore these words are attributed to Christ; I will make known the name of God Himself to My disciples as part of “My work.”

*Ps 22:12-22 Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. 13 They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. 14 **I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint:** my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. 15 **My strength is dried up like a potsherd;** and **my tongue cleaveth to my jaws;** and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. 16 For dogs have compassed me: **the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me;** **they pierced my hands and my feet.** 17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. 18 **They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.** 19 But be not thou far from me, O Lord: O my strength, haste thee to help me. 20 Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. 21 Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. 22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.*

“I Will Declare Thy Name”—*onoma* (on-om-ah)—“Name” as used here means the whole person; their entire character. Christ will proclaim God’s name to His brothers; “My Brethren.” He is a brother to all those who call God their Father; those who are sanctified and do the will of God (*Matt 12:50; Luke 8:21*). But note that He never called His disciples brothers until after His resurrection (*Matt 28:10; John 20:17*); not until He had paid the price did He truly become their (or our) brother.

“In the Midst of the Church”—He is united with His church (His bride) as her bridegroom because He is one with her.

*Heb 2:13 **And again, I will put my trust in him.** **And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.***

“And Again”—This refers to the fact that it is “said in another place” or “used” of the Messiah in another place. Either way it has the same meaning in both instances.

“I Will Put My Trust in Him”— In this He is a brother to all the saints who do likewise; not on their own merits.

*Isa 8:17-18—Just as Isaiah had to trust God to get him through, so did Jesus; **He put His trust in His Father.***

“I and the Children Which God Hath Given Me” (*Isa 8:18*)—*paidion* (*pahee-dee-on*)—refers to “little” children. Jesus and God’s children are in the same group; they are brothers. They were given to Christ by the Father at their conversion:

*John 6:37 **All that the Father giveth me** shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

*John 17:2 As **thou hast given him power over all flesh,** that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*

*Heb 2:14-15 **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;** 15 And deliver them who through **fear of death** were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

This refers to the Incarnation of Christ. “Forasmuch” (since of—because) “The Children” (those who were to become adopted children of God) are “Partakers Of Flesh And Blood”—*koinoneo* (*koy-no-neh-o*); fellowship. One commentator likened the blood (the inner element) to the vehicle of the soul; the obvious element is the flesh:

*Lev 17:11 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.*

Jesus shared humanity with the children of God and as Boaz was the kinsman redeemer for Ruth (*Ruth 2*); Jesus is our kinsman redeemer “Through Death.” He died for us and we need to die for Him:

Matt 16:24-25 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

It was necessary that Jesus should die for our sins and that made it necessary for Him to become a man. He set the pattern for us. If we die-to-self, what can man do to us.” Our old nature is dead, we are new creatures and our spirit is alive to God... what can a dead man do?

“Destroy the Power Of Death”—*katargeo (kat-arg-eh-o)*—Means to render entirely useless, abolish or vanish away. This was the ultimate purpose of Jesus’ incarnation; to deprive the devil of the power to hurt His people:

2 Tim 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel:

The devil is the procuring cause of death. He is said to have the power of death because he draws us into sin, for which the wages are death. But in Jesus’ sacrifice, death was swallowed up in victory (*1 Cor 15:54*). Christ destroyed his power and the devil can’t keep any of those that are “in” Christ under the power of spiritual death.

1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

“Fear of Death” has kept man in bondage. It’s the fear of what lies beyond the “evil that is known.” Being gripped by the fear of death man is in cruel bondage, but Christ’s work has brought an end to the fear of death—it was the only thing that could.

Heb 2:16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

“Verily He Took Not”—*depou (day-poo)*—Means doubtless or truly. Truly Jesus did not “lay hold” of the nature of angels, He “truly” laid hold of the seed of Abraham; Israel and His bride (she is Abraham’s spiritual seed).

“He Took On Him”—*epilambanomai (ep-ee-lam-ban-om-ahee)*—He took hold of “with a purpose.” The goal of Jesus becoming a little lower than the angels was the Cross, which He took upon Himself with the direct purpose of redeeming us.

“Seed Of Abraham”—In His Incarnation Jesus did not descend to the level of the angels to become one of them, He stooped to the level of humanity; He descended to the level of mankind and became a Jew. But, while He came “for” the seed of Abraham that did not exclude the fact that He died for the whole human race. Just because He loves one does not exclude the fact that He also loves another. Believers in Christ, as the spiritual children of Abraham, are beneficiaries of the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant to the “promised seed of Abraham.”

*Heb 2:17 **Wherefore in all things it behooved 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 Behooved Him”—His body, soul, rank and character, by moral necessity, were all part of what God’s justice and love required of Him as Mediator—to be “Made Like Unto His Brethren.” His Incarnation was not aimless; it was for the specific purpose of Jesus becoming a high priest. And only in *Hebrews* is the term High priest applied to Him.

”Merciful” is the high priest’s prime requisite. We need someone who can intercede for us with compassion, being merciful to us because we deserve God’s wrath for our sins. And Jesus is not only our merciful high priest; He is our “Faithful High priest” who is believable, sure and true. We need someone who can intercede for us and Jesus performs that function of the high priest for us. He is our high priest in “Things

Pertaining to God.” In service to God as our high priest He offered up a sacrifice for us—Himself.

“Reconciliation”—*hilaskomai* (*hil-as-kom-ahee*)—means to satisfy, atone, propitiate or to appease, and it is only used here and in *Luke 18:13*. “The People”—Are those whom Christ died for; first the seed of Abraham (Israel) and secondly believing Gentiles:

1 Peter 2:9-10 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 marvelous light: 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Heb 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.

“For In That He Himself” is the word *autos* (*ow-tos*)—which infers a “baffling wind.” It was contrary to what might have been expected that Jesus Himself was to suffer. And because He did suffer He is able to sympathize with us when we suffer. In other words, He understands our needs in an experiential way.

“Being Tempted”—Jesus was examined, proved, tried and tested and therefore He can help the tempted; He has perfect sympathy with them. He experienced the temptation of evil being presented to the mind in its full force, which is something we have never experienced. He was “tried,” put to the proof by Satan, but “He Is Able.” Only one who suffers is able to “Succor Them;” aid, relieve or respond at our cry for help. He knows how to deal with tempted sorrowful souls because He has been sick of the same disease—not of sin but of temptation and trouble of the soul.

Isa 41:10 Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Here then is the first section of *Hebrews*. The Lord is superior to all others in His person and as the Son of God He is deity. As the Son of Man He is humanity. He is the one, unique person in the universe who can satisfy both God's claims and man's need.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 3

A Warning Against “Disbelieving” the Voice of God

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

“Wherefore Holy Brethren,” because of Christ’s sacrifice, we are given a holy character; a common bond in our union with Christ. And note once again that Paul refers to his readers and himself as brethren. They are all Christians and are “Partakers” of the heavenly calling.

This is critical to understanding the book of Hebrews.

Metochos (met-okh-os) is a word that means fellow or partner of the same substance. These were not those who came short of salvation. They were “holy brethren” and “partakers” (believers) of the “same substance” as Christ—of the divine nature.

2 Peter 1:4 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.

Here is the critical takeaway that will help you fully understand Paul’s message.

Partaking **IN** Christ is **positional** while partaking **OF** Christ is **experiential**. Partaking **IN** is free but partaking **OF** costs us something; sanctification requires us to continually lay down our life at the Cross:

Luke 22:42 Not my will but thine be done.

Partaking **OF** means not only receiving His Life in our hearts when we are born again (partakers **IN** Christ), but also **LIVING** that life out in our souls. It means becoming the **Overcomers** referenced in Rev 2-3. The life of Christ is being lived out **Through** us: empowered by the Holy Spirit, living Christ's overcoming life, His agape love, His supernatural power and His divine wisdom. Partakers **OF** Christ are the ones who will be Christ's co-heirs in His future kingdom.

1 Cor 10:17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

This is what "sanctification" is all about; creating the image of Christ in us for the purpose of bringing glory to Him.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow (Know Before), he also did predestinate (Ordain) to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

This involves replacing our "self-life" with "Christ's Life"—an exchanged, shared, and imparted life: Our love, wisdom and strength for His.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Col 1:10-13 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 Strengthened with all might, according to his

glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; 12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

But the exchange doesn't happen automatically. We must be cleansed vessels and that can only happen by exercising child-like faith; faith by which "we choose" the exchange:

John 12:24-25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. 25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

The Hebrew Christians were in danger of coming up short of a life of service, victory and missing out on the rewards to be handed out at the Judgment Seat of Christ. And if we continue to quench God's Spirit over a period of time we also run the risk of becoming those unfaithful, backsliding, nominal Christians who will ultimately miss the inheritance that God has planned for them; now and for all eternity. If we do we place ourselves in peril of coming to that place where we will no longer desire to repent; our heart will have grown "stone cold."

At this point I need to make a distinction that I carry throughout *Hebrews*. Just like in the Tabernacle, there are two places for the Christian to live; the Holy Place and the Holiest Place (Holy of Holies).

- The Holy Place is where the Christian is holy **IN** standing with Christ. He is assured of his position in God's family because he is saved by his believing faith in Christ as his Saviour.
- The Holiest Place is where the Christian becomes a partaker, a vessel and a carrier **OF** Jesus' life to others by

the power of His Spirit. It's here that Christ is not only the Life Giver; He is Life Itself. This is the Rest of Christ.

We can't just be "recipients" of His Life; we must be "partakers" of His Life. If we "Live By The Spirit" we must also "Walk By The Spirit," which is our "Heavenly Calling." And this high calling not only comes **FROM** heaven, it leads us **TO** heaven.

Phil 3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

In the Old Testament it was all about a place but in the New Testament it's all about a person. For the Jew the blessing was in the land but for the Christian the blessing is in the Lord; in the heavenlies (*Eph 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10*). That's where our "Apostle and High priest" is today.

Paul first addresses the resemblance between Christ and Moses because the Hebrew Christians still entertained a very high opinion of Moses, and then he brought forward Christ's superiority.

- *Apostle*—one who represents God to man; pleading "the cause of God."
- *Priest*—one who represents man to God; pleading "our cause" with God.

Paul makes the comparison with Moses who was Israel's apostle, her kinsman redeemer. He was the ambassador in the king's absence, but in the King's presence he falls back into the multitude; *whose house we are*. Aaron was Israel's high priest. But Jesus is both our apostle and the high priest of "Our Profession;" our kinsman redeemer and our mediator. God has spoken to us by His Son in both of those offices and what God proclaims we confess; that's "Our Profession."

Dr. M.R. DeHaan wrote in his study of *Hebrews*—*To those who have come to Christ for salvation, HE now says, I want you to go further and*

go on to the abundant life of victory in service. You are saved by grace but victory comes only by sacrifice. Go—take the next step—take my yoke upon you and learn of me.

*Matt 11:28-29 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and **I will give you rest.**²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and **ye shall find rest unto your souls.***

Israel's forefathers came "out of" Egypt but never "went into" Canaan; the Rest of God, the land of victory, the Promised Land. They died in the wilderness having never attained the victory because they neglected their salvation. They never got their reward, and as Paul notes, they "came up short" of God's best for them.

The bride of Christ can make the same mistake and come up short. She is "out" of sin (living in the Holy Place) but "short" of victory (the Holiest Place; the Rest of Christ). The result is the same as it was for Israel; the loss of our reward both here and now and in all eternity. Just as Israel missed God's Rest the bride can miss Jesus' Rest—through unbelief.

The bottom line is that the purpose of becoming partakers "of" Christ's Life is so we might become those overcomers that Rev 2 and 3 refer to. It is the overcomers who produce the "fruit of righteousness" in their lives; the Godly fruit of our sanctification that is produced by the Holy Spirit. The Pulpit Commentary says: *Our work is our fruit; and our fruit is the product of our lives.* For the bride of Christ, her fruit is her "wedding dress;" her "outward righteousness" that follows after her "inward righteousness." Her betrothal incorporates the process of bringing to the outside the righteousness she has on the inside; the righteousness given her by her bridegroom. This is the wedding dress that she is sowing as she waits and watches for His return.

*Heb 3:2 **Who was faithful to him that appointed him,** as also Moses was faithful in all his house. 3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as **he who hath builded the house***

hath more honor than the house. 4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

“Who Was Faithful”—Christ was faithful as was Moses, but in a greater cause and at a greater cost. He doesn’t pray for the sinners, He prays for those that are His. He is faithful to those who believe in Him because He is faithful to the Father who appointed Him their high priest.

*John 17:9 **I pray for them: I pray not for the world,** but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*

“Who Hath Builded” comes from the word *kataskeuazo* (*kat-ask-yoo-ad-zo*) and it means established or ordained, and the house referred to here is the Temple. Moses built the house but it was founded by Christ, and the honor of the founder of a house is greater than that of the house. Every house has some founder but God is the original founder of all things and therefore Moses was but a servant.

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

“Moses Was Faithful”—He was faithful to the great trust, the great talents and the great tests given him by God. He was a faithful “Servant”—*therapon* (*ther-ap-ohn*)—of high honor or trust and he was a ministering attendant “For A Testimony.” All that means Moses, in his typical ministrations, gave testimony to Israel of the things of Christ, which were “To Be Spoken After” by Christ. He was a shadow of the substance to come; Christ.

On the other hand, Jesus is “A Son Over His Own House.” He is superior to Moses because he was a servant and Christ is the Son. Jesus enters His Father’s house as Master over it. And we (His bride) are that house if we “Hold Fast” our confidence—*parrhesia* (*par-rhay-see-ah*), which means that we must do so plainly and freely with boldness of speech. If we don’t hold fast we will be cut off from being a part of

building God's spiritual house. These are the spiritual works we accomplish with our spiritual gifts as we walk out our calling. In other words, if we don't hold fast our confidence we are in danger of being cut off from the "priesthood," cut off from our reward:

*1 Peter 2:5 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**.*

We become part of God's house by faith alone but we can fail to enter into the practical enjoyment of all that it means. We can fail to enter our Canaan; Jesus' Rest. There is a real danger for the bride of Christ if she settles for a second-class Christian life by remaining in the Holy Place, devoid of boldness, daunted by foes, and haunted by fear.

"Rejoicing of the Hope"—means boasting or glorying. But notice that it is not rejoicing **IN** but **OF** our hope—rejoicing that we "have it." And since all our good things lie in hope we should hold it fast as though our hopes were already realized. Once again Dr. DeHaan—*This passage is not dealing with salvation but with assurance, confidence and rejoicing in hope. The danger was not that these Christians could lose their salvation but they could lose their assurance, their confidence, their joy and finally their reward for faithfulness ... not "if we hold fast our salvation" but rather "if we hold fast our confidence"*

Remember, our salvation depends upon His faithfulness but our rewards are dependent upon our faithfulness; faithfulness in holding fast our confidence and rejoicing in hope, firm to the end. And we will accomplish that by always *Looking Back* to Calvary and considering the cost of our redemption; *Looking Up* and seeing Christ at the right hand of the Father interceding for us, and *Looking Ahead*, waiting for the day when He will return with our reward.

*Heb 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, **lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds**.*

*Heb 3:7-9 **Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith,** Today if ye will hear*

his voice, 8 **Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:** 9 **When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.**

“Wherefore” (for that reason), seeing that we are the house of God, Paul now points to the experience of Israel as a warning against stopping short of the abundant life. Likewise we need to hold fast to our confidence that Jesus is faithful—so don’t be unfaithful.

Understand that this warning comes directly from the Holy Spirit. We are not to “Harden Our Heart”—*skleruno* (*sklay-roo-no*); render it stubborn. And unlike the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart this is not God’s act, it’s ours and the message is clear: don’t repeat the mistake of the Israelites in the “Provocation” (the irritation).

After witnessing the plagues poured out on Egypt, the slaying of the firstborn, their deliverance, and the crossing of the Red Sea, Israel “provoked” God by criticizing and complaining. As a result their “Temptation in the Wilderness”—their wandering—was prolonged for 40 years. All because they “Tempted” God; examined, proved or tried Him. They put God to the proof because they doubted that He was able and/or willing to relieve them. They didn’t believe that He could and yet they understood or had knowledge of all that they “had seen” (witnessed firsthand); all that He had done for them.

For 40 years Israel wandered in the wilderness and for these Hebrew Christians their “today” was to last 40 years; from the first “preaching of the Gospel” until Jerusalem’s overthrow and the destruction of the Temple. It’s a strong message for the bride of Christ: M. R. DeHaan—*Go on, go on till the crown is won, go on to maturity. Neglect to do so will not go unpunished. Failure to obey Christ will result in the chastening of the Lord and loss of reward at the end of the journey.*

Israel lived in disobedience and continued to ignore God’s warnings and pleadings. They became sensitively numb and callous and they landed in a place where it was impossible to renew them again to repentance—where it was impossible for them to “renew themselves”

(6:6). At that point only God could deal with them in chastening and judgment. For the bride that will come at the Judgment Seat of Christ where it will be “burned out” and they shall *be saved, yet so by fire* (1 Cor 3:13-15); saved but without reward.

*Heb 3:10 Wherefore **I was grieved with that generation**, and said, They do always err in their heart; and **they have not known my ways**. 11 So I swear in my wrath, **They shall not enter into my rest.***

“Grieved”—God became frustrated and distressed with the generation Moses led out of Egypt because they had become estranged from Him; He felt indignant and resentful toward them. They had practically “Known His Ways”—resolved, understood, were sure of—and understood the ways He wanted them to follow to reach His “Rest.” And yet they rebelled and even when they entered Canaan they never fully enjoyed it.

We’re faced with the same decisions today as the rest that is promised to “the bride”—the Rest of Christ—is here and now and will be in its fullest on “that day.” It is His Rest in which the bride is to settle down and cease from her work—the work of the flesh—and rest in His work. God not only wanted the Hebrews out of Egypt, He wanted them in the Promised Land. And now that Jesus has taken His bride out of sin He wants her in His Promised Land:

- Israel’s deliverer was Moses—the bride’s deliverer is Jesus.
- Israel’s Passover had its sacrificial lamb—the bride’s sacrifice is the Lamb of God.
- Israel’s escape was through the Red Sea—the bride’s escape is through the blood of Christ.
- Israel’s salvation was in the drowning of Pharaoh’s army—the bride’s eternal salvation and security was at the Cross.
- Israel’s Pillar was a Cloud and Fire—the bride’s pillar is the Holy Spirit.

- Israel's was fed manna—the bride is fed the Word of God.

This is the “rest of redemption,” it's a rest from sin, the world and bondage but it's more than the salvation. It's resting in Jesus' strength and not in ours, which is the abundant victorious life here on earth lived with Him in the Holiest Place. But just as Israel's rest had to be possessed so does ours, and we are to possess in His strength one step at a time.

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

“Take Heed”—Mean to perceive that we don't develop an evil disbelief resulting from a lack of faith. This is not a passive but rather an active evil and it's under our control. In the end it can cause us to “Depart From,” or stand off from, our bridegroom. The word Paul uses here is *aphistemi apo* (*af-is-tay-mee apo*) from which we derive our word “apostasy.”

We, along with Paul's audience,” are admonished not to make the same mistake as Israel. The journey from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea (the gateway to Canaan) should have taken 11 days but because Israel rebelled they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years (1 year for every day Moses spent on the mountain with God):

*Deut 6:23 Then **He brought us out** from there, **that He might bring us in**, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers.*

The bride needs to become a partaker of the full blessing and victory, which Jesus has in store for her. Israel was saved from Egypt (sin) but never entered Canaan (victorious life), and it's possible for the bride—*brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling*—to depart from her bridegroom through neglect and disobedience and never enter her Canaan. This is the plight of the nominal (carnal) Christian; saved but defeated, failing Jesus and never reaching spiritual maturity and victory. And it's very important to note here that this is “not” a question of “salvation” but one of “communion and fellowship;” to be made a

“partaker of Christ” where:

- We become His and He becomes ours.
- His power is ours.
- His position of ascendancy over His enemies is ours.
- His love for others is ours.

It can be a “contemporary” and continuous experience IF we “hold fast” our confidence; our faith (14). Attaining maturity means to walk with Him daily in obedient submission. In His Rest we are brought into His fullness where all of our longings are satisfied in fellowship with Him, where we will find the Bread and Water of life. It’s a life of satisfaction and liberty in Christ.

Unfortunately, however, Christians can get so low that they say, “We were happier before we were converted than in this terrible wilderness we’re in as Christians.” They can get so used to the world that they’re content to go on living in the Holy Place where they’re saved but unfulfilled and spiritually immature. They are just like the 3½ tribes of Israel that chose their portion on the East side of the Jordan (*Josh 22*). They had seen, tasted and experienced the blessings of the Promised Land and loved and served God, but they didn’t want to leave the world they had become comfortable with. They were content to abide right next to the Western bank of the Jordan, nestled right next to the world, trying to serve God through works; the compromised life.

*Heb 3:13-14 But **exhort one another daily**, while it is called **Today**; 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 steadfast unto the end**;*

“Exhort One Another”—*parakaleo* (*par-ak-al-eh-o*)—means to beseech, comfort, entreat and pray for one another in the same manner as the Holy Spirit (*paraklete*) does for us. “Today” we are called to counter unbelief by active and continuous exhortations to those in whose hearts

“active evil is at work,” not tomorrow. We are to love and watch out for one another, especially while it is still the day of “grace.”

“The Beginning“ is not just the start of something, it’s the Greek word *arche* (*ar-khay*), which means the first estate, power, principality or magistrate. Paul uses it to refer to the earlier stage of the experiences of the Hebrew Christians, before their faith had shown any signs of wavering. As the bride of Christ, until we are made perfect in “that day,” we will always be “beginners” but that is not how we are to see ourselves. We are to hold on to what we put our “Confidence” into in the beginning—our foundation, the title deed to salvation we have in Christ (11:1). And we are to hold it all the way to the end. We are as secure as Christ can make us—totally secure—as opposed to the “unbeliever that will depart” (11:12). This refers to the “mere professor” of faith, the one who has never submitted their life to Jesus’ Lordship. Paul’s point is that anyone who would return to Judaism after becoming a Christian has left the ground of grace and proves he had never been truly born of God; never truly gave His life to Christ.

Therefore, we are urged to “Steadfastly” hold onto our confidence firmly by force all the way to “The End;” until Jesus returns for His bride. And the object of that confidence is His Grace. The faith in the Grace of God that makes the sinner draw near and brings the “failed believer” back into fellowship with God. It is that grace that has made Jesus available to us as we continuously “partake of Him” in the Holiest Place. That’s what we are to steadfastly hold onto, not any confidence in any works of our own. Every effort to redeem ourselves by self-improvement only ends in failure and adds to our sense of condemnation. It is not easy to achieve and without a total and complete obedient commitment we will fall short of the goal.

However, the good news is that while we may fall short in our Canaan (fall back into the Holy Place), His blood has paid the price and the throne room won’t close us out. We just need to hold steadfast and embrace His Grace, which is the direct opposite of *cast not away your confidence which has great recompense of reward* (10:35). And to continually qualify for that grace we must be willing to see the sin He

show us as our sin and allow His forgiveness and grace to draw us ever closer through confession and repentance, continually making us ever more into His image.

We are empty vessels of holiness, love and power and we need to constantly come to Jesus and confess that fact if we are to know His fullness; the fullness of His Rest. That is why “Today” (11:13, 15 and 4:7) is so critically important. Our Canaan is living with Jesus in the here and now in the Holiest Place. Once again, as you have by now discovered, one of my favorite teachers is Dr. DeHaan and he sums this up well: *All we have to do from the day of our initial conversion to God is to hold the beginning of that confidence steadfast to the end and we are in Canaan. In actual fact, we may not always do so, and only because of that do we find ourselves in the wilderness (Holy Place) and need to enter again into our Canaan (Holiest Place) by faith in the Grace He has provided with His blood.*

Living in the Holiest Place is resting from the weary way of trying to find in ourselves the holiness that can only be found in Christ. It is resting from trying to find something in us in which we can build hope or a feeling of goodness. Unfortunately these efforts always end in despair. Looking in vain for the nature to produce a spiritual love for God and our brothers and sisters in Christ, or any power to live the Christian life without Jesus is a futile effort. We can’t do it on our own and it will result in a discouraging experience no matter how earnestly we may try. Living in the Holy Place is living the self-centered life of the Carnal Christian, saved but unfulfilled, continually working to justify ourselves in Jesus’ eyes just like the priests scurried around tending the Golden Lamp, the Golden Altar and the Table of Showbread.

*Rom 7:18-19 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for **to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.** 19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but **the evil I will not to do, that I practice.***

But, thanks to Christ, because of the Holy Spirit there is no need for us to continue to try to be a better Christian in the flesh—we can’t do it:

*Gal 3:3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, **are you now being made perfect by the flesh?***

The way of the “flesh” is the wilderness of the desert of Sinai. It’s the place where the “Law” was given, whose demands we can never meet. Praise God that the Holy Spirit is here to bring our flesh to the Cross, but we can’t camp there. He wants to lead us into the Holiest Place and a life of His Love, His Holiness and His Power. He wants to lead us into the promise of the Rest of Christ.

All the Israelites came out of Egypt, they were all under the cloud, they all passed through the sea and they all ate the manna and drank from the rock, but the majority of them were overthrown in the wilderness; *1 Cor 10:1-12*. Let’s not let that happen to the bride of Christ. The Holiest Place is available today and for the bride to sleep is to do so at her own peril. She will not only lose out on a victorious life today but will lose her rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

*Heb 3:15-16 While it is said, **Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.** 16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.*

“Today”—this day, now—is all we have because God never promises tomorrow. Now is the time to get eternal matters settled. Now is the time for us to “Harden Not Our Hearts.” The word harden—*pikrasmos* (*par-ap-ik-ras-mos*)—has a different meaning here than it did in verse 8 where it meant “irritation.” Here it means to fall aside or apostatize and Israel is our example of “failure” in that regard. Most of Israel panicked at the thought of entering the Promised Land. This is what happens when the “majority rule” overtakes the “divine rule,” and that is happening in many of the mainline denominations today. This is what often keeps the bride of Christ in the Holy Place, far short of where she needs to be to enjoy God’s best for her, and it’s fed by:

- *Lust*—the desire for self and the world causes a loss of taste for the Lord; wishing for what has not been given.
- *Idolatry*—worshiping anything or anyone more than Jesus; not setting our mind on things above but on things in the earth below.
- *Impurity*—submitting to the permissive age of the world we live in.
- *Tempting The Lord*—J L Packer said: *Man tempts God by attitudes, words or behavior which in effect constitute a defiant challenge to Him to prove the truth of His words and the goodness and justice of His ways.* Doubting God’s guidance and provision has the same result as did the complaining and doubting of Israel. Not trusting His grace comes from an attitude of unbelief and God will discipline those who tempt Him. If we do we may find ourselves overthrown in the wilderness as well, deprived of the fullness of His blessing.
- *Murmuring*—complaining about what God has allowed; to rebel against God leads to blaming others.

What all of this adds up to is the life of the carnal Christian; the shadow Christian life.

*Heb 3:17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, **whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?***

Those who “Fell in the Wilderness” were saved but they never entered into God’s Rest, settling for far less than all that God had for them. They trusted God to bring them out of Egypt but not into Canaan; from the Outer Court into the Holy Place but not into the Holiest Place.

They didn't lose their salvation but they lost the joy, peace and rest that God intended for them.

*Heb 3:18 And to whom swore he that **they should not enter into his rest**, but to them that believed not? 19 So we see that **they could not enter in because of unbelief***

“His Rest” is the rest from man's efforts and works and the total dependence on God by faith. By faith we appropriate His grace and by boldness we respond to His command to enter into the Holiest Place. This encapsulates Paul's point that the Old Testament disaster was the basis for his appeal to these Hebrew believers to not once again fall back into Judaism. For the bride it's falling back into the life of the nominal Christian; living in the world and trying to be a Christian. And the sad result was the fact that “They Could Not Enter” because of unbelief. Their lack of faith prevented them entering into God's Rest. And now we have the same opportunity afforded to us but it takes is faith in the Word of God, the very word that bids you to “enter in,” and faith in the blood of Christ that allows you to stay there.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 4

Don't Fall Short of His Promise

Heb 4:1 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.

What the wilderness was to Israel the world is to the bride of Christ—but God has something better.

Instead of finding their holiness in Christ many Christians are trying to find it in themselves. They're trying to find something on which to build their hopes of peace, some evidence of faith or goodness, but all they end up with is condemnation when they fail. And the reason is that, according to Paul, we can't find spiritual love for God and our brothers and sisters in Christ or any spiritual power at all other than in the full spirit-filled life:

Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Our problem is that our soul's desire for our old nature produces the opposite of God's best for us. It just produces a life of self-centered actions and reactions that leads to despair. And if we fail to see the grace Christ has for us, we may get to the place where we will want to depart from the Christian life and search for comfort in the world. That begs the question: Is it possible for a person to be saved and destined for heaven, yet lead a "miserable, defeated" life here on earth?

There are two distinct possibilities for the Christian experience: defeat or victory, carnal or spiritual, babes in Christ or mature, grown-up spiritual Christians. But there are many believers that are perpetual infants that lack the joy and reward found in the Rest of Christ. Yet it is possible for them to enjoy and know an undisturbed rest and peace and the attainment of victory over self and the world... and the peace that passes all understanding:

*John 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and **that your joy might be full.***

*John 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, **that your joy may be full.***

Phil 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

“Let Us”—These are the believers who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ but are still struggling in the world, living a life of disobedience and unwillingness to press in and follow Jesus:

*Gal 3:3 Are ye so foolish? **having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?***

“A Promise of Entering Into His Rest”—The rest of Jesus is a victory rest and it’s filled with rich provision to meet every need. But just as faith is required to bring salvation it’s needed to bring rest.

“Fear”—*phobeo* (*fob-eh-o*)—means reverence for or being in awe of. Let’s be afraid to distrust Jesus’ promise of His Rest because if we do it will lead to:

- Becoming overcome with self-will and presumption.
- Wariness in keeping watch for His coming.
- Trusting our self and losing confidence in God.

It's like the little girl that fell out of bed. When her dad asked her about it she said: "I must have gotten too close to where I got in!" A truly saved, faithful and obedient Christian can't lose his or her salvation but they can certainly lose their hold on Jesus' promised rest and their reward.

The problem is that if we continue to live in the Holy Place we aren't distinguishable from the world we are compromising with. There is, however, one thing that will prevent us falling short and that is maintaining a holy fear—a reverence—for God that will keep us examining our faith and exercising it.

“His Rest”—There are three “rests” that we need to be aware of:

- *Past Rest*—Salvation (God's Work); *John 3:16*.
- *Future Rest*—Heaven when all labors and trials are over (God's Work); *Rev 14:13*.
- *Present Rest*—Victory over sin; walking obedient to His Word (Our Work); *Phil 2:12*.

And it's the Present Rest (the Rest of Christ) that is the subject of Paul's message—the rest of finished labor, divine fellowship and Holy service and the rest from:

- Guilt and the burden of sin.
- The pressure of temporal activities.
- The distress of self-will.
- Unsatisfied worldly affections.
- The dread of Death.

“Lest Any of You Should Seem to Come Short of it”—While salvation can't be lost because it depends on God's faithfulness, discipleship can be lost because it hinges on our faithfulness. And therein lies the peril that comes from seeking satisfaction in the visible and material rather than in the invisible and spiritual; ease and happiness rather than peace and rest. It's resting in “creation” rather than the Creator. Listen to Paul in his letter to the Philippians:

Phil 3:9 ...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:

He then said why he suffered the loss of all things:

Phil 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

As there was more for Paul after salvation so there is for us: *to know Him in the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings.* That's why Christ suffered:

Phil 3:11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

The original Greek is *ek anastasis ek ton nekron: ek*—out; *Anastasis*—resurrection; *nekron* —dead ones. He is referring to the “out resurrection;” out from those who are raised from among the dead. All saints will be raised at Jesus’ coming but there will be those who shall receive a reward and those who will be ashamed, disapproved, castaways that will not receive their full reward. Paul wanted to belong to the first group and not see his works burned up at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

This is the way out of the wilderness, out of the shadow Christian life into the substance of the victorious Christian. It’s Jesus and His blood that provides the way out of every wilderness into which our sin gets us. He is our Canaan as well as the way into it, and what Paul chose to do, so must the bride of Christ:

*Phil 3:12-14 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.***

The prize of the high calling is only found in the Holiest Place. It’s only found in a life that partakes “of” Christ as well as “in” Christ. To think that you have come too late to inherit the promises is to disbelieve the immutable (unchangeable) promise of God. How sad, what a great loss if we should stop short of that which is so greatly needed and clearly promised upon entering Christ’s Rest; being made a “Partaker OF” Christ.

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

“The Gospel Preached”—The real meaning here is “the preaching of the special announcement of the Rest of God.” For many, the Gospel has been preached but it meant nothing because they didn’t mix it with faith.

Hearing isn't enough, the message must be acted on in faith or otherwise it "Did Not Profit Them." There were battles to be won in the wilderness but the blessings far outweighed them. Sadly, Israel didn't heed the message and we can't afford to make the same mistake and miss Jesus' Rest because of today's battles:

*Eph 6:12 For **we wrestle** not against flesh and blood, but **against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.***

If we do, we will miss out on today's blessing:

*Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath **blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:***

*Eph 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew **the exceeding riches of his grace** in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

So how do we receive and act on the message of rest that has been preached to us?

*Eph 1:19-21 And what is **the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe,** according to the working of his mighty power, 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:*

It's all based on "believing," trusting, and being obedient to the Word of God; the Son of God.

*Heb 4:3 For **we which have believed do enter into rest,** as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

“We Which Have Believed”—The answer to failing to receive the message is to have faith in the message, which is the God-ordained way of appropriating all that Jesus has provided for His bride.

“True Rest”—The bride doesn’t “act” to enter into the Holiest Place (the fullness of Christ), she just “believes” to receive His perfect peace. Two artists were asked to paint a picture of peace and the results were remarkably different. The first artist painted a picture of a serene pasture filled with flowers and the sun shining down and he named it *Tranquil*. The other artist painted a raging and stormy sea pounding down on the shore line with a small bird safely nestled into a cleft in the rocks and he called it *Peaceful*. The message for us is that the path of victory in Canaan isn’t obtained by a life of ease. Resting in the land of victory requires work, the work of yielding, obedience, forsaking self and following Christ. But it’s that work that produces rest from guilt, self-righteousness, striving, wants, fears and life’s burdens.

*My Savior, Thou has promised rest,
Oh, give it then to me,
The rest of ceasing from myself,
To find my all in thee*

*Heb 4:4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And **God did rest the seventh day from all his works.** 5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into **my rest.***

“Creation Rest”—God didn’t rest until He had “worked.” Moses records the end of the first six days but not the seventh. God “began” to rest on the seventh day and He continues to rest today; His rest hasn’t ended. Israel’s Sabbath rest was based on this fact:

*Ex 20:8-11 **Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:** 10 But **the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work,** thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11 For in six*

days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

The Sabbath Rest was only a “sign” and “seal” of the rest promised to Israel, but that rest was never attained because of the sin of unbelief; failing to trust in the promises of God. Israel made the Sabbath a burden by the extremes to which the rabbis went that bordered on the insane: Israel couldn’t stop a leak in a cask with a little wax, wipe a wound or perform more than 600 other “couldn’ts.”

Heb 4:6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: 7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. 8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

“Again”—*palin* (*pal-in*)—means that the promise of “entering into rest” recurs today. Paul reminds them that it was David who spoke of the rest to come; Canaan, the shadow of the rest to come. Unfortunately, the Jews have still not come into that good rest that David spoke of, but the bride can enter in; so can Israel by acknowledging her Messiah and becoming part of the bride.

“Jesus”—as used here means Joshua. Had Joshua given them their rest David would not have spoken of “today.” And it’s worth noting that the word he used for rest is *katappauo* (*kat-ap-ow-o*), which means to cease or restrain. In Hebrew the word is *catapausis* and is the same word used in referring to the moment when Noah’s ark came to “rest” on Mount Ararat after its tossing about on the waves, just like Israel under Joshua rested from war in Canaan. But it was a rest that was forfeited.

Heb 4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

“A Rest”—*sabbatismos* (*sab-bat-is-mos*)—means the Sabbath rest and this is the only time the word is used in the New Testament; Calvary Rest.

*John 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished**: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost*

Today God rests in Christ’s finished work and so does Jesus’ bride. This is a given rest and, while it’s one that is not “earned,” it should be a “spur to action;” to service.

*Rom 4:5 But **to him that worketh not, but believeth on him** that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted for righteousness**.*

That is why the bride of Christ doesn’t keep the Sabbath. Her rest is in a “person” and not in a “day.” Her “standing” is firm if she has entered into His Rest, but often her “state” doesn’t reflect her “standing.” Her rest must begin with a trusting heart and the more trust she has the more rest she will obtain. What’s important to understand that rest is here and now by faith, but what we know here and now is not the full story—that will be revealed at His coming.

*Heb 4:11 **Let us labor** therefore **to enter into that rest**, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

A missionary in Africa picked up a traveler with a heavy load on his back. As they were driving along he looked in the back of the truck and the man still had his load strapped to his back. When asked why he responded: “I didn’t know if you were picking up my load as well as me.”

Calvary Rest frees us from the burden of our sin but we need to let it go. Resting in Christ doesn’t mean a cessation from work; rather it means that Jesus is picking up our heavy load as we work alongside of Him.

“Let Us Labor”—A man was adrift on a raft in the middle of the ocean and he had been struggling just to keep afloat and avoid drowning when a ship drew alongside and threw him a line. He immediately abandoned his raft and his own efforts—he had been saved and his “standing” was now secure.”

Salvation is the “first” call:

*Matt 11:28 **Come unto me**, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and **I will give you rest**.*

Then there’s a “second” call.

After he had been rescued and was safely homeward bound the captain asked him to help out with some of the work on the ship. The yoke of obedience, labor and service—the “second” call.

*Matt 11:29 **Take my yoke** upon you, and **learn of me**; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and **ye shall find rest unto your souls**.*

His standing (his salvation) is sure because he has been lifted off his sinking raft (his lost state) and is safely aboard the ship. What is referred to here has to do with his “state.” Helping out has nothing to do with his salvation. He can rest even though there are multiple tasks facing him; he isn’t going to be thrown back in ocean if he doesn’t help. But out of gratitude for what has been given him he gladly and willingly serves the one who rescued him.

“To Enter Into That Rest”—The call to service for the bride isn’t a call to bondage, it’s one to a labor of love; gratitude for our salvation. We are not to “fail” to enter into what is promised, we are to avoid being overthrown in the wilderness and remaining overthrown. We are to make “entering into His Rest” our #1 priority and labor to let nothing stand in our way—remember it is NOT a onetime experience. And thank God for the blood of Christ that bought the grace we need to enter in and remain there. But it’s up to us to stay in our garden with Him and labor to reach that point at which nothing else will suffice (this is detailed in *The*

Doorway To Rest).

The message of *Hebrews 3-4* is that after we are saved we have the choice of going on to victory in Canaan (Jesus) or dying in the wilderness (world):

*Deut 1:21, 26-30, 35 Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: **go up and possess it**, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; **fear not, neither be discouraged**. 26 Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God: 27 And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the Lord hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. 28 Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, **The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven**; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there. 29 Then I said unto you, **Dread not, neither be afraid of them**. 30 **The Lord your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes**; 35 Surely there shall **not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land**, which I swear to give unto your fathers ...*

Many of His bride are standing at their Kadesh Barnea, their point of entry into His Rest. They are saved (out of Egypt) but are defeated because of disobedience, lack of separation from the world, neglect of the Word of God, the weights of the world, unconfessed sin and fear of paying the price of yielding to Christ, lack of faith and disobedience. Too many think the Christian life is just escaping hell and going to heaven—just getting off the raft. They know nothing of the joy of service and the life of complete surrender that brings the peace of God here and now and a glorious future reward.

*Matt 10:38 And **he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me**.*

Luke 14:27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple

“The Abundant Life”—*perissos* (*per-is-sos*)—is one that is superior in quality; it’s an advantage.

John 10:10b ... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

“The Peaceful Life”—This peaceful life is conditional, it requires that we turn everything over to Him in prayer:

Phil 4:6-7 Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

“Not in Our Own Strength”—In our Rest in Christ the Holy Spirit provides our strength, wisdom, guidance and power. He is the secret to this “busy” life we lead:

*Lord Jesus, Thou has promised rest.
Then give it now to me.
The rest of ceasing from myself
To find my all in Thee*

And the “victorious” life we need to lead:

*It may not be on the mountain’s height,
O’er over the stormy sea;
It may not be at the battle’s front
My Lord will have need of me
But if by a still, small voice He calls
To paths that I do not know,*

*I’ll answer, dear Lord, with my and in Thine,
I’ll go where you want me to go.*

*I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
O'er mountain, or plain, or sea,
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord
I'll be what you want me to be.*

*Heb 4:12 For the word of God is **quick, and powerful**, and sharper than any two-edged sword, **piercing** even to the **dividing asunder of soul and spirit**, and of **the joints and marrow**, and is **a discerner** of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 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.*

God's Word cuts through all profession of faith, stripping away that which is "merely natural" from that which is "truly spiritual." The Word will strengthen our faith and encourage us to remain diligent so we can obtain His rest. We can't trust our emotions as they can just as easily be "carnal" as "spiritual." M.R. DeHaan—*The day in this age of "smug" and "easy" preaching and superficiality and shallowness as though believing on Jesus settles everything, and there is no more to be gained.*

"Quick"—*zao (dzah-o)*—means living; a quickening; active in seizing the conscience and cutting to the heart of the issue.

"Powerful"—*energes (en-er-gace)*—means effectual; it convinces powerfully:

*2 Cor 10:4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but **mighty through God** to the pulling down of strong holds)*

It can raise the dead, make the deaf hear, the blind see, the dumb to speak and the lame to walk.

"Sharper"—*tomoterios (tom-o-ter-os)*—cuts as if by a single stroke; decisive; entering where no other sword can. The Word cuts both ways; cutting out the sin and healing the wound.

“Piercing”—*diikneomai* (*dee-ik-ne-om-ahee*)—penetrating; coming through.

“Dividing”—*merismos* (*mer-is-mos*)—means separating; making a proud soul humble and a perverse spirit meek and obedient.

“Soul and spirit”—Moses was the soul and the soul draws with it the body. Christ is the spirit and the spirit draws “both” the soul and the body:

1 Thess 5:23 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.

“Joints And Marrow”—This cuts off the lusts of the “flesh” and the lusts of the “mind.”

“Discerner”—*kritikos* (*krit-ee-kos*)—means being capable of judging. God’s Word is a critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart. When brought to bear on the issues of life it will reveal what is carnal and what is spiritual. It will turn the heart inside out and reveal what must be seen that lies there.

“Neither is There Any Creature”—Everything is uncovered, left wide open in His sight. God is omniscient; He is all knowing.

Rev 2:23b ... 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.

“Opened”—*trachelizo* (*trakh-ay-lid-zo*)—refers to exposing the throat or neck of a victim for killing; to lay bare. This represents man’s total exposure and vulnerability to the Word of God.

1 Cor 15:37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

God expects His Son's bride to avail herself of all He has for her in Jesus. The only way she can be certain of salvation is by "exposing" her heart to the piercing sword of God's Word. Sooner or later that sword will find her if she is truly a part of His bride or only a mere "pretender."

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

This discussion continues from 4:14 to 5:3. No man in Israel could be both King and Priest; one was to offset the other, which was God's check and balance for man. In the New Testament the priesthood is centered in Christ, which is a revolutionary departure from the Old Testament law. These Hebrew Christians immediately wondered on what legal ground this could be established. It would mean that all of the Aaronic privileges and responsibilities were completely abolished and swept away by Christ. For them this was a "monumental alteration of the divine order."

- "Prophet"—Christ's life on earth.
- "King"—Christ's return.
- "High priest"—Christ's ministry today.

"His Name"—He is not Jesus, the son of David, or the son of Abraham, He is the Son of God.

"Passed Through the Heavens"—He is our "Great High priest" because no other priest has ever passed through the heavens. It's symbolic of passing through the Outer Court and the Holy Place into the Holiest Place in Heaven. As the high priest passed through the veil into the presence of God in the Temple, so our high priest passed through the heavens into Glory itself; from our visible sky to heaven itself. And He went there not as a "Priest" or a "High priest" but as our "Great High priest," which is a title that was never bestowed on any descendant of Aaron.

“Hold Fast Our Profession”—We are to hold fast our “profession” not our “possession.” This is a critically important differentiation to understand as it embodies the entire message of Hebrews. We are to hold fast our “inward faith” and our “outward confession” of the hope that we hold. We don’t need to hold onto our possession (our salvation); our bridegroom does that for us. For these Hebrews it was a particular demand to confess Jesus as their high priest and make a sharp break from Judaism.

The message is that Jesus is truly “human” and can fully enter into human needs, and yet He is the Son of God and is therefore truly “divine” and can enter into the demands of His deity. There never was a high priest like this. As His bride let us never deny Him, never be ashamed of Him before man.

Heb 4:15 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. 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.

Jesus was tempted as we are when Satan tempted (*peirazo*; tried) Him 3 times:

1 John 2:16 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.

- Lust of the flesh—*command these stones to be made bread; Matt 4:3.*
- Lust of the eyes—*sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; Matt 4:8.*
- Pride of life—*cast himself down from the Temple; Matt 4:6.*

It went far beyond the fact that Jesus did not sin; He was “not able to sin.” His temptations were not intended to see if He could sin; they were to demonstrate Him as being “sinless;” to show that He was pure so that He would be a “perfect” and “pure” sacrifice. He was tested to see whether sin—as to its origin, process or results—had anything in Him. But sin didn’t “attract” Him,” it did just the opposite, it “repelled” Him. We give in to sin before the temptation has fully spent itself but Jesus felt its full impact and did not give in. That is why He is our “sinless” high priest.

“The Feeling of Our Infirmities”—Jesus knows our nature and therefore He can function as a high priest for us, because He understands us from experience. He understands human nature, not just academically and theoretically but “omnisciently” as God. He lived it in the flesh with all its infirmities and is therefore qualified to be our “Gracious” high priest.

“Let Us Come Boldly”—Jesus doesn’t just know our nature, He also knows our needs. In the Old Testament the ordinary Israelite couldn’t approach the Holy of Holies where God was enthroned as that was the sole prerogative of the high priest and then only on the Day of Atonement; once each year. But the bride can come anytime and approach the throne of grace—boldly by faith—knowing that her needs are fully known by our high priest and will be met with mercy and grace:

- *Mercy*—to forgive us in our failures and cleanse us.
- *Grace*—provision for future victory; to keep us from falling again.

It’s our duty and to our benefit to be found at the “Throne of Grace” waiting on our bridegroom. It’s there that we “May Obtain”—*lambano* (*lam-ban-o*)—seize His mercy and grace and find “Help”—*boetheia* (*bo-ay-thi-ah*)—to keep like a rope or a chain holding a ship. No matter how strong the storm, like the ship moored to the pier, nothing can sweep us away from our bridegroom.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 5

A Warning Against Becoming Dull of Hearing

Heb 5:1-3 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; 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. 3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

Verses 1-10 corroborate the fact that in Christ we have a true high priest.

Qualification #1

“Taken From Among Men and Ordained for Men”—*kathistemi* (*kath-is-tay-mee*)—constituted, appointed, set or ordained. Israel’s priests had to be men so that when they offered gifts and sacrifices they could appreciate the sinners’ experience. Our bridegroom became human in order to fulfill His priestly role. Our good deeds must be rendered to the Father by our high priest if they and we are to be acceptable. Likewise our evil deeds must be expiated by His blood.

“Offer Both Gifts and Sacrifices for Sins”

- *Gifts*—freewill offerings of animate things; first fruit (corn, wine, oil, etc.).

- *Sacrifices*—blood sacrifices for atonement to satisfy justice and remove God’s wrath.

“Compassion”—*metriopatheo* (*met-ree-op-ath-eh-o*)—means to show gentleness or be moderate in passion. As our high priest Christ has compassion on us having personally experienced the pressures and problems of man and yet having not sinned.

Rom 12:15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

“Ignorant”—*agnoeo* (*ag-no-eh-o*)—this does not mean stupid, it means not understanding. A state of ignorance comes about by continually ignoring what God is saying to us.

“Out Of The Way”—Those that have fallen into sin and lost their fellowship with God having been misled by temptation and offended Him by their practices.

1 Tim 1:13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

Qualification #2

“He Himself Also Compassed With Infirmary”—He had to have something to offer. When Adam saw the fallen state of Eve, because he loved her and longed to be with her, he stepped down to where she was; so has Christ done for all humanity.

2 Cor 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

He offered Himself—a merciful and faithful high priest (3:2); merciful to us and faithful to God. Our peace with God doesn’t depend upon our faithfulness; it doesn’t even depend upon Christ’s faithfulness to us. It

solely depends upon Christ's faithfulness to His Father, who has appointed Him for me.

“By Reason Hereof”—Because of His name, His nearness and His nature.

Heb 5:4-6 And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. 5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

Qualification #3

“Called Of God”—Christ was not self-appointed, He was called, appointed and exalted by God. Man can't take the office because God must call him as He did at first with Aaron. Those who took it upon themselves failed:

- Korah—*Num 16*
- Saul—*1 Sam 13:8*
- Uzziah—*2 Chr 26:16*

Only members of Aaron's family could be priests but Jesus was not of his family, He was of the tribe of Judah. Therefore only God could call Him; He couldn't call Himself.

“Also Christ Glorified Not Himself”

John 8:50 And I seek not mine own glory; there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

We also have been called to the priesthood—the “spiritual” priesthood—to offer sacrifices which are spiritual; our bodies and the fruit of our lips (our praise).

“Thou Art My Son”—This statement refers to *Ps* 2:7; the Father called Him, appointed Him and glorified Him.

- His eternal generation as God.
- His conception as man.
- His perfect qualification as mediator.

“Forever After the Order “of” Melchisedec”—This refers to *Ps* 110:4 and back to *Heb* 1:3; neither beginning nor ending of days. Not “in” the order of—His line was not successive. “Of” means “the same as.” It is an eternal priesthood, not temporal like Aaron’s and those who followed after him. Jesus is all that is pictured by Aaron and more.

When we know Jesus “only” as Aaron we are just looking back to His work for us on earth; the Cross (living in the Holy Place). But when we know Jesus as our Melchisedec we are not looking back at the Cross but ahead into His Rest. That’s the place where we will find the answer to our every sin with a never ending supply of grace (living in the Holiest Place). He entered into His Kingly Priesthood—His inauguration—upon His resurrection after He accomplished His “human” obedience; His sacrifice whereby He “qualified” Himself for the priesthood. It was only then that He was referred to as the high priest of mankind.

Heb 5:7 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; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

“The Days of His Flesh”—In the days of His humanity He experienced the “sufficiency” of God, which is the perfect example of how we are to walk out this life, depending on the sufficiency of Christ. Jesus had to “step down into and become humanity.” Even though He had no sin of His own, He had to stoop to our human level to assume our guilt and to sacrifice Himself in our behalf. The fulfillment of the “Aaronic priesthood” occurred on the Cross. His human life was lived in

perfection, which proved that He was the perfect, pure, innocent lamb that would fulfill the ultimate sacrifice. Satan would have no grounds to stand on because “there was no sin found in Him,” which was proved by His obedience in suffering in His humanity.

“Offered Prayers and Supplications—With Strong Crying and Tears”

- *Prayers* refer to the “mind.”
- *Supplications* refer to the “body.”

The Rabbis said that there were 3 kinds of prayers, each loftier than the preceding ones:

- *Prayer*—made in silence.
- *Crying*—made with a raised voice.
- *Tears*—overcome all; there is no door through which tears do not pass.

At every crisis we find Jesus praying. He offered prayers and supplications for His own sacrifice. It was His constant prayer that He would fulfill the Father’s command that He become the “perfect” sacrifice. He prayed that prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and it was answered on the Cross; the fulfillment of *Ps 22*.

Jesus always referred to God as “Father” except on the Cross when He cried out to Him as “My God.” At that moment He was not the Son of God but the Son of Man—He was each one of us (sinners all) crying out to our God who had forsaken us because of our sin.

*Mark 15:34, 37 and at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? Which is, being interpreted, **My God, my God**, why hast thou forsaken me? 37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.*

“Heard in That He Feared”—He was heard because of His reverent submission and what He feared was the Father “hiding” His countenance

from Him; a spiritual fear not a natural fear. He didn't fear death; He "feared" displeasing the Father by anything He did. And failing in His humanity (His human nature) would be to fail to accomplish our redemption; His mission from the Father. But the Father didn't let that happen. He "heard" His prayer and responded by sending an angel for comfort Him.

- *Father save me from this hour*—the cry of His humanity; *John 12:27*.
- *Not my will but thy will be done*—the submission of His will to the divine; *Matt 26:39*.

He was not "carried away from death"—He was "carried through death"—and so it will be for His bride. It was His passion that made the way to eternal glory for His bride. God does what brings about the end He has designed, but it may not necessarily be the one that we're praying for.

"Thy Will Be Done" takes precedence over our selfish prayers. Remember, prayer is not about getting God to do what we want; it's to get us in harmony with what He wants, which is ultimately what we wanted all along. If you don't understand this, prayer will always be a mystery and a problem and you will eventually stop praying as a result of not getting the answers you want.

"Learned He Obedience by the Things Which He Suffered"—Jesus wasn't shielded from suffering; His sufferings were real and intense. As the perfect Son of God He experientially acquired knowledge of the human condition by taking on humanity—what God commanded him to do (*Isa 53*).

*Phil 2:6-8 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 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.*

Suffering became a reality for Him and because He tasted it He can sympathize with us. His “passive” obedience taught Him “active” obedience. Even though He was never disobedient He performed an incredible act of submission when He became obedient to death on the Cross.

It was not His “Sonship” that was answered, the cry of His humanity was answered (our cry). Affliction is needed to teach submission and He is qualified by His affliction to be our high priest. And likewise the bride needs the discipline of suffering to perfect her in the “practice of her bridegroom’s perfect will.”

Matt 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Heb 5:9-10 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; 10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

“Being Made Perfect”—Jesus was made perfect at His resurrection; perfectly becoming that which He was intended to become from the beginning. He could not be a perfect redeemer and high priest without His death and resurrection. In them He “perfected” or “consecrated” (*teleioo*) Himself to His office through His suffering and was therefore exalted to glory.

Jesus was always morally perfect but His perfections became matchless in His life on earth where He proved to be the “perfect, pure lamb;” a perfect propitiation. And that’s the goal of our redemption, to be conformed into the image of Christ; not His physical image but His “character”—His name.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

That will fully happen when He comes again but in the interim we are to continue to progress toward that goal; *toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus*. And that can only happen by the intercession of the high priest of our sanctification, continually applying the cleansing of His blood on our behalf.

“He Became”—This Indicates the change of relationship that followed His perfecting. The perfection that resulted from having actually having suffered is different than the perfection that is “ready” to suffer. By His action He “became” the source of eternal salvation; its author.

“Author of Eternal Salvation”—His perfection is perpetual, it’s the “ongoing” cause of salvation. By His obedience and sacrifice man is now “savable;” the man who is repentant (*John 3:16, 18, 36*). This negates the view of some that the book of Hebrews teaches that a person can lose his salvation. But this salvation is bestowed “only on” those who by faith believe in and are obedient to Christ, not those who have some “doctrinal knowledge” or that make a public profession of faith in Him. Only for those who “hearken to the Word” and “obey it” are those to whom He is a prince. They are the ones who wait and watch for His coming and are willing that He should “reign over them” now and for all eternity

“All Them That Obey Him”—Jesus, who learned to obey, brought salvation to those who are obedient to the call. Obey—*hupakouo* (*hoop-ak-oo-o*)—refers to “listening” and then obeying the word spoken; responding to the Gospel. These are those that step into the fullness of their Rest in Christ.

“High Priest After the Order of Melchisedec”—Jesus was one name that swept away 1500 years of Jewish ritual and religion. When Rip Van Winkle fell asleep King George III ran the country, when he awoke George Washington was in power. The name Washington swept away an entire political system and so did the name Jesus. Christ is not only a real priest He is a rightful priest, our high priest. His function is to help all

those who, in spite of their repeated failures, are seeking the goal of spiritual victory. This is covered in more detail in Chapter 7.

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

“Hard to Be Uttered”—The problem was not in the Word or the mystery, it was in their intellectual capacity to discern, perceive and understand it in order to judge their hearts, which were averse to it.

*John 16:12 I have yet many things to say unto you, **but ye cannot bear them now.***

“Seeing You Are Dull Of Hearing”

- Are—*ginomai (ghin-om-ahee)*—have become; an acquired state, not a natural one.
- Dull of hearing—*nothros (no-thors)*—slothful, lazy or sluggish; *akoe (ak-o-ay)*—of which you heard preached; ignorant (ignorance is the result of ignoring.)

Mental immaturity leads to Spiritual immaturity and these Hebrew Christians weren’t mentally ready to grapple with Melchisedec. They were zealous, but only for the law. James said of them:

*Acts 21:20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, **how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:***

*Heb 5:12-14 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. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the **word of righteousness;** for he is a babe. 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.***

Their mental problem was also a “moral” one; they were behind in their duty. It was also a “faith” problem and the result was that they never progressed.

“Ye ought to Be Teachers”—*opheilo* (*ff-i-lo*)—you have a moral duty or obligation to become teachers of the Gospel. They were behind in their development and Paul wrote this entire book as an admonition to challenge them to “go on to perfection.” Their lack of spiritual maturity was the result of their hanging onto the ritualism of the Law.

What was acceptable in the Old Testament is not in the New Testament because we are now under the divine revelation of the Gospel. However, they were still tied to the things of the Law, avoiding the far better provisions that Christ bought on the Cross. They were looking to find some coexistence between Judaism and Christianity, but the Old Testament was only a shadow of the real substance found in Christ and the only bridge between the two is Jesus.

There is a difference between coming “to” Jesus for salvation and coming “after” Jesus for service and this is a good place to make that distinction:

- *Coming “To”*—makes one a believer. It’s accepting the invitation of the Gospel. It only comes through the sacrifice of Christ and it cannot be lost because it depends on God’s faithfulness.
- *Coming “After”*—makes one a disciple. It’s accepting the challenge of a life of dedicated service and separation. It only comes through the sacrifice of self and the surrender to His call for devoted service. It can be lost because it depends on our faithfulness.

The key is that all disciples are believers, but not all believers are disciples.

Many of the bride are perpetual infants, lacking the joy of victory and reward. They may have the “knowledge” but they haven’t put the teaching of the Gospel to effective use, and knowledge without “obedience” won’t advance the individual. They should have stepped into a “mature spiritual life” long ago, the life that is the undisturbed rest and peace in Christ, which is attained through victory over self and the world; *the peace that passeth all understanding*. There is no excuse for neglect because we have been taught in the light of the power of the Word, we have a great high priest to forgive and strengthen us and we have the Holy Spirit to guide us.

Isa 28:10 There must be line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.

Paul makes it very clear that there is no excuse for remaining in a state of perpetual spiritual infancy. In the end we will all be judged by Christ and He won’t ask us about sin—that was taken care of on the Cross—He will only show us what we did with what we were given and make the righteous judgment concerning our eternal rewards and future in heaven?

The danger is that if we fail to heed His warnings, God may cease dealing with us here on earth and permit us to harden our hearts and we will never know victory here in our wilderness while He waits to deal with us at the Judgment Seat.

“First Principles”

Gal 4:3, 9 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

“Oracles of God”—As opposed to the Law.

*Col 2:9, 20 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. 20 Wherefore if ye be **dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world**, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,*

“Become Such As Have Need of Milk”—This is better translated “You have become.” You have moved into the position of becoming “beginners.” There are only two options: you are either advancing or retreating with God, never standing still.

“Word Of Righteousness”—The Gospel.

“Full Age”—Grown up, spiritually mature, the person who can handle solid food.

*1 Cor 14:20 Brethren, **be not children in understanding**; howbeit in malice be ye children, but **in understanding be men**.*

“Senses Exercised to Discern Both Good and Evil”—*aistgheterion* (*ahee-sthay-tay-ree-on*)—perception or judgment; the inward senses. These are the senses of our soul by which we discern the Gospel doctrines. *Gumnazo* (*goom-nad-zo*)—means exercised like a wrestler who uses all the might and strength that he has developed over a long period of time. It’s not the training “itself” but the “result” of the training referred to here. The spiritual eye, spiritual appetite, and spiritual taste are dulled and can be lost by sin, but by use we make them stronger and quick to what is good and true versus what is false and evil; the sweet versus the bitter.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 6

Remain Steadfast in the Faith

Heb 6:1 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,² Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.³ And this will we do, if God permit.

“The Doctrine of Christ”—the first principles of Christianity.

“Go on to Perfection”—make spiritual progress. But it’s more than just a new line of thought, it involves taking action. There are six foundational principles of Christianity:

1. *Repentance from dead works*—This is essential for life/salvation. It deals with sin, the evil actions that bring death and don’t belong to life. For the Hebrew Christians this was the legalistic adherence to Jewish works that could never bring life. Today it’s living in the Holy Place and failing to move into the Holiest Place; focused on our own “works.”
2. *Faith*—Essential for life/salvation. It’s not just faith in Christ—faith toward God—it’s trusting in Him in a truly personal relationship.

3. *Baptisms*—Plural, meaning the Jewish “washings” that were only an outward sign of what was yet to come. This is elementary Christian baptism.
4. *Laying on of hands*—The bestowing of blessings and the conferring spiritual gifts for healing, ordination, and baptism.
5. *Resurrection*—Everyone will be resurrected; believers to eternity with Christ and non-believers to eternal judgment.
6. *Eternal judgment*—Non-believers face an eternity absent from the presence of God.

“Let Us Go On”—*phero (fer-o)*—to bear forward, press on with active exertion.

*Phil 3:14 **I press toward** the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

“And This We Will Do”—Press on to perfection “if” you are in a position which God will permit advancement. This can only be done with the help of God and that help only comes to a faithful, repentant, submitted, obedient and loving heart.

Heb 6:4-6 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, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 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.

This is a description of the “true believer.” In these verses we have the “marks” of the bride of Christ. They also provide a warning of the danger of a Christian moving from a position of true faith and life to

becoming disqualified for further service:

*1 Cor 9:27 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.***

“Impossible for Those Once Enlightened”—*photizo (fo-tid-zo)*—Enlightened means illuminated or having been given light; made to see. It means more than just being baptized as to the body. “Professors” of Christ only have baptism; they don’t have the illumination that comes with the Holy Spirit. This is an inward spiritual illumination of the soul, and Paul’s point here is that you can’t make a “second beginning.” You can’t stand still. You are either moving ahead or falling behind once you have “made a beginning.” He further makes his point by noting what they had tasted.

“Tasted the Good Word of God and the Powers of the World to Come”—For them it was just a taste and not a digestion of the Word. They had tasted the heavenly gift—*geuomai (ghyoo-om-ahee)*—they had experienced the heavenly gift; Christ the bread of life. They had an experience as well as knowledge; they were redeemed (*Rom 5:15-17*).

Partakers “of” the Holy Ghost—*metochos (met-okh-os)*—They had become participants; sharers; associates; or partners with Christ. They actually shared in Him, the first fruit of the Spirit.

- Partakers—*1 Cor 6:19 What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.*
- Holy Ghost—*2 Cor 9:15 Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.*

“Tasted the Good Word of God—Powers of the World to Come”—Same as “tasted” used previously. This is not the “logos” but the “rhema,” the revealed (understood) word.

Matt 4:4 Man shall not live by bread alone.

“Powers”—*dunamis* (*doo-nam-is*)—This is miracle working power. It’s “potential” power and it’s where we get our word dynamite. They had witnessed mighty miracles at the hand of Paul and others.

“World to Come”—*aion* (*ahee-ohn*)—This is the Messianic age, which began in this world and will continue on into eternity. It can also mean at His second coming. They had a foretaste of things to come by the Holy Spirit.

Eph 1:13-14 **13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.**

“Fall Away”—*parapipto* (*par-ap-ip-to*)—means to fall aside. This expression is found only here in the New Testament and it “does not” refer to loss of eternal life. It means to “defect” (desert) from the faith or withdraw from their Christian profession. In other words, to “fall back” or fall away from Christianity; apostatize. The point is that it was possible for them to fall back into the realm of the unbelieving Jews, with those who among the followers of Christ that rejected Him. The bride can fall into the same trap if she allows herself to be drawn back into the world she has “come out from.”

“Renew Them Again to Repentance”

- “Renew”—*anakainizo* (*an-ak-ahee-nid-zo*)—to restore. The problem is that you cannot “renew” something that has “already” been renewed. They were saved and you don’t keep repeating that act.

- “Again”—*palin* (*pal-in*)—repeat; anew; once more. This is not “again to Christian Conversion,” it is again to “Christian Commitment.”
- “Repentance”—*metanoia* (*met-an-oy-ah*)—reversal. It doesn’t mean that repentance is not available or that they cannot be forgiven or restored to salvation. It means that it is impossible for “these people” to repent of themselves because their heart has been hardened by their actions and God will not violate their free will. It is not their nature now to return to Christ or see things that relate to peace anymore. The bar to repentance is “their attitude” toward Christ, not His attitude toward them. This is not about forbidding communion or baptism, it’s solely about repentance.

*Mark 4:16-17 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, **when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.***

*2 Peter 2:18-22 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 20 **For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.** 21 **For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.** 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.

Once again, this is “not” about salvation:

*John 10:28 And **I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.***

*Rom 8:14-17 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but **ye have received the Spirit of adoption**, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that **we are the children of God**: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

*John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and **him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.***

*John 10:27-28 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, **neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.***

“Crucify to Themselves”—This is the breaking off of fellowship with Christ. They would be repeating the act of their fathers and take a stand with those who crucified Christ in their mind.

This is all about their “inward attitude.”

Some think these are Christians who fall away that may never come back. That’s not the case. What it means is that it is impossible for them—“of themselves”—to repent in their own strength. But God in His mercy and grace can bring them back if that is their choice, and that’s the issue. The danger Paul is talking about is that they may slip so far back that they will never “want” to come back. You can’t “lose your salvation” but you can “leave your salvation.” God will not force Himself on anyone and that’s why it’s so critical to “press on” to the finish. Just remember that perseverance is something that comes from

God and not from our best efforts. He will provide it but we have to utilize it.

Some think it is purely hypothetical and that since Paul has not said it has happened before it never could really happen—but *why make the statement if it couldn't happen?* Others believe Paul is referring to those who were never saved in the first place. They look like the real thing but something is missing. They entered into the Christian experience far enough to know what it's all about but have turned away and lost the ability to repent. They are crucifying Christ over again in their heart.

In my personal view it is only about repentance. Take a quick look back here and see where Paul is headed. It's all about moving onto spiritual maturity—what they have failed to do and what they need to do to move toward becoming more like Christ; perfect.

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

Heb 6:1 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,

It's possible for one to fall by the wayside and have his ministry set aside. He is “not lost” but his “usefulness is ended” and at the Judgment Seat of Christ there will be no reward.

1 Cor 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 Cor 9:24, 26, 27 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain... 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 (rejected; disqualified to receive a reward).

Paul is talking about “running the race, about “rewards” and not “salvation.” Remember, sinners don’t “run a race” to get into heaven or to obtain salvation. They run the good race and fight the good fight for the “crown” of victory. Dead sinners can’t run.

*Phil 3:13-14 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.***

The warning here is that it’s possible for a Christian to fall away so far that God ceases to deal with him until the Judgment Seat of Christ, where all his works will be seen as “wood, hay and stubble.” He is saved and will be given entrance to heaven but everything he has done here on earth is unworthy of reward and will be burned up. He will only be saved “so as by fire.” That’s what Paul meant back in Chapter 4:

*Heb 4:1 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 Dr. DeHaan clarify for us: *There comes a time when after repeated warnings and admonitions the Christian continues in disobedience and “willful” sin, until God shelves him, to deal with him at the Judgment Seat of Christ. They may never be able to repent here below but will be among those who are ashamed at His appearing.*

The message for the bride is that if you examine yourself, judge every known and doubtful sin, confess to Jesus and be cleansed (*1 John 1:9*) you will never fear the judgment of which we have been duly warned. Your rewards will be secure unto the end. Nowhere do the scriptures teach that a Christian can sin and escape the penalty, but neither do they teach that a Christian who sins is lost again.

The looseness and worldliness of Christians and the lethargy and indifference of those who are just professors of Christ are the results of a one-sided, unbalanced preaching of grace that results in a false sense of security. No Christian can indulge in, know or willfully sin and get away with it. While the guilt of the sin was forever settled on the Cross it is nevertheless a fact that we must bear the consequences of neglect and disobedience. A reflection on the life of David is a great reminder of this truth.

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

“The Earth Drinketh in Rain”—The whole earth, the world of the saved and unsaved alike. The rain is symbolic of the grace of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is poured out on all mankind but, like the rain doesn’t produce the crop itself, it takes man’s response to bring for the blessing.

“Bringeth Forth Herb”—The land is useful to those that farm it who benefit from their work—the blessing. For the bride her spiritual fruit is both a blessing for them and for others.

“Receiveth Blessings From God”

Matt 13:12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

John 15:2 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.

“That Which Beareth Thorns Is Rejected”—This is better translated: *But when (or if) it produces thorns.* Only if it produces thorns is it worthless, rejected, disapproved, castaway, reprobate, unapproved or

worthless. In the end an unproductive Christian life is disapproved and not blessed with a reward. Its “works” and “acts of service” will be burned up just like the land that produced thorns and briars needed to be burned to rid it of the bad weeds. It wasn’t burned to destroy it; it was just to set it aside.

*1 Cor 9:27 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.***

So the point is that some may not respond and if their fruit is not produced their unfruitful works will be rejected. In the end the bad fruit (self works) will be burned up because it is unacceptable to our bridegroom. The heart is the earth and man is the dresser of the land and the fruit of the Spirit is brought forth not for the dresser but for the owner; God.

The good fruit that will stand at the end as silver and gold is produced in the Rest of Christ.

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

Here Paul quickly makes it plain that he does not believe any of his readers have reached that point. This is the only time in the book that he uses the term *agape*; beloved. And once again he uses the term “we” because he is one of them (a Christian) and they are all of the same Spirit. This is meant to encourage them and give them hope after the strong warning. God will keep them from apostasy and now he gives them the reason.

*Heb 6:10-12 **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.** 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.

“For God is Not Unrighteous to Forget Your Work”—Because God is constant, our confidence can be sure. He is not unrighteous—*adikos* (*ad-ee-kos*)—unjust. Those who have shown their faith by their works won’t lose it. God will not forget the works we have long since forgotten and, conversely, there won’t be a lot of rewards for works we haven’t forgotten. If we want rewards here on earth we will get what the world gives us. God will be gracious to those who have used His grace to do His work:

*Phil 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that **he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:***

*John 6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, **This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.***

“Have Ministered to the Saints and Do Minister”—The fact that their Christianity was more than a mere profession was evidenced by their works, which showed that their lives had been changed. It showed more than just their profession of faith. We need to keep that in mind as our works of charity are the very test used in final judgment at the Judgment Seat of Christ:

*1 John 4:19-21 **We love him, because he first loved us.** 20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21 And **this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.***

“Show Diligence to the Full Assurance of Hope unto the End”—Continue in what you have been doing; your past has set the standard so continue in it.

1 Thess 1:5 For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

“Be Not Slothful”—don’t be dull, lazy or stupid.

“Followers”—Not just following along but being and imitator.

“Through Faith and Patience”—Faith and patience are required in order to “Inherit the Promises” (to have sure possession of) the divine promises of God. These are required to secure our own inheritance. Patience indicates being “undismayed” in whatever difficulties present themselves.

Heb 6:13-15 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, 14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

“God Made Promise to Abraham”—The first one to receive the promise was to be Israel’s example and we have the same promise and the same conditions; to patiently endure by faith.

Acts 3:25 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.

Rom 4:13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Gal 3:8 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.

Gal 3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit

through faith.

“God Swore by Himself”—There is no higher authority than God Himself. It was His personal oath to Abraham and therefore to us as his spiritual seed (in-grafted branch). If God was going to fulfill His promise immediately there would not have been a need for His oath and so there is... *hope and faith.*

“So”—Thus, confident in God, Abraham waited the fulfillment of God’s promise.

“Obtained”—But enough had happened that, although the promise was yet to be fulfilled, by faith Abraham “obtained” what was promised.

*John 8:56 Your father **Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.***

We are to follow our example and also wait for our promises because God will be faithful to deliver them—He never goes back on His promises.

The possession of God’s promise to Abraham depended on “God’s faithfulness,” the enjoyment and assurance of the promise rested upon “Abraham’s faithfulness.” This was the spiritual principle that Abraham demonstrated for us. We need to remember that there is very often a “gap” of time between the promise and the performance of the promise. The danger is that rather than waiting on God we will raise up “Ishmael” in the interim, along with its long-term consequences. It’s far better to wait for our Isaac. Here are three good reasons for patience in waiting:

1. *To produce endurance*—it takes time for God to change us and prepare us for what is coming

Jer 12:5 If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then

how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?

2. *To perfect the blessing*—we don't know what goes on behind the scene and we become impatient while God is preparing the blessing.
3. *To prepare us*—is the increasing language of faith. The only way we will be prepared for the future is to learn the language of faith. Years ago my business involved dealing with clients from Mexico and South America. I needed to brush up on my Spanish so I had a tutor come in once a week for three hours. Her plan was simple, when she entered my office we spoke only in Spanish for the entire time she was there. It's no different in learning the language of faith—you must practice it constantly.

*Heb 6:16-20 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 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: 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**.*

“Two Immutable Things”—*ametathetos (am-et-ath-et-os)*—
unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie:

- *His Promise*—God makes the promise and He guarantees it; there is no higher guarantee.
- *His Oath*—once God has spoken it is assured because He cannot lie; He cannot deny Himself.

“Strong Consolation”—*ischuros (is-khoo-ros)*—Means valiant, boisterous; *paraklesis (par-ak-lay-sis)*—comfort, exhortation. This comes from the word *parakletos (par-ak-lay-tos)*, which we know defines the Holy Spirit; our advocate or comforter.

“Fled for Refuge”—Like the refuge city of the Old Testament we have our refuge in Christ where we can safely flee from spiritual death in a sinful world and keep life in Him.

“An Anchor of the Soul and Steadfast”—Hope is our anchor and it is anchored in Christ.

- It is the antithesis of despair.
- It is the Christians’ stabilizing force.
- It is the anchor for our entire life.
- It is sure—*asphales (as-fal-ace)*—undisturbed by outside influences.
- It is steadfast—*bebaios (beb-ah-yos)*—sure; not disappointing.
- It is “set before us”—lying right ahead of us, inviting us, and we are encouraged to enter in.

The Soul is the ship, the World is the sea, Hope is the anchor, and the Promise is the cable that connects the ship and the anchor; the soul and hope. The anchor doesn’t stay in the sea, it goes to the bottom and Hope doesn’t stay in the Holy Place, it reaches up into the Holiest Place where it lays hold of God Himself.

“Entereth Into That Within the Veil—The Forerunner”—Our “forerunner” is Jesus because He has gone beyond the veil. Our hope enters into the Holiest Place and we cast our anchor upward to heaven, through the veil into the very presence of God. But before Jesus went to the Cross the Holiest Place was closed to all but the high priest by the veil. The veil was 60’x30’x10” thick—it took 100 priests just to move it and yet God tore it from top to bottom. Jesus went in first but He didn’t have to. He went in before us to show us the way and now we’re free to

enter in any time—in fact we are told to enter boldly.

“High priest After the Order of Melchisedec”—Here is the entry into the thought that was introduced in 5:6, which we will examine in the next chapter.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 7

The Physical/External is Replaced by the Spiritual/Internal

First let's take a quick review of the critically important points we noted previously. There is a difference between coming "to" Jesus for salvation and coming "after" Jesus for service—the first makes you a "believer" and the second makes you a "disciple." Salvation comes by acceptance of the sacrifice by Christ—it is free and can't be lost because it depends on God's faithfulness. Discipleship only comes by self-sacrifice, by fully surrendering to His call for devoted service, it costs us a separated walk, and it can be lost because it depends upon our faithfulness. As a result we aren't just to seek to make "believers out of sinners" (by preaching); we are to make "disciples out of saints" (by teaching):

Matt 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

This commission is associated with "power for service."

- *Teach*—*matheteuo* (*math-ayt-yoo-o*)—to be a disciple and make disciples; disciples are believers who are taught.

- *Observe—tereo (tay-reh-o)—to hold fast and keep watch; salvation emphasizes “faith” but discipleship emphasizes “faith and obedience.”*

*Heb 7:1-3 For this **Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God**, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and **blessed him**; 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**; 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.*

“Melchisedec” is mentioned only two times in the Old Testament; in Genesis and in Psalms:

*Gen 14:17-20 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.*

*Ps 110:4 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, **Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek**.*

“King of Salem Priest of the Most High God”—A man (king and priest) and a place (Jerusalem). As a king he had power with men and as a priest he had power with God. Melchisedec was perhaps of Shemitic descent, not Canaanite, which would make him the last independent representative of the original Shemitic line, which had been vanquished by the Canaanites who were Ham’s decedents. He was the highest and last representative of the Noachic Covenant just as Christ was the highest and ever-enduring representative of the Abrahamic Covenant.

“The Most High God”—The one true God, not one of the pagan gods. He was a type of Christ in which righteousness and peace have forever come together. Remember, no Hebrew could unite these two offices as it was God’s check and balance. But Uzziah tried it and suffered the consequences:

*2 Chr 26 1:21 – Uzziah did what was right in the sight of the Lord and he prospered – But when he became strong **he went into the temple himself to burn incense** and was withstood by the priests—as he was about to burn the incense he was stricken with leprosy and remained a leper until his death.*

God didn’t want—and still doesn’t want—the “priesthood” involved in politics. But unfortunately it is all too common today as good men that God has set in the pulpit have been eaten up by politics. Jerry Falwell is a perfect example. He experienced the tragedy of trying to mix the two and in the end he said: *I regret the years I spent activating people politically when I was called to preach the Gospel in simplicity.*

“Greater Than Abraham”—Abraham acknowledged Melchisedec’s superiority by giving him the tithe and recognizing his titles.

- King Of Righteousness—Like Christ is our righteousness:

*2 Cor 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; **that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.***

- King Of Salem—Salem means “peace.”

*Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, **The Prince of Peace.** 7 Of the increase of his government and **peace there shall be no end,** upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with*

judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

“Without Father, Mother, Descent”—Genesis is a book of genealogies and yet Melchisedec is brought forth without any family history. All of a sudden he is there and then he is gone—no record was kept. Symbolically he had no beginning and no ending—just like Christ.

“Like Unto the Son Of God”—Some believe he was Shem and others believe he was an earthly appearance of Christ. History shows us that he was a real man and the Word shows us that he was the shadow, picture or resemblance of Christ in His royal priesthood. He was “Made Like,” not the opposite of. His record was so arranged that it brought out certain truths that apply fully to Jesus: he was both a King and Priest—“righteousness” coming before “peace”—the peace He brings is the fruit of righteousness.

*Isa 32:17 And **the work of righteousness shall be peace**; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.*

*James 3:17-18 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then **peaceable**, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.¹⁸ And **the fruit of righteousness** is **sown in peace** of them that make peace.*

He was a “type” of the coming Messiah:

*Ps 85:9-10 Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. 10 Mercy and truth are met together; **righteousness and peace** have kissed each other.*

*Zech 6:13 Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and **he shall be a priest upon his throne**; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.*

*Heb 7:4-7 Now **consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.** 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:** 6 But **he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.** 7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.*

“How Great This Man Was”—So great that the patriarch Abraham gave him tithes.

“The Sons Of Levi” —Priests were required to take a tithe from the people and according to Levitical law, he who received the tithe was greater than he who gave the tithe.

“Out Of Abraham’s Loins”—The law required Levites to take a tithe but here Paul states that long before the law—while still in Abraham’s loins—the Levites effectively gave tithes to Melchisedec. Therefore he was greater than Aaron and his priesthood was greater than Aaron’s. This follows the same logic as “in Adam all men sin.”

“Whose Descent is Not Counted”—Without genealogy (without record) Melchisedec, the king and priest, not only received the tithes, he was blessed by Abraham, the one who had the promise of God; the promise of the Messiah.

“The Blessed is Less Than the One Who Blesses”—The priestly tribe of Levi was blessed by Melchisedec while in Abraham’s loins, therefore they tithed and proven to be inferior to him. Blessing in this context only applies to blessings given with divine authority, not merely a prayerful wish but like the blessing of the patriarchs on their children; so is Christ’s blessing:

Luke 24:51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

Acts 3:26 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.

Heb 7:8-10 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. 9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. 10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

“Here Men That Die Receive Tithes”—This refers to the Levites. Their office had to continue from generation to generation because they grew old and died and for the priestly office to continue it required a new priest.

“That He Liveth”—Melchisedec’s office continues forever because his testimony continues to live; there was no end to his priestly reign; immortal is superior to mortal.

“Levi”—Israel has a supreme high priest (Jesus) they have acknowledged—in type if not in fact—by the founder of their race. Jesus both received and paid tithes—effectively—because he was in Abraham and so he was also blessed. The Levites could only “receive” tithes from brothers (equals), therefore the entire Aaronic priesthood was inferior (of a lesser order) to Melchisedec. The point Paul makes is that Christ is a priest after the order of Melchisedec, not after an inferior order. So, he logically asks, why go back to Judaism—Levitical ritual—when you have more in Christ? Why, as a Christian today, would you not be satisfied with Christ? Why look back to your old life and cling to “religion” and the “law” and trust after the flesh? Why not grow into perfection?

“Yet In the Loins of His Father, When Melchisedec Met Him.”—Levi, the third son of Jacob, was born 162 years after Abraham met

Melchisedec. Yet, as noted previously, this follows along the same logic that all men sin in Adam. :

Rom 5:10 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Heb 7:11-14 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? 12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. 13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

After David things were never the same as materialism and idolatry ruled. When the priesthood was at its height it got its first hint of change in David's psalms (*Ps 110*). The existing priesthood was effectively weighed and found unsatisfactory so a new one was eventually put in its place.

“If Perfection Were by the Levitical Priesthood”—*teleiosis* (*tel-i-o-sis*)—by performance the condition in which men are acceptable to God. The point is that perfection was not by the Levitical priesthood because if it was then there was no need for Christ.

“Under It the People Received the Law”—There was no perfection in the priesthood because it came under the Law.

Gal 3:17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. 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.

“The Priesthood Was Changed”—Therefore God, who created the law, declared in *Ps 110* that He intended to change it. Every Jew knew that *Ps 110* was Messianic (prophetic of the Messiah):

*Ps 110:1-4 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.** Jehovah saith unto my Lord ... Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec*

Paul quotes this scripture 4 times, emphasizing a different part each time:

- 5:6— *Thou art*—appointed by God.
- 6:20—*A priest after the order of Melchisedec*— infinitely superior to Aaron.
- 7:17—*A priest forever*—He is for all time, in heaven, ever living to make intercession for us; His blood continues to provide our mercy and grace.
- 7:21—*The Lord sware and will not repent*—the immutability of the grace of God; God made Him a priest with an oath.

“Our Lord Sprang Out Of Judah”—He is our high priest but He did not come from the tribe of Levi.

*Jer 23:5 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, **that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch,** and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*

No priest had ever come from any tribe other than Levi. The change would enable Christ—out of David from the Tribe of Judah (not of Levi)—to legally be a priest; therefore it was necessary to change the Law. The words of the Lord through David sealed the fate of the Aaronic priesthood and the priesthood that had been in the hands of Aaron and the Levites had to change. The restrictions in the Mosaic Law made it imperative because Jesus was David's seed as well as Abraham's.

Heb 7:15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, 16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. 17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

“After The Similitude”—*homoiotes* (*hom-oy-ot-ace*)—like, parallel in order to. How wonderfully God designed the Melchisedec priesthood and hid it away from Israel:

- The seed of this new priesthood was sown in the days of Abraham.
- The seed came into flower in the days of David and displayed in *Ps 110*.
- The flower came to full fruit in Jesus.

“Made Not After The Law of Carnal Commandment—It Is After The Power Of Endless Life”

Rom 1:4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

2 Cor 13:4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

*Acts 10:38 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.***

*John 5:21, 24-26 21 **For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.** 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;*

“Ever After the Order Of Melchisedec”

- Melchisedec’s priesthood is durable—eternal.
- Aaron’s priesthood was physical—external.
- Christ’s priesthood is spiritual and internal.

*Heb 7:18-19 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.*

The Aaronic priesthood was elaborate and full of symbolic ritual but it was only a shadow of what was to come. It couldn’t satisfy God or man and Isaac Watts (English theologian, preacher, poet, and hymn writer) captured the essence of the problem: *Not all the blood of beasts, On Jewish altars slain; Could give the guilty conscience peace nor wash away one stain*

“Disannulling of the Commandment”—God cancelled the law Himself by setting up the Gospel by His Son. He replaced it *with a better hope*, with something that works, with a new priesthood that would draw

men near to God.

“Weak and Unprofitable”—The real problem with the Law wasn’t the Law itself; it was the fact that Israel abused it. They expected expiation by it but they never paid attention to the promise that preceded it by 430 years. In truth had they followed the letter of the law they would have been justified and saved; but they didn’t. The Law was strong unto the end for which God made it—to lead to Christ. But it was too weak and unprofitable to justify and sanctify them; the end to which they used (abused) it.

“Bringing in of a Better Hope”—The Gospel was brought in to abolish the law, giving free access to God to worship Him and receive the blessings of the New Covenant.

*Heb 7:20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: 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:) 22 **By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament**.*

“Priests Made without an Oath by God”—No Levitical priest was made a priest by an oath, it was strictly done by descending order. They had no pledge that their priesthood would go on forever. At the time Paul wrote *Hebrews* the Temple was still standing and the ritual continued even after the “ultimate” sacrifice of Christ’s life. Then came Rome and God’s enforcement of the “new priesthood;” the “annulment” of the Law.

“The Lord Sware and Will Not Repent”—This is our hope, our anchor (6:19); an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

“Jesus Is a Better Surety of a Better Testament”—*egguos* (*eng-goo-os*)—this is a pledge like a bondsman of a covenant, contract or a will. Jesus became our mediator, He became responsible for our guilt as a better testament; the Gospel covenant:

Jer 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord,; and I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts will be their God, and they shall be my people.

The guarantee of the Old Testament was made with a “mediator,” but there was no one to “guarantee” that the people would fulfill their undertaking:

Gal 3:19 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.

But Jesus is a continuing guarantor: 1) Guaranteeing to man that God will fulfill His covenant of forgiveness, and 2) guaranteeing to God that those who are in Him are acceptable. Paul demonstrated the undoubted Lordship of Christ and the undeniable legality of His Priesthood and now he focuses on the “undying” life of Christ as our High priest.

Heb 7:23-27 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: 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. 26 For such an 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.

“Man Does Not Continue Forever”—A sick person has a doctor that knows everything about him, but when he dies that person has to start all over with a new doctor. A businessman has a lawyer but when he dies that businessman has to start all over with a new lawyer. It’s the same with government—election after election. It was the same for the Israelite with the Levitical priesthood. One day the priest who knew him was dead and he had to start a new relationship all over. The Talmud said

that there were 18 high priests from Aaron to the destruction of the first Temple, then more than 300 during the second Temple. But...

“Jesus Continues Forever”—His priesthood is unchanging and unchangeable.

“He is Able to Save Them to the Uttermost”—To save is in the present tense, it’s a sustained experience resulting from a continued practice. It’s the same for “come unto” or “draw near.” Jesus *is able* “*to be saving*” *those who are continually coming* because He is a capable priest.

Many have placed themselves in the hands of someone incapable and the results have been disastrous. J.B Phillips said: *Imagine having to trust the affairs of a nation to a shortsighted, opportunist, pigheaded politician. Imagine having to trust your soul’s welfare to the careless attention of an incompetent, disqualified priest!*

“Ever Liveth to Make Intercession for Them”—Continual intercession is not Jesus having to maintain some form of public worship for our benefit; it’s His character and presence in heaven that is the intercession. It is His blood that was placed on the altar that continually intercedes for us. There was perpetual incense before the Lord (*Ex 30:8*) that was unseen by the people because it was burnt by the high priest. So it is for Christ’s ever-continuing life of intercession for us so that we may know:

- Continual, existing salvation.
- Continual cleansing from the guilt and defilement of sin.
- Continual supply of His own life; the Rest of Christ.

It’s like the diver working under the water and the man on deck turning the pump. The diver is totally dependent on the air tube and but for the man turning the pump he would die. We are totally dependent upon Jesus to keep providing for our needs (material and spiritual). He continually sends down His resurrection power—*yet not I but Christ liveth in me (Gal 2:20)*. We are totally dependent upon His Holy Spirit

(our air tube) that links us to Him.

“Holy, Harmless, Undefined, Separate from Sinners and Made Higher Than the Heavens”—Jesus is a consecrated priest:

- *Godward*—He was holy, fully satisfying all the righteous claims of a holy God.
- *Manward*—He was blameless, free from all malice and craftiness and duplicity.
- *Selfward*—He was unstained, without any taint of sin.

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

“Which Have Infirmity”—Levitical high priests had infirmities—*astheneia* (*as-then-i-ah*)—disease, sickness, weakness, feebleness of mind or body, frailty. They were all subject to death.

“The Word of the Oath—Maketh the Son”—The oath of God consecrated Jesus in His own death. His death on the Cross is significant in that although He intercedes for us daily, He never has to renew the sacrifice. The Old Testament priests had to offer up sacrifices daily but that ceased with Jesus because He is a consecrated priest for eternity; He is “continuingly” capable. Like Melchisedec’s order of ministry, His is not one of “obtaining” salvation; it is one of “maintaining” salvation. Jesus’ presence in heaven ever intercedes for us, “maintaining” our salvation.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 8

The Old Covenant Versus the New Covenant

Heb 8:1-3 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; 2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. 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.

“The Sum”—*kephalaion* (*kef-al-ah-yon*)—doesn’t mean “all,” it means the principle or chief point. It is the crowning truth that Christians, in contrast to the Jews of the Old Covenant, have a high priest sitting at God’s right hand. Jesus is the reality whose ministry is fulfilled in heaven and not on earth. His work is complete, He has been enthroned at the right hand of God, and He is able to fulfill a more excellent ministry as the mediator of a new and better covenant.

“Sanctuary”—*hagion* (*hag-ee-on*)—Refers to the Holy of Holies (the Holiest Place), where the Spirit-filled Christian (the bride of Christ) needs to reside, where she will find the Rest of Christ.

“True Tabernacle”— When Jesus was on earth the true tabernacle was his human body, a tent which the Lord pitched. The tabernacle on earth with its rituals had one purpose and that was to illustrate that which was to come; a shadow of the ultimate reality in heaven. The tabernacle in the wilderness (tent of meeting) was the most perfect type of Christ in the Old Testament because it speaks of Christ in His capacity of a

servant. Consider some of the types it presented:

- *Silver*—redemption
- *Gold*—deity
- *Wood*—humanity
- *Brass*—judgment
- *Altar*—the Cross
- *Shewbread*—bread of life
- *Candlestick*—light of the world
- *Golden incense*—high priestly intercession

And today the tabernacle—God’s temporary sanctuary on the earth, is the bride of Christ. We carry His Glory because we are *the temple of the Holy Spirit*.

“To Offer”—*prosphero* (*pros-fer-o*)—in the Greek is in the aorist tense, which signifies a single finished act, not a continuous one. Jesus offered Himself—His human nature—on the altar of His divine nature. Matthew Henry: *He offered up His own righteousness as incense to offer up all that His people offer and render them acceptable.*

*Heb 8:4-6 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. 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.***

Jesus belonged to a heavenly order and therefore His offering of Himself as a man on earth was done in relation to the heavenly tabernacle; done at the throne of God. As the bride, though we still live on earth, we are to regard ourselves as belonging to heaven and we are exhorted to come boldly to the throne of grace; enter into the Holiest

Place. Our worship, like Christ's priestly work, is not on earth, it's in the heavenlies.

Those who deny Christ's priesthood on earth don't extend it to the Cross where He offered His sacrifice as a priest on earth. Then His crowning work as our High priest was bringing His blood to the Holiest Place in heaven; not on earth.

"Established Upon Better Promises"—It's an improved covenant (*verse 6*). Old Testament promises were earthly but New Testament promises are heavenly and therefore they are more spiritual and more absolute. Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant, of better promises.

But in spite of these better promises it is still possible for us, like the Hebrew Christians, to attempt to live our Christian lives under an obsolete covenant. We may not be enjoying the better benefits of the New Covenant because we have failed to enter into the Rest of Christ. It is so natural for the bride to feel that to be more deeply blessed or to find greater peace with God she has to "work harder." That's Old Covenant thinking and it results in nothing but criticism and condemnation, a struggle to fulfill conditions and a struggle to attain an exterior code of ethics. It is all external (natural) but the New Covenant is all internal (spiritual). What was necessary to fulfill the Old Covenant are now blessings under the New Covenant: *If you will hear my voice* is replaced with *You shall hear my voice*; Jesus as our mediator guarantees it. The New Covenant is another way of achieving the same goal as the Old Covenant—fulfilling the righteousness of the Law.

Heb 8:7-9 For *if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.* 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*: 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.*

“If That Covenant Had Been Faultless—No Need For a Second One”—The Old Covenant was an imperative one (7-8) and if it had been faultless there wouldn’t have been a need for a second one. But, the covenant itself wasn’t “faultless,” it was the fact that the people didn’t follow it that mandated a new one. The very presence in the Old Testament of a promise of a New Covenant is itself witness that the first one wasn’t wholly satisfactory and free from fault. This was all foreseen by the prophet Jeremiah:

*Jer 31:31-34 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 neighbor, 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.*

This is the third of Jeremiah’s trilogy of prophesies against:

- The shepherds of the people—*Jer 21-25*.
- The false prophets—*Jer 26-29*.
- The book of restoration—*Jer 31-31*.

This prophecy is repeated in *Ezekiel 36*.

“Finding Fault With Them”—The people of the Old Testament were not made faultless by the Old Covenant because of their unbelief; God found fault with them.

“They Continued Not—I Regarded Them Not”—The Old Covenant was a mindful one (9-12). Their disregard for God’s covenant made Him “regard them not” and all they received from it were its curses. The New covenant takes into consideration the failure of the first one and *we will* in the first is replaced with *I will* in the second.

*Ex 19:5-6 – If ye will **obey my voice** indeed, and **keep my covenant***

...

But we must not make the mistake of assuming that all of the New Covenant was made for the bride. It was specifically made with Israel and it will be fulfilled during the millennial age with respect to Israel. When it comes to the “land” it always refers to Israel. However, since it is based on the Cross the bride can and does spiritually benefit from it here and now and for all eternity.

*Heb 8:10-11 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: 11 And **they shall not teach every man his neighbor**, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: **for all shall know me**, from the least to the greatest.*

“Write Them in Their Hearts”—God’s laws have now been written on our heart and they call us to:

- Understand, know and believe His laws.
- Love His laws.
- Recognize His laws.
- Confess His laws.
- Use the power He has given us to put His laws into practice.

“They Shall Not Teach”—Under the Old Covenant the priests were to keep the knowledge and the people were to seek the Law from them. Under the New Covenant the Holy Spirit teaches every believer. It’s

shorter than the Old Testament because it teaches principles of the Spirit instead of details of the Law (*Matt 11:25; John 6:45; 1 John 2:20*):

*1 Thess 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for **ye yourselves are taught of God** to love one another.*

*2 Cor 3:6 Who also hath made us able ministers of **the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit**: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*

“All Shall Know Me”—It’s a memorable covenant (*11*)—it’s the message of the Song of Solomon:

- The message of the bride’s betrothal.
- The message of the call to enter boldly into the Holiest Place.
- The message of entering into the Rest of Christ.
- The message that many of today’s churches have lost:

But like Israel, many of the brides have fallen short of His best and have:

- Lost touch with the Holy Spirit.
- Replaced Him with the Word.
- Replaced Him with works.
- Wandered about in the world, defeated.

So many have fallen into the “works” trap and have used the Word incorrectly to justify their belief. What they forget is that the Word is to nudge us along in our walk with Christ and to confirm the voice of the Lord in our hearts, not to drive us into self-righteous works. All the work is in God’s hands; our job is to submit to His work.

*Phil 2:13 For **it is God which worketh in you** both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Heb 8:12-13 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 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.

“Their Iniquities Will I Remember No More”—Its a merciful covenant (12).

“He Hath Made the First Old”—Its an implemented covenant (13). Paul described it as decaying, waxing old and ready to vanish away. From God’s first mention of a New Covenant the first one began to dwindle away until its complete annulment by the introduction of the Gospel; Jeremiah’s prophecy. The two can’t exist side-by-side; it’s either the Law or Grace. What Paul is saying is that when he wrote this letter the Old Covenant was “not waxing old,” it was already “obsolete.”

The superior accomplishments of the New Covenant—the better promises of verse 6—were all because of the Cross and they belong to believers of every age. God will put His laws in their minds and write them on their hearts and He will be their God and they will be His people; they will know Him. He will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more. According to Oswald Chambers this is *conscious repentance leading to unconscious holiness*

According to Jeremiah the New Covenant is focused on the house of Israel. Its God’s vehicle for fulfilling the Abrahamic blessings to Israel but it’s not yet in force as far as Israel is concerned but it will be when Christ returns:

Rom 11:26-27 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

This is extremely important to understand. “Replacement theology” and “allegorizing the Book of Revelation” are blatantly incorrect. The church “has not” and “never will” replace Israel. It’s true that the church shares

in salvation, forgiveness of sins and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, but NOT in those promises concerning the land. The rest from persecution and material prosperity are for Israel alone. The spiritual clauses are all encompassing but the eschatological clauses belong exclusively to Israel.

*John 4:22 Ye worship ye know not what: **we know what we worship**: for salvation is of the Jews.*

*Luke 22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, **This cup is the new testament in my blood**, which is shed for you.*

*1 Cor 11:25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, **This cup is the new testament in my blood**: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

*2 Cor 3:6 **Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament**; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*

The True Church, as the bride of Christ, is distinctly different from the nation of Israel. She has realized what Israel has yet to understand, that salvation comes through the Cross and the blood of Christ for all. The bride just needs to remember that the New Covenant wasn't made with her but it ministers to her.

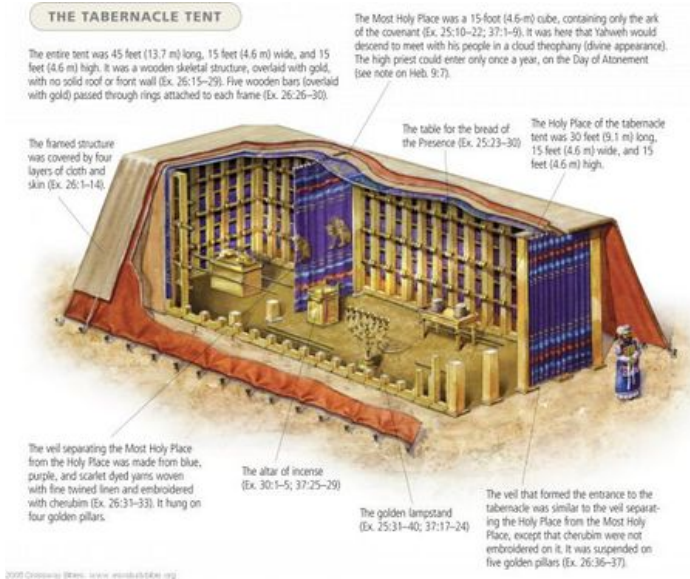
HEBREWS

CHAPTER 9

The Legal Sacrifices Were Imperfect – Christ's Sacrifice Was Perfect

Heb 9:1-7 Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. 3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid roundabout with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5 And over it the cherubim's of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. 6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 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:

TABERNACLE AND THE DAY OF ATONEMENT



THE TABERNACLE

As a pilgrim people we, like Israel, are making our way through this hostile world. The types of the Temple are more suited for Israel and the millennial reign of Christ but as the bride of Christ we relate more to the Tabernacle:

- The tabernacle was worldly and not heavenly.
- It was temporary rather than permanent.

Bishop Lightfoot: *The kingdom of Christ has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and every place alike are holy. Above all it has no sacerdotal system (relating to the priesthood). It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man... The only priests under the Gospel designated as such in the New Testament are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood. As individuals all Christians are priests.*

Sir Robert Anderson: *These great facts of the Christian revelation sweep away the whole structure of the false cult of Christendom. The cult would have us believe that every man upon whose head a bishop's consecrating hands have been placed is a sacrificing priest, with powers and privileges higher than those which pertained to the divinely appointed priests of Israel.*

The Outer Court—was lit by the Sun and surrounded by a linen wall suspended on brazen (brass) pillars. In the center was the brazen altar and behind it was the brazen (brass) laver.

The Tabernacle—was 45 feet long, fifteen feet high and fifteen feet wide and was covered with 4 layers of draperies and skins. It was constructed of acacia wood that was covered with gold with a doorway made of drapes. Inside there were two sanctuaries of the Tabernacle (two degrees of proximity to God) representing the two places where the bride (not the unsaved) can dwell:

- *Holy Place*—A place nearer to God than in our sin but still a shadow of the Spirit-filled Christian life. It's a place full of busy work like it was for the priests (trimming the wicks, filling the oil, changing the showbread), a place where there is seemingly a veil between us and God, a place where we never seem to be “good enough” and nothing we do seems to take that feeling away (reading the Bible,

praying, Christian service, etc.).

- ***The Holiest Place***—A place living in the light of His glory (in His presence), where His light shines into our heart and shows everything for what it is. By abiding in the Holiest Place we are consenting to walk in that light and be obedient to what it reveals. Walking in the fear of the Lord and seeing sin for what it is the light of His Word and His Spirit. Living in the place of repentance where things can quickly go wrong and where we need to respond quickly to what the Holy Spirit reveals. The Holiest Place is where we have His cleansing blood.

*John 1:14 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.*

The word dwelt is “tabernacle” and the flesh of the Lord Jesus is where the Deity “dwelt” while here on earth.

The Holy Place—was symbolic of earth and it represented the Old Testament Economy that looked forward to Christ. The furniture was placed to form a cross and the room was illuminated by the light of the *Golden Lampstand* (on the left) whose central stem had six branches, each with a vessel for oil (7 representing the light of perfection) The lampstand represented the enlightenment the righteousness that the Son of God would bring with Him and communicate to the people.

The *Table of Showbread* (on the right) was opposite the lampstand. It contained 12 loaves of bread that were replaced each week; one for each of the 12 tribes of Israel. The showbread was for the priests to eat, symbolically “feasting on Christ,” to enable them to complete their labor. This was symbolic of the bride having communion with Christ and one another. We come in the light of the Word to His table where we are to discern His body.

The *Golden Altar* and the *Golden Censer* were used by the priests to burn incense, which symbolizes the prayers of the people. It's interesting to note that some have said that Paul was wrong by saying that the Censer was in the Holiest Place rather than here in the Holy Place. But that would be incorrect because on the Day of Atonement the High priest used it to carry coals, passing by the Golden Altar and on into the Holiest Place where he would put incense on the coals. The purpose was to put a cloud in the Holiest Place to cover the Shekinah cloud.

The walls and ceiling of the Holy Place were covered with drapes of scarlet, blue and purple. All the furniture was acacia wood covered in gold so that it would never rot or decay. The floor, however, was the desert to remind the priests they were still on earth and that there was nothing permanent about their position.

The Veil separating the Holy Place from the Holiest Place was symbolic of the body of Christ. It was His body that hid the glory of God (His divinity) from man here on earth as did the veil in the tabernacle. And like the veil in the tabernacle, Jesus' body was also rent to open the way to God's presence on the Cross.

The Holiest Place—was symbolic of heaven, representing the New Testament Economy and it was lit by the Shekinah Glory. It was here that Israel passed from the shadow of Christ to the substance of Christ. It was a perfect cube with the walls covered with curtains of blue, scarlet and purple and it housed:

The Ark of the Covenant—was 3 feet by 2 feet, symbolizing God's Provision in its contents—the Old Testament kingdom. *The Stone Tablets* represented God's concern with His peoples' moral needs; the ones which we can't keep that can only be kept through Christ. *Aaron's Rod* was symbolic of God's concern with His peoples' spiritual needs and was a type of Christ; the branch by whom God has wrought wonders.

The Cup of Manna—represented God's concern with His peoples' physical needs. When kept by Israel it became putrid but here in God's presence it is kept pure and sweet. It speaks of Christ's ability to fully

meet our moral, spiritual, and physical needs. In Him all of our graces and performances are kept pure because His obedience fulfilled the Law.

The Mercy Seat—was constructed of acacia wood covered in gold representing divinity over humanity. In speaking of pardon it was the perfect type of Christ. It stood between God (the Shekinah Glory) and man, covering our sins with perfect righteousness.

The Cherubims—looked down into the great redemption work of Christ. They attended His birth, temptation, agonies, resurrection, and ascension and they will attend His second coming.

The Shekinah Cloud—was the very presence of God was the only light in the Holiest Place. Man's light was left in the Holy Place as a foretaste of the light of God that was to come in the Messiah. And nothing in the life of Israel depicted that coming more than the Day of Atonement.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (*LEV 16*)

It was the day each year when Israel's national guilt was reviewed, dealt with and put away, both ceremonially and symbolically; Yom Kippur.

Prevalent Guilt—was widespread common guilt and it required the sacrifice of a bullock for the High priest; a ram was set aside to be sacrificed later. The High priest took off his garments of glory and left them off until the entire ceremony was complete, just as Jesus laid aside His glory when He came down here to make atonement for us and He did not assume His outward glory until His work was finished.

The High priest then washed his flesh with water and put on linen garments. In the Old Testament "linen" is a type of the righteousness of Christ. He then selected two goats to be sacrificed later in making atonement for the guilt of the nation and a ram to be used as a national burnt offering. Then he presented the two goats at the door of the

Tabernacle and cast lots to see which one would be the “scapegoat.”

- *Sin offering*—the vileness of the sinner was transferred to the substitute.
- *Burnt offering*—the virtue of the substitute was transferred to the sinner.

*2 Cor 5:21 For **he hath made him to be sin for us**, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

Next he had to take care of his own personal guilt by sacrificing the bullock. His sacrifice required a larger animal because sin in the high priest was greater in God’s eyes. Then he went into the Holy Place and took the Golden Censer and filled it with coals and filled his hands with incense along with the blood of the bullock. Thus protected he entered beyond the veil into the Holiest Place where he placed the incense on the burning coals and the cloud hid him from view. This was symbolic of the fragrance of Christ and His intercessory prayers on our behalf. Next he approached the mercy seat, dipped his finger into the bowl of blood and sprinkled it before the mercy seat 7 times, symbolic of the perfect effectiveness of the blood of Christ. Only then could he leave the Holiest Place; his personal guilt taken care of.

Public Guilt—next he sacrificed one of the two goats for the sin offering, taking the blood once more into the Holiest Place and sprinkling it 7 times on the mercy seat. All this he accomplished alone as no one else was allowed to enter:

*Lev 16:17 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.*

This is symbolic of Christ's work on the Cross that was done alone. As one commentator put it—*the loneliest work every performed in the universe*.

Then he left the Holiest Place, not to enter again until on the Day of Atonement the following year. Next he took the blood from the bullock and the goat and put it on horns of the altar in the Holy Place and then the Tabernacle and the Altar were reconciled by the blood, which had to be done because of the contaminating nature of human sin.

The scapegoat was the central, most public and most impressive part of the ceremony. The high priest laid hands on the head of the remaining goat—the scapegoat—and confessed over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their sins. Then a “fit man” came to lead the goat outside the camp, past the last tent out into the wilderness. On and on went the “sin-bearer” and the “fit man” until finally in an uninhabited land he let the goat go and retraced his steps with the goat watching him; no grass, no water just the merciless sun where it died alone.

So did Christ die an agonizing death alone on the cross; no water, just the beating down of the hot sun where He died bearing the sin of all. And like the scapegoat, which was not slain by the fit man (a type of the Holy Spirit), Jesus was not slain by man. He “gave up” His life of His own free will.

Nothing in scripture depicts the horror of the Cross more than the scapegoat. When the Holy Spirit withdrew (the fit man) Jesus was left completely alone, carrying the sin of the world on His head—*My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Looking at the types presented in the two goats we see:

- Aaron and Melchisedec typifying Christ's work.
- David and Solomon typifying Christ's royal power.
- The Wilderness and Canaan typifying the believer's pilgrimage and position.
- Christ whose blood was shed and Christ who bore our sins.

Persistent Guilt—Now the high priest re-entered the Tabernacle and went into the Holy Place where he took off his linen garments, washed himself and put the garments of glory back on once again and came forth back into the Tabernacle in splendor. This represents the suffering of Christ and the glory that followed. Never again will He appear in weakness and His next coming will be in glory and power (*Rev 1*).

Then he sacrificed a ram for a burnt offering for himself and one for the nation; both involved offering all for God. This symbolized God's satisfaction in the finished work of Christ and it was called a "sweet savor offering" because it expressed God's appreciation for His Son. Next the fat of the burnt offerings was burned upon the altar, which symbolized Christ's inward richness, something only God could fully appreciate. It was forbidden for Hebrews to ever eat fat because it was for God alone.

It was then at this point that the "fit man" reappeared in the camp whereupon he had to wash his clothes and bathe because of being defiled by touching the scapegoat. Only then could he re-enter the camp. Then the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat along with the skin, the flesh and the dung were given to the "fit man" to take outside the camp where he burned them all. Nothing was to be left but ashes because you cannot rekindle a fire with ashes.

Preoccupying Guilt—Finally the people were called upon to keep the remaining day as a day of rest; one of God's appointed Sabbaths. This looked ahead to the time when God would indeed find His Sabbath rest where we today find ours; in the finished work of Christ.

Heb 9:8-10 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 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; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

“Until The Time of Reformation”—The Tabernacle was a parable, pointing forward to the future way into the Holiest Place (God’s immediate presence). But now Paul makes the case that it is a “discarded parable” because the Holiest Place is a reality for the bride of Christ.

Heb 9:11-12 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; 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.

“Of Good Things to Come”—We are now served by a better priest of the good things to be realized. While Israel’s high priest served in a sanctuary that was on earth in the wilderness, our high priest serves in our sanctuary in heaven.

“Not Made With Hands”—Our sanctuary is more perfect having not been made by man, and it is served by a better sacrifice. Not by shedding the blood of goats and calves but by the blood of Christ. And it’s supported by a better plan. Jesus entered into the Holiest Place one time and that was sufficient to purchase eternal redemption for us. It was a one-time sacrifice that will never be repeated.

Now Paul moves into his concluding argument. Not only do we have a better Savior, a better security and a better sanctuary, we have a better sacrifice (9:13-10:39).

Israel left Egypt a redeemed people, but they were nevertheless sinners and liable to fall. Their sin didn’t put them back under the doom or the bondage of Egypt but it did bar them from approaching the presence of God, and therefore they still needed sin offerings.

Heb 9:1-14 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: 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?*

“The Red Heifer”—When ashes are mixed with water the result is lye, a strong cleansing agent. Ashes of the Red Heifer, when mixed with water, removed ceremonial uncleanness for the individual. It washed away the ceremonial defilement of touching something dead. For the bride, she can still become defiled by engaging—touching—our old nature.

The Red Heifer was slain by the priest outside the camp and the blood was sprinkled 7 times before the altar and the ashes were mixed with water and stored outside the camp. The ceremony could be only be performed by a “clean person,” which signifies for the bride of Christ her responsibility to keep herself in communion with Him by faith and repentance. Her Red Heifer is the word of God mixed with the work of the Holy Spirit, constantly applied and the repentance it produces—“practical purity.”

*Titus 3:5 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 Much More”—Animals were offered with no will of their own but Christ offered Himself with His own consent. This one act is solely responsible for “Purging Our Conscience;” renewing our inner man and making us alive so we can serve God. This was something a ritual cleansing could never do.

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

“Redemption of the Transgressions”—This is like the person who is burdened with debt that continues to grow and get worse over time. It seems hopeless but then someone comes in and pays off all the debt,

removing the entire burden. This is what the “Mediator of the New Testament” has done for us. All of our debt—our sin—has been paid.

“Promise Of Eternal Inheritance”—There were two bums sitting on the gutter and one was crying “Rockefeller died.” The other one said, “So what, you weren’t related to him.” He responded, “That’s why I’m crying.” There is a whole world filled with those who will one day cry because they didn’t know Him. The harvest is ready, is the bride?

*Heb 9:16-22 For where a testament is, **there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.** 17 For **a testament is of force after men are dead:** otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. 18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. 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, 20 **Saying, This is the blood of the testament** which God hath enjoined unto you. 21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. 22 And **almost all things** are by the law purged with blood; and **without shedding of blood is no remission.***

“There Must Also of Necessity Be the Death of the Testator”—If the testator is alive there is no inheritance because there has been no death. With Jesus’ death His will is now in force, but unlike the worldly testator that sometimes struggles to perfectly carry out the will, Jesus is alive to perfectly carry out the terms of His will.

“Blood and Water”—This speaks of justification by Christ (blood) and sanctification by the Spirit (water). We ratify our agreements with a signature but God ratified s agreement with blood and water.

“The Blood of the Testament”—First the Law was read, received by acclamation of the people and then ratified by the sprinkling of blood.

“Almost All Things”—There were some things required personal cleansing by the ashes of the Red Heifer such as having been defiled by

touching something dead.

“Without the Shedding of Blood is No Remission”—The new emergent church movement shies away from preaching about sin, the Cross and the “blood of Christ.” It has turned its eyes from God’s holiness and the true nature of sin and focuses on the love of Christ. But to ignore the Cross is to preach a watered down Gospel with no power of redemption. Sin is a radical reality that calls for a radical cure and that can only be found at the Cross—in the blood of Jesus.

*Heb 9:23-28 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. 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: 25 **Nor yet that he should offer himself often**, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 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. 27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 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**.*

“Patterns of Things in Heaven”—The Old Testament Tabernacle was cleansed with blood every year by the high priest entering into the Holiest Place two times; once of himself and once for Israel. But Christ has gone into the Holiest Place one time—into the very presence of God—where His blood was poured out on the Cross. And He has stayed in the Holiest Place where he continually ministers for us; never to leave. The Levitical ritual of the high priest was “unremitting” and was only a foreshadowing of the truth.

“Nor Yet That He Should Offer Himself Often”—Christ didn’t have to offer Himself over and over. His sacrifice was one for all past and future sin. The “un-bloody sacrifice” of the catholic mass and the Holy Eucharist offered every day as a “true sacrifice” offered by Christ

Himself through the priest is no different than Judaism offering daily sacrifices. They are both totally inadequate, even as illustrations. Calvary was the focal point between two eternities: all ages prior looked forward to it and all ages after look back at it.

“Christ Was Once Offered”—Christ can die only once and only once must He bear sin’s penalty. Man also dies only once but then he faces judgment. It is there he must deal with the second death; spiritual death.

“The Second Time”—Christ will appear a second time and He will come like the High priest reappearing from the Holy of Holies (*Rev 1*).

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 10

Don't Despise, Reject or Cast Away Your Confidence

Heb 10:1-4 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 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. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

“A Shadow of Good Things to Come—Not the Very Image”—The Law never made the people perfect. It was only to show them that the sacrifices could never make them perfect.

“Ceased to Be Offered”—If they had made man perfect then there wouldn't be a need for more sacrifices, and therefore they would have “ceased.” The Day of Atonement only brought back a remembrance of the peoples' sins because the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins; *aphaireo* (*af-ahee-reh-o*)—cut off, smite off.

“Not Possible That the Blood of Bulls and of Goats Should Take Away Sins”—Where sins are not removed by the blood of Christ guilt and liability remain the sinners' personal responsibility.

Heb 10:5-12 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 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. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;

The words of David:

Ps 40:6-8 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.

“In the Volume of the Book it is Written of Me.” This is a conversation between the Father and the Son regarding Jesus’ incarnation. The prophets all foretold of Christ’s coming, His birth, behavior, death, burial, and resurrection. What possible reason could anyone familiar with the book ever turn their back on Him? It’s a valid question for the bride today.

“Once For All”—Offering of the body of Christ was one sacrifice for all that was orchestrated by the Father. He led Christ from Gethsemane where He yielded afresh to His Father’s will, to Gabbatha (the Temple

Mound) where He was scourged by Pilot's judgment and to Golgotha and the Grave.

“Every Priest Standeth Daily—Christ Forever Sat Down”—The crown assures us of our security because His work is done and we are secure in it. The “shadows” have been replaced by the “substance”

*Heb 10:13-17 From **henceforth expecting** till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath **perfected forever them that are sanctified**. 15 Whereof the **Holy Ghost also is a witness to us**: for after that he had said before, 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**; 17 And **their sins and iniquities will I remember no more**. 18 Now where remission of these is, **there is no more offering for sin**.*

“Henceforth Expecting”

*Acts 1:7 And he said unto them, **It is not for you to know the times or the seasons**, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

These are now the times or the seasons when the bride is being made ready. The world is growing ripe for judgment and the Lord is eagerly waiting for the day when He can bring His bride home. Then He will turn His attention to Israel and all those who have scorned His sacrifice.

“Perfected Forever Them That Are Sanctified”—The bride of Christ is perfected (saved) forever. This is “positional” sanctification, the birthright of every believer.

“The Holy Ghost Also Is a Witness to Us”—He is three witnesses to us:

- *Heb 10:15*—“to” us; “fact”

- *1 John 5:10*—“in” us; “faith”
- *Rom 8:16*—“with” us; “feeling”

“The Covenant That I Will Make With Them”—“Them” are those mentioned in verse 14; those perfected and those sanctified. Jeremiah’s words belong to “Israel” and by application to the bride.

“In Their Minds Will I Write Them”—The Word of God will be permanently secured in our hearts “by God.” We will “remember” all that is of God and He will “forget” all our guilt and shame

“There is No More Offering for Sin”—The Levitical offerings are now “completely” meaningless.

*Heb 10:19-25 **Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,** 20 **By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil,** that is to say, his flesh; 21 And **having an high priest over the house of God;** 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. 23 **Let us hold fast the profession of our faith** without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24 And **let us consider one another** to provoke unto love and to good works: 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.***

There are three key themes in verses 19-25:

- Welcome
- Warning
- Wisdom

“Welcome”—We now have the boldness to enter into the Holiest Place where we have direct access to our bridegroom. This welcome is

extended to all believers (both Jew and Gentile) because the price of access was paid by the blood of Jesus.

“Through the Veil”—The veil spoke of Jesus’ incarnation—it separated all men from God—and the colors reflected His humanity and His divinity.

- *Blue*—the color of heaven pointing to Jesus, the Son of God.
- *Scarlet*—the color of man; Adam means red pointing to Jesus, the Son of Man.
- *Purple*—take equal parts of blue and scarlet and you get purple. It is impossible to tell where one begins and the other ends just as Jesus’ deity is perfectly blended with His humanity.

The woman at the well (*John 4*) was an example of His humanity. He gave her water and at the same time His divinity confronted her. The boat in the storm (*Mark 4*) showed both His humanity—He was sleeping—and His divinity when He spoke to the storm.

Christ was crucified at the time of the evening sacrifice and the soldiers spear rent His fleshly veil; man’s action. At that very moment the veil in the temple was rent in front of all Israel and they saw inside the Holiest Place for the first time; God’s action

“High priest Over the House Of God”—We can approach God, not because of Christ’s perfect life, but because of His death. He is in the heavenly Holy of Holies and we can go there; He has commanded us to “boldly” enter in. Unlike the earthly High priest who had to enter alone, Jesus has taken us “in” with Him. And as a result there is a great responsibility for the bride. Three times Paul says “let us:”

- *Let us draw near.* We have a responsibility “toward God” to be conscientious when we enter in; to enter with a true

heart. We must be confident with no natural hesitation. We must be cleansed when we enter in; sprinkled from an evil conscience (*1 John 1:9*).

- *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.* We have a responsibility “toward ourselves.” Faith is a forward-looking word and Paul uses it to draw attention to the fact that these Hebrew Christians were under constant pressure to go back
- *Let us consider one another.* We have a responsibility “toward man.” We need the help that comes from fellowship with each other. Like the hot coal that is at the edge of the slowly dying fire, we need to stir up one another to keep the Spirit burning brightly.

“Not Forsaking the Assembling of Ourselves Together”—Gathering together—*episunagoge* (*ep-ee-soon-ag-o-gay*)—means gathering together on earth. The only other place it is used is *2 Thess 2:1* where it refers to gathering together “in the air;” the rapture.

“The Day Approaching”—This is the “day of Christ” (*Phil 1:6, 10; 2:16*) or The “day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*1Cor 1:8; 5:5; 2Cor 1:14*); the rapture, which is a day of “unspeakable joy.” The “day of the Lord” (*Isa 2:12; 2Thess 2:12*) is the return of the Lord to earth in “judgment.”

Heb 10:26-31 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 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.***

“Word of Warning”—This warning regards “deliberate” sin; sinning willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth. Willfully—*hekousios* (*hek-oo-see-ose*)—means not by sudden impulse but with settled intention. The willful sin here is “apostasy.”

“There Remaineth No More Sacrifice for Sins”—Renouncing the sacrifice of Christ leaves the sinner without any other sacrifice. Since there are no longer any acceptable sacrifices (except self-sacrifice to Christ) there is no other place for man to go for salvation.

“A Certain Fearful Looking for of Judgment and Fiery Indignation”—To become an “apostate” (*apostasia*) is to become an “adversary;” to defect or depart.” This is not “backsliding” or failure in the life of a Christian; it’s the deliberate repudiation of the Gospel. For them to return to Judaism meant being required to publicly repudiate Christ and disavow all their Christianity. Be certain that God’s righteous judgment will fall on the defector and in the Old Testament that meant death. There was no compassion to those who chose other gods. In the New Testament it is a sin against “God’s grace;” the total, willful rejection of Christ. It is repudiating the Holy Spirit who is the only one who administers grace to the soul.

Some interpret this as one who has come to the Cross and confessed Christ outwardly and identified with Christians but has turned back one step short (a professor of Christ only). In Paul’s day it meant going back to Judaism and today it means going back to the world or some dead religion. It is a terrible thing to fall into the judgment of God and for the believer who apostatizes there is certain judgment at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

*Heb 10:32-39 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 gazing stock 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. 35 **Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward**. 36 For **ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise**. 37 For yet a little while, and **he that shall come will come**, and will not tarry. 38 Now **the just shall live by faith: but if any man drawback, my soul shall have no pleasure in him**. 39 **But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition**; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

“Remember the Former Days”—When trials come we need to think about the past and remember the former days when we endured persecution and hold on to the faith that got us through.

“Cast Not Away Your Confidence Which Has Great Recompense Of Reward”—This takes “patience” because Satan’s favorite tactic is to try and “wear out” the bride. The antidote to this, however, is “patience.” And note that it has “great recompense of reward.” There are rewards awaiting those who believe, are obedient, give and are faithful; the “overcomers.” They are the ones that never cast away their confidence in the promise of the bridegroom; His promised return.

“He That Shall Come Will Come”—The Lord is coming again and in light of that it is imperative that “The Just Shall Live By Faith.” Faith keeps one from apostasy because when we look at the Lord Jesus it reaffirms our faith.

“But We Are Not of Them Who Draw Back unto Perdition”—The word perdition means waste. This is the frustratingly pointless existence of living under the law of self-help and self-importance. It always results in “wasteful” accomplishments as far as the Kingdom of God is concerned and will ultimately wind up as wood, hay and stubble that are burned up at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

This is a good place to stop and take a closer look at this issue of “perdition.” And it will help if we look at the three common views taken in understanding the message of this book.

THREE COMMON VIEWS OF HEBREWS ***The Key to Correctly Interpreting Hebrews***

Armenian View—Paul is writing to Hebrew Christians who have drifted into a place where they have denied Christ by a willful and purposeful rejection; they have lost their salvation

Calvinistic View—Paul is writing to Hebrews that have not fully become Christians, they are only professing Christians.

Nominal View—Paul is referring to Hebrews that are only half-saved; they have not yet come all the way to salvation

The Textual View—But let’s consider the view based upon the text in which Paul continually uses the terms us, we, our, brethren, and ourselves to refer to the “collective” body of believers. The easiest way around the warnings of *Heb 6* and *10* is to say they apply to unsaved people or half-saved people. But that’s not the case as Paul wrote this letter to born again Hebrew Christians. Consider his words so far as he has included himself in the same category as them:

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Heb 2:1,3 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. 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;

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

Heb 4:14-16 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. 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. 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.

*Heb 10:19-25 Having therefore, **brethren**, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 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. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 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. 26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more*

sacrifice for sins,

Here are Paul's marks of a Believer:

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

- Once enlightened.
- Tasted the heavenly gift.
- Partakers of the Holy Ghost.
- Tasted the Word of God.
- The knowledge of prophecy.

Consider then the message of Hebrews in these three steps:

1—Salvation—Hupa (The Wedding Contract)

Matt 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

This is the first stop—"come unto me"—for salvation; it's free. This is partaking "in" Christ, passing from the Court of the Gentiles (the unsaved), past the brazen altar (the Cross) and into the Holy Place

2—Maturing—Sanctification—Katubah (The Betrothal)

Matt 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your soul

This second stop is all about submission, obedience, labor and service; it's not free. This is partaking "of" Christ and moving into the Holiest Place.

1 Peter 4:13 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.

2 Peter 1:4 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.

Col 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

1 Cor 10:17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

Heb 12:1-2 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, 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.

Phil 2:12 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.

3—The Judgment Seat of Christ

2 Cor 5:10 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.

This is the last step, coming before Him to become His wife:

1 Cor 3:13-15 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

And here is the key to the entire message Paul delivered to these Hebrew Christians:

Heb 5:12-14 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. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 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.

THE REWARD PERSPECTIVE

The 6 Ds of danger for the bride of Christ:

1. *Drifting* from the things we have heard—2:1-4
2. *Disbelieving* the voice of God—3:7-14
3. *Degenerating* from the elementary principles of Christ—5:11 to 6:20
4. *Despising* the knowledge of God—10:26-36
5. *Devaluing* the grace of God—12:15-17

6. *Departing from him who speaks—12:25-29*

God provides forgiveness for the weaknesses of His children for their mistakes and errors, sins of ignorance, omission and defilement, but not those willful presumptuous sins. These are the sins committed willfully and deliberately with full knowledge and warning of its consequences. This is continued sin that willfully rejects His mercy and grace.

So what about those who don't repent? *Deut 1:21, 26-30, 32, 34-35; Heb 3 and 4*. The scriptures don't teach that a Christian can sin and "escape" the penalty and they don't teach that a Christian can "lose" his salvation, but those who preach grace without the truth of the penalty for sin at the Judgment Seat of Christ are preaching a dangerous doctrine because God does judge His people:

*Heb 10:30 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**.*

No Christian can indulge in known or willful sin and get away with it for God chastens His people. The guilt was dealt with on the Cross but the consequences of neglect and disobedience will be—must be—dealt with because God is Holy. And if the chastening is ignored by the believer, God may set him aside until the Judgment Seat of Christ where he will be judged by fire. To preach free grace without the counterbalancing truth of the responsibilities and the penalties for sin to be dealt with at the Judgment Seat of Christ is "false doctrine" and it leads to a false security.

"The sin unto death"—This is continued, deliberate, willful sin.

*1 John 5:16 If any man see his brother sin **a sin which is "not" unto death**, he shall ask, and **he shall give him life for them that sin not***

unto death. There is a sin unto death: I “do not say” that he shall pray for it.

Presumptuous, continued disobedience may result in the sin unto death that is judged by the Lord in a variety of ways. One way is chastening by God for the rest of one’s life until the day of physical death; taken out of service and made a castaway.

*1 Cor 5:5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, **that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.***

*1 Cor 11:30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and **many sleep.***

This is the most tragic for it is here that it’s impossible to renew them again to repentance. They are saved like Israel— out of Egypt—but they will never enter into the Promised Land. They will die without ever reaching Christ’s rest; the abundant, victorious, fruitful, blessed life.

Persisting in willful disobedience—ignoring the mercy and grace of our High priest—will not go un-judged, but God will supply repeated warnings and chastening. However, if he persists, God may punish by physical death. Satan has a plan to destroy the unrepentant man but God will not allow that to happen, He will take that one out of Satan’s hands before He can be lost. Or God may cease to deal with him and make him a castaway:

*1 Cor 9:27 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.***

- The Catholic answer is purgatory.
- The Armenian answer is lost salvation.

- The Holiness groups answer is missing the rapture and going through the Great Tribulation.
- The Calvinistic answer is they were never saved in the first place.

Paul's answer was quite different. Castaway—*adokimos* (*ad-ok-ee-mos*)—means worthless, rejected. It means to be castaway until he is judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ where:

*1 Cor 3:14-15 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: **but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.***

This is the penalty for the “sin unto death.” If after being enlightened, having tasted the heavenly gift, being a partaker of the Holy Ghost and having tasted the Word of God and the powers of the world to come, he refuses to go on but “falls away,” God may cease to deal with him in repentance and set him aside for the fires of the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is that that all his works will be burned as “wood, hay and stubble.” This is the answer to *1 John 5:16*.

The worldliness of Christians and indifference to the truth resulting from preaching “easy grace” results in a false sense of security. No Christian can indulge in known and willful sin and get away with it. The guilt of sin has been forever settled for the believer but he must still bear the consequences. It is critical to understand that becoming the bride of Christ includes an obligation to be obedient to Christ:

- Obedience is rewarded now and in the future.
- Confession and repentance are required for forgiveness.
- Failure to stop sinning and confess and repent will result in God's will use the rod of discipline. Presumptuous and continued sin (not sins of ignorance, omission or defilement) may result in the sin unto death

Those referred to in Chapter 6 and here in Chapter 10 are willfully sinning and falling short of God's best for them. But between these two chapters are three (7, 8 and 9) that give an exhaustive picture of Christ interceding in heaven, which is the answer to 6 and 10.

If we don't want to fall into the category of those in 6 and 10 then when we sin we need to avail ourselves of our the mercy and grace of our high priest. Confession and repentance result in forgiveness and cleansing and receiving His grace that will keep us from falling again. We have no excuse in becoming a castaway; it's our failure to avail ourselves of His ministry.

Remember, we need to hold fast our "profession" (our hope). not our "possession" (our salvation).

*Heb 4:14-16 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.** 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. 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.***

*Heb 4:2-27 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 **But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation***

...

There will be a judgment of all but it will not be of "condemnation;" it will be of "correction" and "receiving of rewards." This judgment is called a "fiery indignation" where works will be burned up. There will be salvation but no reward. When Jesus asks, "What did you do with what you were given" there will be no answer. And that is why Paul said in

Chapter 3:

Heb 3:13-15 But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; 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 Steadfast unto the end; 15 While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

That is what we are to hold onto; our confidence in His promise.

Heb 4:35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

Note that Paul does not say “cast away your salvation.” This is about losing your “assurance” and the danger of losing the “reward.”

Heb 4:36 For ye have need of patience that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise (Reward)

The reward comes at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Faithfulness will be rewarded but the unrepentant, disobedient Christian will be dealt with and as a castaway and will be “saved as so by fire”—once again Paul’s letter to the Corinthians.

1 Cor 3:12-15 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The believer cannot draw back unto perdition because there is no condemnation for the believer. He has passed from death to life:

Heb 4:38-39 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man drawback, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

John 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

He can, however, draw back and invite God's judgment in sickness, weakness and chastening and even the sin unto death. But God will not go back on His promise of salvation. When someone receives Christ as Saviour their sins—past, present and future—are removed—if they are obedient according to *1 John 1:9*; there is no condemnation:

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

But we can neglect that salvation. Go back to Chapter 2:

Heb 2:3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

We may come short of God's best for us. We are to work out our salvation for His reward is great but if we pursue the reward of the world that is all we'll get. Consider these scriptures:

Heb 4:1 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.

Col 3:23-25 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

1 John 1:7 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.

2 Cor 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

2 Cor 7:1 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.

Rom 8:18 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.

Ps 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Gal 3:1-3 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? 2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn

among many brethren.

*Eph 5:15-16 See then that ye **walk circumspectly**, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

*Eph 4:14-15 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may **grow up into him in all things**, which is the head, even Christ*

Paul wrote this book to make it clear that what is important for and expected of the bride of Christ. She is to make the commitment and submit to the work of the Holy Spirit to move on to spiritual maturity. There is no way she can become all that her bridegroom created her to be if she continues to sleep in the comfort of the world while all around her there people are lost and going to hell. She needs to rise up from her complacency and follow Jesus into the Holiest Place and be about the work of the Kingdom; spreading the Gospel and making disciples.

We need to keep that admonition in mind as we move into Chapter 11 and reflect on some of the heroes in God's Hall of Faith.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 11

God's Hall of Faith

“Abel Had Faith—Cain Had the Opposite of Faith”

*Heb 11:1-4 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good report. 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. 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.*

Gen 4:2-7 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. 6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

Human reasoning, great as it is, can lead people of equal intelligence to opposite conclusions. Cain had his own ideas about God and about the way He should be approached and worshiped. He had his own religion;

in fact he invented “religion.” Abel’s altar looked like a slaughterhouse because he came to God, God’s way: *Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain...*

He was righteous not because of himself but because of the “blood” of the lamb. God made clear the way He was to be approached but Cain invented his own way (Way of Cain) and millions are doing the same thing today. He had a beautiful altar piled high with fruits and vegetables, it was academically satisfying, it flattered the flesh, it pleased natural man, and it ministered to “his” religious needs without forcing him to face up to guilt and sin. He substituted beauty for “blood” and that religious practice continues today. Cain’s religion had a basic principle that hasn’t been altered down through the centuries; salvation isn’t by faith, it has to be earned, by “works.”

Cain had “good feelings” about his offering and his altar but his religion was the first false religion on earth. After his works the religious person feels safe but he isn’t. He isn’t “righteous” he is “religious.” The problem is that false religion acts as a narcotic and it deadens the conscience. At the end of the day, all that Cain got for his “works” was becoming a vagabond and a fugitive who founded a godless civilization. He raised his sons in that religion and before long they had no religion at all. In the end he became the father of all who refuse to believe, who substitute reason for revelation, beauty for blood, trying for testing, and feelings for facts.

“Enoch and Noah—The Future Of Faith”

*Heb 11:5-7 **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. 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. 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.

Enoch and Noah are both archetypes of the last days. Enoch typifies the bride of Christ (church) and the rapture; the escape “out of.” Noah typifies the wife of God (Israel) and the saints of the Tribulation; salvation “through.”

Enoch

Enoch was 7th generation from Adam in the Godly line of Seth and it’s interesting to note once again that 7 is the number of perfection. He was born when Adam was 622 years old, Seth was 492, and his father Jared was 162. Enoch lived with Adam for 308 years but instead of being surrounded by the light of God he was surrounded by the world’s gloom. Everyone was doing their own thing as man tried to create a “new paradise,” an artificial one based on technology, science and engineering.

Smelting (the melting and fusing of metals) was the antediluvian equivalent of the industrial revolution. Social sophistication was replacing the simplicity of earlier times and timeless truth was being replaced by “social justice” and secularism (preoccupation with the good things of life) brought on “spiritualism.” The end of all of this necessitated the flood because God determined that man had become corrupt beyond recall. America lives today exactly where Enoch lived, in a world plunging toward God’s ultimate judgment.

Enoch had simple goodness in a pornographic society and his testimony was *Godward*:

*Heb 11:5b... **he had this testimony, that he pleased God.***

God said the same thing about Jesus:

*Matt 3:17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, **in whom I am well pleased.***

And he had a testimony *Manward*:

Jude 14-15 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

Enoch saw the Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints, which is symbolic of the Lord coming “with” His saints when He comes “for” His bride. Enoch experienced a taste of that sudden glory when he was raptured (snatched away without experiencing physical death) 70 years before Noah was born (there’s that number 7 again):

Gen 5:24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Heb 11:5a... Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him

And most importantly for us, Enoch left a legacy... *He Walked With God.*

Noah

Heb 11:7... became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

The Canaanites were in charge and the legacy of Cain was in full control—science, technology, art and the occult were rampant. There was a population explosion and increasing immorality was rampaging everywhere. What we often overlook is the fact that Noah knew about Cain and Abel and he was well aware of the Way of Cain, which he avoided for the path of Enoch:

Jude 10-11 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they

*corrupt themselves. 11 Woe unto them! for **they have gone in the way of Cain**, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

Noah was saved and he knew and followed the way of Enoch:

*Gen 6:9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and **Noah walked with God**.*

He had incredible courage and he followed God's command to spread the message, but he had no converts aside from his wife, 3 sons and 3 daughters-in-law; there it is again, the number of perfection. And it was Noah who was the last to enter the ark before God sealed the door; #8, a new beginning. And then they sat had to sit in "faith" in the ark for 7 days during which nothing happened. Can you imagine what must have been going through his mind after all he had done over the past 120 years; just sitting there inside that ark with nothing happening except the ridicule and laughter of all those on the outside ?

Noah was also "pure from the blood of all men:"

*Ps 24:4 He that hath **clean hands, and a pure heart**; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.*

*Acts 18:5-6 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. 6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, **Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean**: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*

He is a type of Israel and those who will be saved during the Great Tribulation (Jacob's trouble; Israel's trouble); saved "through" the tribulation. Some use the Ark as a type of Jesus but it better represents Israel—saved through the flood.

“Abraham—Grace in Weak Faith”

*Heb 11:8-19 **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. 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: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 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. 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. 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. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 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. 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*

Abraham traveled where God led him and at Bethel he built his first altar—the house of God. He was following God and he didn't expect to encounter any obstacles, however he quickly discovered two things: famine and an enemy in the land. He had yet to learn that where God's people find their blessings they also find their battles. That place was

ultimately Israel's Rest of God (the Promised Land) and today it's the bride's Rest of Christ.

But in the face of the challenge Abraham suddenly found Egypt looking like a pretty good option. And, in the midst of the enemy's attacks, just as suddenly the world can begin to look pretty good to the bride. The problem was that Abraham had yet to learn to fully trust God and so he took things into his own hands and lied about Sarah, saying she was his sister. It was a half-lie because she was his half sister but it was still a lie (*Gen 12:9-20*).

Then God promised him Isaac, but after years of waiting he once again took the "world's way" and as a result God did not speak to him again for 13 years; the number 13 means "rebellion." He had to learn that the answer to "barrenness" is not to be found in worldly means. That hasn't changed today as God still uses our faith to mature His promises. Sadly, many churches and Christians haven't learned that lesson either. They still strive after bigger budgets, better music, friendlier preaching, more advertising, more money, more things, etc.

You would think that Abraham learned his lesson in Egypt but he didn't and he repeated his sin with Abimelech (*Gen 20:1-18*). So often we do the same thing and God has to teach us the lesson all over again; our heart isn't pure:

*Jer 17:9 **The heart is deceitful** above all things, and **desperately wicked**: who can know it?*

But Abraham, for all his mistakes, was a "friend of God" and we can be His friend as well... "If"

*John 15:14 Ye are my friends, **if ye do whatsoever I command you**.*

Then came Mount Mariah and God's greatest challenge to Abraham; the sacrifice of Isaac. God does the same thing with us and we will all have our Isaac moment. The pattern of Abraham's life is the same for us:

God discovers us, then He detaches us, develops us and then when He is done He displays us as a prime exhibit of His grace. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, really captured the essence of the journey:

*Eph 2:4-9 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath **quicken***ed us* together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath **raised us** up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the **exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.** 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

“Isaac—Sliding From the Holiest Place Back Into the Holy Place”
(Gen 25-28)

*Heb 11:20 **By faith Isaac** blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*

There was a time in Isaac’s life when he was an outstanding type of Christ. He was the most Christ-like man on earth when he was obedient to his father on Mount Moriah. He was also like Christ in the way he received his bride; just like Jesus received His bride. But as time passed things began going wrong in Isaac’s home—he became a “carnal Christian.”

At the age of 137 he thought he was going to die (that didn’t happen until he was 180) so he decided to make out his will and the rest is history; Jacob and Esau. God wanted Jacob to be the direct line to Christ but Abraham wanted Esau, so he turned a blind eye to Esau’s carnality and worldliness and tried to circumvent God’s perfect will. The result was a disaster. Esau married two pagan women. One of them, Aholibamah, was a Canaanite that was addicted to religious

abominations and she had a Horite ancestry, which was a long line of Anakim blood that was the accursed race of giants that polluted the Promised Land. He also married one of Ishmael's daughters thinking that would put things right, but it didn't. He moved in with the Horites in the rock city of Petra and climbed the social ladder while Jacob slowly climbed the spiritual ladder.

In retrospect we can see that the problem was that Isaac became preoccupied with his flesh. His fleshly desires are mentioned in 21 times; savory meat 6 times, venison 7 times and eating 8 times. In the end he was ultimately deceived by his own senses:

- *Taste*—goat instead of venison.
- *Smell*—one of Esau's coats that smelled of the earth.
- *Touch*—hairy goatskin instead of flesh.
- *Hearing*—mistaking Jacob's voice for Esau's.

But just like it did for Isaac, the world will ultimately fail you and leave you stranded on your own. For example, on one of his trips to the North Pole Robert Peary took his bearings and trekked north all day. At night he took them again and discovered he was south of the point from where he had headed north. He found out he was on a floating iceberg that was drifting south faster than he was going north. That was Isaac, and that is a great many of the bride today that are drifting in the world, not really knowing where they are.

Here's the lesson. No man can legislate holiness, not in his family and not in the world. He can command obedience but not holiness. Spiritual maturity cannot be passed from father to son. Isaac found that out and the response of Esau proved that he didn't have one trace of spirituality; he just wanted the blessing of the eldest. He and his descendents—the Edomites—became bitter and persistent enemies of God's people throughout the Bible. One Herod tried to kill Christ, another beheaded John the Baptist, one murdered James and tried to murder Peter and yet another Herod heard the Gospel directly from Paul but turned deliberately back to his sins.

“Joseph—The Coronation of the Church”

*Heb 11:22 **By faith Joseph**, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.*

There are 3 types of the bride of Christ represented in *Genesis* in conjunction with Joseph:

- Creation of the church in *Eve*.
- Calling of the church in *Rebekah*.
- Coronation of the church in *Asenath*.

Joseph wound up the number two man in all of Egypt after all his suffering and he was given a Gentile bride by Pharaoh—the daughter of a pagan priest.

*Gen 41:45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife **Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On**. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.*

But the story is so taken up with Joseph that we fail to pay attention to Asenath, who was no doubt brought up as a devout pagan. But her pagan past is completely blotted out by the Holy Spirit; it's been covered up in Scripture.

Asenath is a beautiful picture of the bride of Christ. On the Day of Pentecost the “church” suddenly breaks into history just like Asenath. Taken out of obscurity the church had no past, only a glorious future. Asenath came from obscurity to share the honor bestowed upon Joseph. She was seated with him in “high places” but not because of her own merit. It was because her life had been sovereignly linked with his.

Rejected by Israel Joseph took to himself an elect family and Asenath gave him two sons:

- *Manasseh*—the first; “forgetful.”

- *Ephraim*—the second; “fruitful.”

And when his family was complete the “famine” came, and when Christ’s family is complete the Great Tribulation will come. It will be a tribulation that, like the famine that drove Joseph’s family to him, will drive Israel to Jesus. In Joseph, Israel was back in the land and today the heavenly family is just about complete, and that means that famine is just around the corner—Jacob’s Trouble lies directly ahead.

“Moses—Lived by Faith Daily”

*Heb 11:23-29 **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. 24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. 28 Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. 29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.*

Moses and the people were in the desert and no doubt he spent some sleepless nights wondering what was he going to do with them; what God was going to do? They had to be fed, and feeding 2 or 3 million people require a lot of food. Here are some interesting facts (or thoughts) that I found posted on the Internet and—accuracy aside—they certainly make the point.

- According to the Quartermaster General in the Army, it is reported that Moses would have to have had 1,500 tons of food each day. To bring that much food each day, two

freight trains, each at least a mile long, would be required!

- Besides you must remember, they were out in the desert, so they would have to have firewood to use in cooking the food. This would take 4,000 tons of wood and a few more freight trains, each a mile long, just for one day.
- And just think, they were forty years in transit.
- And Oh yes! They would have to have water. If they only had enough to drink and wash a few dishes, it would take 11,000,000 gallons each day and a freight train with tank cars, 1,800 miles long, just to bring water!
- And then another thing! They had to get across the Red Sea at night. Now, if they went on a narrow path, double file, the line would be 800 miles long and would require 35 days and nights to get through. So there had to be a space in the Red Sea, 3 miles wide so that they could walk 5,000 abreast to get over in one night.
- But then, there is another problem... each time they camped at the end of the day, a campground two-thirds the size of the state of Rhode Island was required, or a total of 750 square miles long. Think of it! This much space for camping.

Moses didn't work this all out before he left Egypt. The point is he believed and trusted in God. As a result, God took care of these things for him. Now do you think God has any problem taking care of all your needs? *When the road you're traveling seems difficult at best, just remember, keep on praying, and God will do the rest.*

“Rahab—Faith That “Works”

*Heb 11:30-31 **By faith the walls of Jericho fell down**, after they were compassed about seven days. 31 **By faith the harlot Rahab***

perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Rahab was a Canaanite—a prostitute—and she lived a perfectly acceptable lifestyle in their perverted culture. In fact her occupation was endorsed by society. She lived a lot like our times in America with our so called “alternate lifestyles.” But she is also a perfect example of what James said; it’s faith plus works, a faith that works and a faith that believes.

Jericho was surrounded by two walls that were 30 feet high. The outer wall was 27 feet thick and the inner wall was 12 feet thick. There was 15 feet between the two walls and that space was covered with houses bridging the two walls; that’s where Rahab lived. This is where many live today. They imagine themselves very secure in their world of man-made walls (their own religion, righteousness and respectability). Many of them are baptized members of a church that read their Bibles and pray and give to charity; “their unassailable walls.”

Rahab looked down from her window at the river Jordan—“the river of death”—and imagined she was safe where she lived. But she lived within sight of death and so do we today. She knew that everyone in Jericho was doomed. She was convicted by the work of the Holy Spirit and she did something about it; she was lost and admitted her condition. The problem today is that many make professions of faith with the conviction of sin but they are without genuine conversion to Christ. And the fault lies directly at the feet of the bride of Christ.

God sent “two” spies to Jericho just like he does to all sinners:

- *Conscience* – to rebuke us for our sin
- *Memory* – to remind us of our sin

And we stand between the two, fully exposed before God and faced with the same five facts that Rahab faced:

1. She couldn't save herself; there was no place to hide.
2. Jericho was shut up and she could not leave.
3. Any thought of salvation was actively discouraged by those who ruled over her.
4. She recognized that salvation had to come from the outside.
5. Salvation had to come from those she was taught were the enemy.

Nothing has changed today and the world's only salvation is to make the same response that Rahab did:

*Josh 2:8-11 And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; 9 And she said unto the men, **I know that the Lord hath given you the land,** and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. 10 For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon **as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you:** for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.*

She asked for a true token and a scarlet cord was given. It was to Rahab what blood on the doorposts was to Israel and the Cross is to the bride—*when I see the blood I will pass over you*. She believed and stood in faith and took action—*Faith + Works* (faith that works and belief that believes).

*Josh 2:21 And she said, **According unto your words, so be it.** And she sent them away, and they departed: and **she bound the scarlet line in the window.***

But she not only acted for herself, she reached out and her family was saved. Opportunity in the form of the Holy Spirit may only knock once. The world has no promise that it will hear the Gospel over and over with plenty of time to respond. America “has” clearly heard the

Gospel but she is still not desperate. She is comfortable in her “material world” but that is about to change if the 21st century is any indication. America needs to follow Rahab’s example and develop faith that works—she needs to believe, confess, repent and take action. In the end Rahab rested in the promises of God and as a result she married Salmon and became the mother of Boaz, standing directly in the line to David and Jesus; her faith forever memorialized in Scripture.

For the bride of Christ the message is a clear one. There is a totally lost world around her without hope and she lives in that world, filled with hope. The challenge and the opportunity to share that hope stand before her but if she continues to “sleep,” both she and the world will be the loser.

“Gideon—Faith in the Wrong Place”

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: 33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 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.

Midianites were relatives of Israel, descended from Abraham by Keturah, whom he married after Sarah’s death. They were Abraham’s natural seed and Israel was his spiritual seed. They were merchants that lived hand-in-hand with the Ishmaelites; Midian was a brother of Ishmael. It was the Midianites who bought Joseph for 20 pieces of silver, doing to Joseph what Judas did to Christ.

And as a result of their continued unbelief God turned Israel over to the Midianites who reduced Israel to a state of begging. Midian (a type of the world) and Amalek (a type of the flesh) would wait for Israel to bring in their new crops and then they would descend and steal it:

*Judg 6:5-6 For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and **they came as grasshoppers for multitude**; for both they and their camels were without number: and **they entered into the land to destroy it**. 6 And **Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites**; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.*

And that is where God found Gideon—thrashing wheat in the wine press so the Midianites wouldn't see him and come and steal the grain. We find Midianites in our churches claiming to be true relation to God's people; true heirs of the promises. They are in the pulpits, on deacon boards, on staff, teachers and administrators. But they are there for one reason only; it pays. It's all about money and power and, sadly, we see their impact on our children.

JB Phillips: *Just when we think that all the sowing and watering and cultivating and toiling we have done is about to bring us a harvest—Midian comes, the world comes and the harvest is stolen away from us in our very own homes before our eyes. The first scoffing professor they meet on the college campus is all it takes. The first immoral young man or young woman they meet is all it takes. The first real taste of the world with its “lust of the eye” and its “lust of the flesh” and its “pride of life”— and off they go. “He was saved when he was 3” is the only consolation some people have.”*

So there was Gideon, thrashing in the winepress, fearful, afraid, defeated, and hiding. Yet God had something to say to him. Far too many of the bride are cowering down in their winepress today and God has a word for them as well.

*Judg 6:12 The Lord is with thee, **thou mighty man of valor**.*

We need to understand that is how Jesus sees His bride. She is not only beautiful she is “militant” (see my book *The Doorway To Rest*). God has a plan for her but it takes faith to execute it just like it took Gideon's faith to destroy his father's idol. In fact, God told him to

destroy the whole town. No matter what the cost he was to cut it down and build an altar to the Lord.

It was the beginning—one act of faith—and the Midianites knew it before Israel did. Immediately the Midianites and the Amalekites mobilized to come against Israel—the “world and the flesh” don’t give up easily. And where was the battle to be fought? In the valley of Jezreel, exactly where the battle of Armageddon will be fought.

Gideon had faith but he made two mistakes, the same two we often make:

1. *He looked for human support*—Rather than standing in faith, “*calling those things that are not as though they were*” (Rom 4:17), he reached out in the natural instead of relying on the spiritual.
2. *He questioned God*—We make that mistake all too often by “putting out the fleece.” When we ask for signs we weaken our faith. A faith that depends on signs will soon want more and more signs.

God had His plan and it was designed to ensure that only He got the glory. The message for the bride is to remember that Satan can always gather more than we can. For Gideon 32,000 soon became 10,000 and God said: “still too many.” Those who bent down on their knees to drink were more concerned with their physical needs than about the enemy; God sent them home. And when there were only 300 God had him send down spies to find out how bad the situation really was and to learn how God had put fear of Gideon into the enemy. Then God moved with pots and candles and trumpets and it was a rout!

God’s enemies are all around the bride: the powers of darkness can be found in seminaries, pulpits, churches, government, education, commerce, etc. But like Gideon, the bride has “her light” and her “clarion call”—the light of her bridegroom that always drives out darkness. Her fight is with darkness and it will continue until Jesus

returns. So, the lesson of Gideon is to remember that Satan's numbers don't mean anything to God.

- If we think the enemy is too strong to be overthrown—God says he isn't.
- If we think we have to put up with the enemy stealing our harvest—God says we don't.
- If we think seeking signs is a healthy spiritual condition—God says they aren't.
- If we think the discouragement, defeat and destitution we find in our homes and churches is without some explanation in our own neglect of the Spirit of God and the Word of God—God says it isn't.
- If we think we can expect God to bless us when we tolerate in our own homes things which give the enemy hold over us—God says we can't.

Gideon was a hero but remember that while he started out in faith he wound up in the flesh. That is the story of many of the bride today.

“Barak—Weak Faith”

Judges 4-5

In Barak's day the Canaanites had come back into the north stronger than ever and there was no Joshua to fight the battle. In the North was a Levitical city of refuge—Kedesh Naphtali—and there we find Barak, whose name means “to bless.”

He was the son of Abinoam (father of pleasantness) and is the only Barak mentioned in the Bible. He was chosen by God to deliver Israel out of the bondage of the Canaanites. But at that time the only person in touch with God was a prophetess named Deborah, and she judged Israel for a time. God told her to call on Barak.

When a woman is in charge of spiritual things—taking the lead—something is out of place because that's not God's order. But this isn't an indictment of women; it is an indictment of men who should take the leadership of God's people as He commanded. God didn't commission Deborah to fight—she was to train Barak because he was fearful of man.

Judg 4:6-9 And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? 7 And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. 8 And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. 9 And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honor; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

But Barak wouldn't go into battle alone, he would only go if Deborah would go with him. She agreed but told him that he wouldn't get credit for the victory, a woman would. She went along with Barak's weak faith believing that weak faith was better than none at all. However, she told him that his weak faith was dishonoring to God.

Paul did the same thing. Out of fear he played the "Roman citizen" card to avoid trial by the Jewish High priest and the leaders. God had told him that he was to go to Rome but he jumped ahead of God's timing and instead of Caesar he got Nero. And on top of that, King Agrippa affirmed Paul's innocence. One wonders what new continents might Paul have opened up to the Gospel if he hadn't weakened in his faith?

But Barak was a faithful man. He had his 10,000 and he thundered into battle and God provided some kind of natural disaster to help him defeat the 900 chariots of Jabin. Deborah tells us:

Judg 5:19-21 The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money. 20 They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera. 21 The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

The Kishon River overflowed its banks and the chariots of Jabin were swept away. Later Sisera was searching for Barak and he came into the Kenite camp and Jael, the wife of Heber, called him into her tent. This was an absolute no-no in the culture; it was death for both if they were caught. He entered and begged for something to drink and went to sleep. Then Jael grabbed a tent peg and a hammer and pounded it through his head into the ground and Deborah's prophecy was fulfilled; a woman got credit for the victory. What did God have to say?

Judg 5:24-27 Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent. 25 He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish. 26 She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples. 27 At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

So what's the lesson for the bride from Barak? Error is almost always an intellectual thing; something conceived in the mind. The only solution is not make excuses for it, don't accommodate it, don't feed it, just nail it to the ground. But that takes courage and conviction. Remember, if a man won't do it God will find a Godly, faith-filled woman to do it.

In the end, all the tribes were brought before Deborah to be rewarded or rebuked for what they did in the battle. This is a perfect type of the Judgment Seat of Christ—*Judges 5*. Debora rewarded Ephraim, Benjamin, Machir, Zebulon and Naphtali. She rebuked Reuben (he was

among the sheepfolds); Gilead (he was beyond the Jordan); Dan (he remained in ships—“he had gone fishing”); Asher (he was on vacation at the beach) and Meroz (they commanded the pass and could have stopped Sisera). God cursed those who did not come to help Barak.

As the bride of Christ, all of us will be judged for what we did when the call to battle came. Will we be found taking care of business like Reuben; staying in the comfort of home like Gilead; fishing like Dan; on vacation like Asher; or sleeping on duty like Meroz?

The answer has huge repercussions.

Heb 11:35-40 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 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; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 12

So the Answer is That We Need to Run the Race

Heb 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

“Great Cloud of Witnesses”—These are the ones who have gone on before us that have given us a great witness of faith in the Hall of Faith.

“Lay Aside Every Weight and the Sin Which Doth So Easily Beset Us”

Eph 4:21-32 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may

minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And **grieve not the holy Spirit of God**, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 **Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice**: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

“Run With Patience”

1 Peter 1:13-16 Wherefore **gird up the loins of your mind**, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 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.

Heb 12:2-4 **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**. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, **lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds**. 4 **Ye have not yet resisted unto blood**, striving against sin.
“The Author and Finisher of Our Faith”

John 17:12-19 While I was with them in the world, I **kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost**, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that **thou shouldest keep them from the evil**. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of

the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

“Endured The Cross”—Our high priest who was once sacrificed for all time and all people, who is now sitting at God’s right hand because His work is finished.

“Lest Ye Be Wearied and Faint in Your Minds”

*Matt 24:4-13 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye **be not troubled**: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But **he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.***

The mind is the battle ground for the war of the soul that rages between our spirit and our old nature.

“Not Yet Resisted Unto Blood”—This is a prophetic word of what was to come.

*Heb 12:5-11 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:** 6 For **whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth** every son whom he receiveth. 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.** 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? 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. 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.

“Ye Have Forgotten the Exhortation”—This is a correction.

*Rev 16:11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and **repented not of their deeds.***

“Chastening Of the Lord”—This in the letter to Sardus:

*Rev 3:19 **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten:** be zealous therefore, and repent.*

“Faint”—This in the letter to Ephesus:

*Rev 2:3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and **hast not fainted.***

“Chasten and Scourge”

1 Peter 5:9-10 Whom resist steadfast 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.

“Endure”

James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

“Chastisement Whereof Are All “partakers”—This speaks to both partakers “in” and partakers “of” of Christ. He doesn’t chastise those who are not His children.

“The Purpose of Chastisement”—It’s painful at the time but it’s like the grapevine, you need to prune it to get more and better fruit; fruit that is to the bride’s benefit.

Heb 12:12-17 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and 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. 14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 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; 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his 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.

“Lift up the Hands”—Praise, worship and thanksgiving are the cure for a feeble soul.

“Make the Straight Path”—When we wander we fall into sickness of the soul and sometimes of the body. Don’t detour into the world;

remember what happened to Lot. All our healing is on the straight path, the path that leads to the Holiest Place.

“Peace With All Men And Holiness”

- Peace

James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

- Holiness

1 Peter 1:16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

“Fail of the Grace of God—Root of Bitterness—Defiled “—Don’t drift from the Holiest Place, it’s a slide that may not stop:

Ps 109 – David’s cry for grace in the midst of persecution and bitterness.

Gen 4:8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

James 3:6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

James 3:16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

“Esau—No Place of Repentance”—He sold his spiritual blessing for a piece of the world and suffered the “spiritual loss.” He lost a blessing

he couldn't get back. Isaac could not repent of the blessing he gave Jacob, no matter how much Esau pleaded with him or Isaac wanted to.

*Heb 12:18-21 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, 19 And the sound of a trumpet, and **the voice of words**; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: 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: 21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)*

“The Voice of Words”—This is speaking of the Old Testament, the first covenant, the Law.

Ex 19:19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

*Heb 12:22-24 But **ye are come unto mount Sion**, and unto the city of the living God, **the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to an innumerable company of angels, 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, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

“The New Testament”—The second covenant; grace.

- Mount Sion
- City of the living God
- The heavenly Jerusalem

“God the Judge of All”

2 Peter 3:17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

Heb 12:25-29 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: 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. 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. 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: 29 For our God is a consuming fire.

The shaking has begun and the question at hand for the bride is, what will she find standing when it's done? What in her life can't be shaken? The bride is expected to have much that cannot be shaken and will stand till the end—to be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

HEBREWS

CHAPTER 13

The Final Exam

*Heb 13:1-4 **Let brotherly love continue.** 2 **Be not forgetful to entertain strangers:** for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. 3 **Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them;** and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. 4 **Marriage is honorable in all,** and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*

The first 12 chapters compose doctrine and deal with the fundamental truths of the Word. Here in Chapter 13, at the end of the course in spiritual maturity, we get our final exam.

“Let Brotherly Love Continue”—Has your brotherly love continued? The answer to all the other questions depends on your answer to this one just as everything in the Gospel depends on love.

“Entertain Strangers”—How is your hospitality; verse 2.

“Bound with Them”—How is your sympathy; verse 3

“Marriage is Honorable”—How is your home life; verse 4.

*Heb 13:5-6 **Let your conversation be without covetousness;** and **be content with such things as ye have:** for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

“Without Covetousness”—How is your contentment and courage; verses 5-6. A great place to reflect on this is *Matt 6*. And note here that it’s important that verse 5 must precede verse 6. We are commanded not to covet and to be content.

1 Peter 3:12-13 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. 13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

*Heb 13:7 **Remember them which have the rule over you**, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

“Remember Them Which Have the Rule Over You”—How’s your intercession; verse 7. This isn’t speaking of the government, it refers to church leaders.

*Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ the same **yesterday, today and forever**.*

What an awesome statement about the surety of our bridegroom; the immutability of Christ.

*James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, **with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning**.*

*Heb 13:9-12 **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. 10 **We have an altar**, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. 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. 12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

“Divers And Strange Doctrines”—How’s your stability and you conviction; verse 9. False teaching in the form of cults, the Emergent Church or the Missional Movement or any doctrine that is not true to the person and work of Christ is strange or alien

2 Peter 2:1-3 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 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.

“Not With Meats”—For the bride these are the sacrifices to the world’s system she is constantly tempted to make. This is setting aside Christ for comfort, power, money, influence, etc. The antidote to “meats” is the “Word.”

“We Have an altar”—The first covenant (Law) has been abolished and works has no place in the second covenant (Grace). The bride’s altar is the communion table and she can only come to it under the blood of her bridegroom, not by her works.

“Suffered Without the Gate”—This points to suffering outside of the Law—in the place of grace. It was through grace that we came as a rejected sinner.

Heb 13:13-17 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. 14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. 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. 16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. 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.

“Without The Camp, Bearing His Reproach”

1 Peter 4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

Life is brief and we have no home here in the world because we too live “without the camp.” We wander in tabernacles as did Christ. Jesus is still “without the camp” and that is where we will find Him. Organized “religion” is no different than the “temple,” and we need to separate ourselves from everything that denies the fundamental truth of the Word of God. This is our walk, our sanctification, our *ketubah*.

“Sacrifice of Praise”—This is our daily walk, the fruit of our lips, our testimony and it’s our sacrifice because faithfulness to Christ costs us something. Is praise just glib singing of a chorus or hours spent in His presence? Is praise a thoughtless line or two or the voice of testimony to the glory of God at home, work or at play?

“Giving Thanks to His Name—Do Good and Communicate”—Communicate in the Greek is *koinonia* and it means fellowship or communion. It’s all about sharing what you have with others and sharing

yourself with Jesus—*Jas 2:14-16*.

“Obey Them”—Respect those in authority that watch over your soul. Your shepherd is responsible for you and will have to give an account to Christ one day for how well he did.

*Heb 13:18-25 **Pray for us:** for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.¹⁹ But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner. 20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that **great shepherd of the sheep,** through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 **Make you perfect in every good work to do his will,** working in you that which is well **pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ;** to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. 22 And I beseech you, brethren, **suffer the word of exhortation:** for I have written a letter unto you in few words. 23 Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. 24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. 25 Grace be with you all. Amen.*

“Prayer”—Nothing hinders prayer more than a guilty conscience from dishonesty.

“Great Shepherd”

*1 Peter 2:25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto **the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.***

“Make You Perfect”

*James 1:4 But let patience have her **perfect work,** that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

“Pleasing in Gods Sight Through Jesus Christ”

1 John 3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

“Suffer The Word of Exhortation”—The message has not changed but in many of our “Laodicean” churches, where grace is popular, the responsibilities that go along with it are not. We hear little about the Cross, sin and the blood of Christ. What we do hear about are receiving our rewards, but unfortunately nothing about the “loss” of rewards because of unbelief, self-gratification and failure to submit to the teaching and correction of the Holy Spirit.

To Sum It All Up

We have covered a lot here as we explored Paul’s words and there are certainly lessons for us in every verse if we will just pause and let the Holy Spirit reveal them to us. Perhaps, in looking for a bottom line, we might sum the message of *Hebrews* up with the admonition that the bride must wake up and be about what is required of her during her betrothal. She is to be the Church at Philadelphia and not the Church at Laodicea. She is to be alive and vibrant in the world and not just another political, humanitarian force that has compromised her values with the world. She carries the only hope a lost world has and she needs to be about her responsibilities in the Kingdom of God. She has a unique and individual calling that is intended to impact the lives of those around her and bring glory and honor to her bridegroom.

That message goes to the heart of every member of the bride. We will see how hard the enemy works at foiling her progress to spiritual maturity as we move into the messages of warning and love that were delivered to us by no one other than our bridegroom (*The Battle For Rest*). The first 3 chapters of the Book of Revelation may well be the most important chapters in that book. Certainly they should impact the

life of all those who call themselves the bride of Christ. Time is growing short and that day is quickly approaching when we will be called to give account of what we did with what we were given. Let none of the bride stand before Him ... *“yet so as by fire.”*

OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

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The Doorway To Rest—The Brides’ Invitation... When we consider Solomon’s Song—the love relationship he had with one of his wives—we can easily see the relationship between Christ and His bride portrayed. And that relationship has been portrayed in many ways. Think of the “sun’s” relationship with the moon being like our relationship with the “Son.” This book is a detailed, verse by verse study of the *Song of Solomon*, revealing the true view of bride of Christ through the eyes of the bridegroom and a life changing view of the bridegroom through the eyes of the bride.

The Pathway To Rest—The Brides’ Purpose... As we looked at the message of the *Song of Solomon* we were given a clear picture of not only who our bridegroom is, but equally important how He sees us and how we should see Him. His invitation opened the doorway to His Rest and now, as we walk out the days of our *ketubah*—our betrothal—we need to find out what that means and what it entails along the pathway to His Rest. For that we turn to the book of *Hebrews*, where we learn through each verse what sewing our wedding dress means and how important it is for us to be ready and watching for His soon return as we move up the path to spiritual maturity.

The Dangers To Rest—The Bride’s Warning... We have been inundated with not the shout of triumph but the incessant worldly scream of pending disaster. The country’s economics have been turned

upside down and fear and panic have grabbed the headlines as the Middle East falls into chaos. The news is full of rampant pandemics, meteorological disasters, hopeless individuals committing tragic acts and families destroyed. And sadly, the majority of the bride of Christ is not prepared for His return. We have allowed the world and its supreme ruler to distract us from the path the lies in front of us. Now He has finally released me to write this verse-by-verse study out of the book of *Revelation* that He put on my heart 18 years ago concerning His letters that not only deal with why He is coming back but also what we, His bride, are supposed to be doing and not doing as we wait and watch.

The Battle For Rest—The Bride’s Armor... Spiritual warfare is a war between the forces of God and the forces of rebellion led by Satan. And the bride is engaged in this spiritual war between light and darkness, good and evil, Heaven and Hell and Christ and Satan. But sadly, many aren’t even aware of the fact that they are in a spiritual battle every day of their life. As believing Christians we’re in a grim conflict and not on a worldly cruise ship or a showboat; it’s a battleship. It is a fight to the finish with no holds barred and we can’t be neutral and we can’t call a truce. And this war is a personal one; very personal. In this book we have taken a detailed verse-by-verse study of the part of the book of *Ephesians* that deals with the enemy, his strategies and his goals and most importantly the battle orders we have been given from our commander-in-chief to ensure victory over those personal strongholds the enemy has established in our lives.

Walk With God—The Way Of Enoch... In this series I have attempted to open the door to a solid study of our foundation by looking at our Walk With God in eight volumes. Each volume takes a look at a key fundamental part of our walk. They were written with the goal of challenging the bride of Christ to firm up her underpinning and step into the Spirit-filled, victorious and abundant life that Jesus has for her. And to accomplish that we need to draw near to Him through the leading of the Holy Spirit. Our Christian life should be spent with Jesus where He is now, in the Holiest Place. It’s there that we will find His mercy and grace in the power of His blood. This series explores the foundation and sound

scriptural doctrine that underlies God's plan for our lives. It is a journey beginning with learning who God really is and culminating with discovering how we are to walk out a loving and obedient relationship with our Creator.

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