

ENTERING THE HOLY OF HOLIES

a verse-by-verse exposition of
the Book of Hebrews

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"THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SON!"



TEXT: Hebrews 1:1-3

THESIS: To praise the Lord for Who He is and what He has done!

INTRO: A. In **verses 1 and 2** there is a contrast between the old and new revelations. The "old" revelation came in bits and pieces over centuries. The "new" revelation came in completion in the Son of God. In **verses 2 and 3** another contrast is seen. Here the contrast is not between the 2 revelations, but between the recipients of the revelation of the past ("unto the fathers by the prophets") and the nature and character of the new Revelation Himself, the Son. The thesis here is **"THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SON"!** over the prophets.

B. These two verses contain three pronouns ("*whom*", "*whom*" and "*who*") which present a series of seven statements setting forth **"THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SON"**.

NEW TESTAMENT Throughout the book of Hebrews this "SUPERIORITY OF THE SON" will be documented. These two verses and their seven statements set the tone for this thesis and summarize Jesus' superiority. **CHRIST IS SEEN AS...**

I. THE CLIMAX OF ALL REVELATION: V. 2a

A. The prophets spoke the Word of God, Christ IS the Word of God:

1. God's revelation of Himself became visible, tangible and personal at His Incarnation.
2. He Who was always the Logos (Word) became intelligible to man. **John 1:18**
3. The apostles and their associates penned the remainder of God's revelation, but Christ anticipated the canon by His promise that His Spirit would remind, teach and guide them in its production.

B. The prophets were vehicles to record God's Word, Christ is the Embodiment of the Word:

1. He did not become the Word of God because God spoke in Him,
2. He always was the absolute expression of Deity - the Living word of God.

II. THE HEIR OF ALL THINGS: V. 2b

A. The first Adam lost dominion over God's creation:

B. The Second Adam will regain that dominion:

1. Christ is the designated "Heir Of All Things".
2. The psalmist records the offer of the Father to the Son in **Psalm 2:7-8**.
3. The apostle John records the claim of the title deed of the universe by the Son from the Father's hand in the seven-sealed scroll in **Revelation 5:1-14**.

ILLUS: In New Testament times Roman law required a will to be sealed seven times. In **Revelation 6**, the Great Tribulation begins and one-by-one the seven seals of God's title deed are broken and Christ regains more and more of His purchased possession till at last the seventh seal is broken and the seventh trumpet sounds and the earth is His again! Then He shares His possession with all of His "joint-heirs"----believers! We will never be joint-Christ or joint-Gods, but we will be joint-Heirs!

III. THE CREATOR OF ALL WORLDS: V. 2c

A. He created more than JUST planet earth:

B. He created all the "worlds":

1. This word is not "kosmos" but "aion" which goes beyond the physical universe and includes time, space, energy and matter.
2. He created every thing and entity that exists and did so without effort or diminishing Himself or His power--He simply spoke!

ILLUS: Sir John Nichols, Nobel Laureate in neurophysiology, said in Chicago in 1968, that the odds against the right combination of circumstances occurring to have evolved intelligent life on earth are about 400,000 trillion trillion, trillion, trillion, to one. After admitting that, he said he believed nevertheless that it did occur! This unscientific logic demonstrates the dilemma of humanistic science. Without a Creator there is no logical or scientific explanation for our intricate, immeasurable universe

IV. THE RADIATOR OF ALL GLORY: V. 3a

A. The Son is like the sun:

1. The brightness of the sun is not the sun.
2. The radiance of the Son is the glory and holiness that emanates from His person, e.g. the Transfiguration.

B. The Son is like God:

1. The brightness issuing from the Son is the same nature as the Son.
2. The Son is all that God the Father is.

V. THE EXPRESSION OF ALL THAT GOD IS: V. 3b

A. He is an Exact Copy of God:

1. The Greek word is "*charakter*" and is only used here in the New Testament.
2. The "express image" then means He has the exact character of Deity.

B. He is the Same Person as God:

1. The Greek word is "*hupostasis*" and means "to stand under" or the foundation.
2. Here it means the Divine Nature "stands under" or is fundamental and foundational to the Being of God and His Son.

Yet thousands upon thousands, probably millions, of men somehow believe that man emerged out of some primeval slime. The wondrous creature of man just evolved- that wondrous creature whose heart beats 800 million times in a normal lifetime and pumps enough blood to fill a string of tank cars running from Boston to New York; that same man whose tiny cubic half-inch section of brain cells contains all the memories of a lifetime; that same man whose ear transfers sound waves from air to liquid without losing any sound. He is thought to be a cosmic accident!

A.K. Morrison, another brilliant scientist, tells us that conditions for life on earth demand so many billions of minute interrelated circumstances appearing simultaneously, in the same infinitesimal moment, that such a prospect becomes beyond belief and beyond possibility.

Consider the vastness of our universe. If you could somehow put 1.2 million earths inside the sun, you would have room left for 4.3 million moons. The sun is 865,000 miles in diameter and is 93 million miles from the earth. Our next nearest star, Alpha Centauri, is 5 times larger than our sun. The moon is only 211,463 miles away and you could walk to it in 27 years. A ray of light would reach the moon in only 1-1/2 seconds. If we could travel at that speed, it would take 2 minutes and 18 seconds to reach Venus, 4-1/2 minutes to reach Mercury, 1 hour and 11 seconds to reach Saturn, and so on. To reach Pluto, 2.7 billion miles from earth, would take nearly 4 hours. Having gotten that far, we would still be well inside our own solar system. The North Star is four hundred billion miles away, but is still nearby in relation even to known space. The star Betelgeuse is 880 quadrillion miles (880 followed by fifteen zeroes) from us. It has a diameter of 250 million miles, which is greater than that of the earth's orbit.

Where did it all come from? Who conceived it? Who made it? It cannot be an accident. Some-Body had to make it, and the Bible tells us the Maker was Jesus Christ.

NOTE: It seems that the writer here ransacks human language and expression to set forth the "SUPER-IORITY OF THE SON" and the glories of His majestic Person. In staccato-like fashion, he declares, one-after-another yet another facet of this perfect diamond we know as the Christ. The Climax of all revelation, the Heir of all things, the Creator of all worlds, the Radiator of all glory, the Expression of all that God is...

If you want to know what God is like- LOOK AT CHRIST.

ILLUS: THE FRESCO AND THE MIRROR

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son... being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.... (Hebrews 1:2,3)

In the city of Rome there is a splendid palace in which may be seen Guido Reni's famous fresco, "The Aurora." It is said to be a work unequalled for its nobility of conception and magnificence of color. Its lines flow like poetry and its beauty is breathtaking; yet the fact that it is painted on a high ceiling makes it difficult to appreciate. They say that as you stand on the pavement and look up at it your neck stiffens, your head grows dizzy, and the exquisite figures in the fresco become hazy and indistinct. The ones in charge of the palace have therefore placed a broad mirror near the floor in such a way that it reflects the masterpiece above. It is therefore possible now for visitors to sit down at a table and at their leisure look into the mirror and enjoy all the intricate artistry of the fresco on the ceiling. Because of this handy arrangement, the masterpiece can be studied in comfort. All straining and dizziness is avoided; yet every minute detail is clearly reflected. In the same manner the Lord Jesus- being the "**express image**" of the invisible God (**Col. 1:15**)- manifests the Father to us in a way that is both distinct and lovely. The glory of the Divine nature is wondrously revealed to our eyes in the attitudes, actions, and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. (For a better understanding of this truth, read Jesus' own words concerning it in **John 17.**) As one expositor has written: "Christ interprets God to our dull hearts, for in Him the attributes of divinity become visible and intelligible to us."

Do you want to know and understand God better? Then read the Gospels and see the Savior in action. His self-sacrificing life and death, His matchless words, and His faultless conduct warmly portray the mind and heart of God!

***Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus,
I've lost sight of all beside;
So enchained my spirit's vision,
Looking at the Crucified! -Anon.***

He is the DIVINE FRESCO or, more literally, the engraving of God ("*charakter*"). The word means both the tool used to make the engraving and the engraving itself. An illustration would be the plate of pure gold on the mitre of the High Priest, upon which was engraved "**Holiness unto the Lord.**" God's image is now to be seen in His Son, Who is absolute holiness.

NOTE: This image was not stamped upon Him at His Incarnation when He entered our world as a virgin-born babe, for He is not a created god - He IS God, the Son of the Father, "**the Express Image of His Person**" - the engraving of God.

VI. THE GOVERNOR OF ALL CREATION: V. 3c

A. He Upholds His Creation:

1. The word "upholding" (*pheron*) implies not only support, but direction or movement toward a goal.
2. He will bring things and persons to their proper end.

QUOTE: "Not as an atlas with the world or universe as a dead weight upon His shoulders, who merely keeps all things from seeking into nothingness; He bears all things so that His will and purpose are fulfilled." -Lanski

B. He Sustains His Creation:

We base our entire lives on the continuance, the constancy, of laws. When something such as an earthquake comes along and disrupts the normal condition or operation of things even a little, the consequences are often disastrous. Can you imagine what would happen if Jesus Christ relinquished His sustaining power over the laws of the universe? We would go out of existence. If He suspended the law of gravity only for a brief moment, we would all perish in unimaginable ways.

If the physical laws varied, we would have an unbelievable mess. We could not exist. What we ate could turn to poison. We could not stay on the earth; we would drift out into space. We would get flooded by the oceans periodically. Countless other horrible things would happen, many of which we could not even guess.

Consider, for example, what instant destruction would happen if the earth's rotation slowed down just a little. The sun has a surface temperature of 12,000+ degrees Fahrenheit. If it were any closer to us we would burn up; if it were any farther away we would freeze. Our globe is tilted on an exact angle of 23 degrees, providing us with four seasons. If it were not so tilted, vapors from the oceans would move north and south and develop into monstrous continents of ice. If the moon did not retain its exact distance from the earth the ocean tides would inundate the land completely, twice a day. After the first flooding, of course, the others would not matter as far as we would be concerned. If the ocean floors were merely a few feet deeper than they are, the carbon dioxide and oxygen balance of the earth's atmosphere would be completely upset, and no animal or plant life could exist. If the atmosphere did not remain at its present density, but thinned out even a little, many of the meteors which now harmlessly burn up when they hit the atmosphere would constantly bombard us. We would have to live underground or in meteor proof buildings.

1. His vehicle? **"The Word of His Power!"**
2. When Christ speaks, the physical universe responds.

VII. THE REDEEMER OF ALL BELIEVERS: V. 3d

A. He did it "By Himself" (There was no other qualified)

B. He did it "For Himself" (For His own glorification)

C. He did it "For Others"

NOTE: The Old Testament sacrifices were like a promissory note, advantageous only because the wealth of God, expressed **in the blood** of Christ, was behind it.

1. Christ is our purgatory...not future, but past...not by fire, but **by blood!**
2. His redemption purged men from the practice, pollution and penalty of their sins...they simply **accept and believe.**

CONCL: THE FINISHER OF ALL SYMBOLS: v. 3e

A. The priests in the Old Testament could never sit because their work was never done.

B. The absence of seats indicated men could never sit (Rest in the presence of a Holy God)

NOTE: Angels and men **stand** before the throne. The Son **sits**, not in idleness, but in active power and rule!

1. He was seated to demonstrate the finality of His finished work.
2. He was seated to symbolize His authority.

NOTE: Because of His **accepted** sacrifice, He was now in a place where He could receive the glory the Father bestowed on Him because of His **obedience** (not His essential glory).

3. He was seated to intercede for us.

NOTE: PRAISE GOD for our WONDERFUL SAVIOR and His COMPLETED Redemption!!! TO GOD BE THE GLORY!!

The song "**He is the King**" summarizes the teaching of this passage in its chorus:

**He is the King of every nation,
He is the Lord of all creation,
And He's the hope of our salvation,
Jesus, was, is and shall ever be.**

"ABOVE ANGELS"



TEXT: Hebrews 1:4-8

THESIS: To show the superiority of Christ over the angels.

INTRO: A. After the opening barrage in verse 2, demonstrating the Person and work of Christ, Who He is and what He has done, it hardly seems necessary to show His superiority to the angelic hosts. But that's exactly what the writer does. Why?!

B. There are over 100 references to angels in the Old Testament. They were created before man, their number is perhaps in the trillions, they are powerful, immortal and awesome. They are God's messengers and sometimes man's servants. They travel at incredible speed, are sometimes dazzling in their brightness, and at other times appear as mere men. They were God's executioners, protectors, helpers, and witnesses. They do God's bidding and guard God's children. They are invisible, extra-terrestrial creatures who inhabit heaven, surround God's throne and travel through space to earth for whatever God desires.

ILLUS: Rabbinical tradition added to biblical revelation concerning these fantastic beings. They assigned 200 angels to control the stars, another angel to oversee the calendar, others to superintend the seas, wind, frost, snow, hail, thunder and lightning; still others were wardens of hell and torturers of the damned. One Rabbi claimed every blade of grass had an angel.

NEW TESTAMENT: Paul, writing to Jews, knew how they had exalted angels and so begins to reveal that Christ is "**better than the angels**". In v. 4ff he quotes the Old Testament Scriptures no less than 10 times to show that Jesus is "**ABOVE ANGELS**"...

I. HE HAS A BETTER NAME (SONSHIP): V. 4-5

A. A Name and Its Symbolism:

1. Biblically and Hebraically a name is not just a designation whereby one is called or known.
2. It is everything that name embraces: character, rank, authority, fame, etc.

ILLUS: A name was more like what we would consider a title, e.g. King, President, etc.

B. His Name and His Sonship:

1. His Name is *"more excellent"* than Gabriel or Michael.
2. His Name is an *"inheritance"* from the Father.
3. His Name is simply *"Son"* here, later the Son is designated *"Jesus"*. (2:9)

NOTE: Paul knows of their phony traditions, so he does not appeal to them or to philosophers, etc., but to the Scriptures. (Ps. 2:7; II Sam. 7:14) The Jews recognized Ps. 2 as Messianic, but the passage in II Sam. was specifically about Solomon, David's son. Paul uses it in a much broader sense to include Christ, David's *"greater son"*.

- a. No angel (singular) was ever called *"My Son"* by the Father.
- b. No angel was ever *"begotten"*; they are not related to God in any way, except as His creatures.
- c. The term *"begotten"* here is only a reference to His incarnation and Sonship: He was always God, but He became Son.

II. HE HAS A BETTER POSITION (WORSHIP): V. 6

A. He is the First-begotten: v. 6a

NOTE: The fact that He is *"the first begotten"* does not imply that He was created. The term is "proto-tokos" and signifies that which surpasses anything of the same kind. Under the Law, the first-born had authority over his brethren and received a double portion of the Father's inheritance. They also had the honor of acting as priests. It means "Chief One" and refers to position, not birth.

1. Christ was the first man ever born of the Holy Spirit.
2. Christ was eternally God, but became the Son at His incarnation.
 - a. Sonship is an analogy which helps us understand Christ's essential relationship and willing submission to the Father for our redemption.
 - b. Scripture speaks of Christ's position in the godhead and His absolute Deity, but not of His "eternal Sonship".

B. He is to be Worshipped: v. 6b

1. The logic is simple: If angels must worship Him by direct order of God, He is in fact *"better than the angels"*.
2. It is blasphemy for any being to accept worship but God, thus Christ the Son, is God.
3. Angels previously worshipped Him as God, now as the Son.

III. HE HAS A BETTER ADMINISTRATION (KINGSHIP): V. 7-9

A. His subjects: "His angels..." v. 7

1. They are His to command.
2. They are to serve Him. *"His ministers..."*

ILLUS: Angels are spirits, the demons are spirits, the devil is a spirit. In the KJB Jesus says that *"God is a spirit"*. The other versions all leave out "a" since there is no indefinite article in Greek. However, all translations add the indefinite article at times!! Why not here- for clarity and sound doctrine? The point is that He is a spirit in distinction from other spirits!

B. His Throne: *"Thy throne"*

1. Note that this verse makes Jesus the Son, God!
2. The throne He sits upon is God's throne.

NOTE: To call the Son "God" would be blasphemy if it were not so. He was merely "a god" (no indefinite article!). But the Father, Who is God, calls the Son **"God"!!** So much for every cult, religion, denomination, lodge and philosophy (evolution, humanism, psychology, et. al.)!!

C. His Reign: *"for ever and ever"* (omitted in NASV and NWT)

D. His Sceptre: *"of righteousness"*

NOTE: His sceptre only shows up when the King shows up!

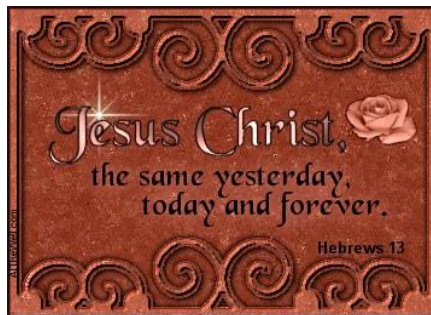
E. His Kingdom: *"thy Kingdom"*

NOTE: Christ prayed; *"our Father...Thy Kingdom come..."* Here the Father's Kingdom becomes the Son's Kingdom!

QUOTE: "But as glorious as the angels are, elevated as their station is, great as is their work, they are, nevertheless, in subjection to the Lord Jesus as man: for in His human nature, God has enthroned Him high above all." - A.W. Pink

CONCL: Oh yes, He is **"ABOVE ANGELS"!** The angels worship Him because He has a BETTER NAME, A BETTER POSITION and A BETTER ADMINISTRATION. We should do likewise.

"A NEW YEAR, A NEW WORLD, BUT THE SAME GOD"



TEXT: Hebrews 1:9-14

THESIS: To demonstrate Christ's further superiority over angels.

INTRO: A. With us change is inevitable. Transition, age, disease, disorder, destruction, and decay is the regular pattern of our lives. We move with swiftness toward the greatest change of all - death - and our entrance into eternity.

ILLUS: Each new year is portrayed as a bright new baby, but in just 12 months he will change into a bearded old man with the scythe of death in his hand.

B. Even this world will pass away and the heavens with it. Thank God He is constant and consistent.

C. These closing verses of **Hebrews 1** are climatic. Paul's thesis that Jesus is superior to the angels continues. He has demonstrated that angels are creatures, Christ is the Creator, and thus Christ, as the Son, is **"more excellent"** than the angels. He has shown His superiority thru His Name (**"Son"**), His Nativity (**"firstbegotten"**), His nature (**"worship Him"**) and His kingdom (**"throne...forever"**). He continues with more proofs of the superiority of the Son over the angels...

I. THE SON'S PERFECTION: V. 9

A. His Agreement with the Father:

1. He "*loved righteousness*".

NOTE: We often DO righteous acts and OBEY right things, but we do so at times grudgingly, or out of necessity, or out of duty. One measure of our spirituality is when we LOVE to do right. Do you LOVE to read the Word? Give the tithe? (+an offering) Witness? Pray?

2. He "*hated iniquity*":

- a. Because He loves righteousness, He hates iniquity or lawlessness.
- b. Many times in Proverbs and elsewhere are lists of things God hates. (eg. **Proverbs 6:16-19**; **Revelation 2:6**)

NOTE: **Proverb 8:13** says "*The fear of the lord is to hate evil...*". We often secretly love evil. You cannot love righteousness without hating evil. Jesus is total light and righteousness.

B. His Anointing by the Father:

1. The Hebrew word for Messiah and the Greek word for Christ is "The Anointed One".
2. Since His kingdom, throne and sceptre are spoken of in **v. 8**, this anointing seems to be His anointing as King.

ILLUS: Prophets were anointed (**I Kings 19:16**), priests were anointed (**Lev. 8:12**), and kings were anointed (**I Sam. 16:13**). Jesus was anointed as prophet at His baptism, as priest before His sacrifice at Bethany, and as King at His ascension. Thus when He returns, He will come as King of Kings.

II. THE SON'S PERMANENCE:

A. Creation: v. 10

NOTE: The quotation here is from **Psalm 102:25-27** and links the creation of the universe to Christ the Son (cf. **v.8**). We would not have dared to apply this Psalm to Christ had not the Spirit done so here. But read in this context, it bares the most intimate feelings of Christ the Son to us. It portrays Him in His humanity, but climaxes with a statement concerning His creatorship.

B. Deterioration: v. 11-12a

1. Here in the Scriptures is God's statement on the 2nd law of thermodynamics, i.e., everything decays, wears out, breaks down and dies.

ILLUS: Your clothes wear out, your car wears out, your home wears out, and your body wears out. Stars burn out, suns die and "Super nova", and "black holes" swallow galaxies (according to astronomers), etc. This universe is destined to "wear out" like the clothes on your back. cf. **Isaiah 51:6** There is nothing scientific about evolution, it is just another false religion. Their god is Darwin (or Einstein or --?), their bible is any *recent* scientific text, their objects of worship are the fossils and their creed is "everything is evolving". (or "Ontogeny [individual development] recapitulates Phylogeny [species development]!!!")

2. God's creation is subject to His laws; a miracle is a mechanism He included in His creation to suspend or reverse one of His laws.

NOTE: Like the watchmaker who builds into his watch a mechanism to reverse the hands without damaging the watch. Only God, His Son, His Spirit and His Word are eternal and He has given those who believe on Him everlasting life. His earth and heavens will "*perish*", "*wax old*", "*be changed*", "*folded up and put away*"!

C. Stabilization: v. 11b,12b

1. **"Thou remainest": v. 11b**

ILLUS: A farmer lost all he had. On the day of auction, he returned to the old farmhouse, sat on an empty crate, and then noticed a little card which became his last and treasured possession. The silvered letters spelled out **"Thou remainest"!**

2. **"Thou art the same": v. 12b**

ILLUS: **"Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away.
Change and decay in all around I see,
O Thou Who changest not, abide with me!"**

3. **"Thy years shall not fail"**

NOTE: God never has a birthday or gets older. He is **"I AM THAT I AM!"** "A NEW YEAR, A NEW WORLD, BUT THE SAME GOD!"

III. THE SON'S POSITION: V. 13,14

A. Enthronement Repeated: v. 13 (cf. v. 8)

1. The angels are never seated with God on His throne at His **"right hand"**.
2. Thus His enthronement establishes His superiority.

B. Authority Reiterated: v. 14

1. Here is the marked contrast between the enthroned God and the serving angels.
2. The word **"all"** includes all ranks of angelic beings.
3. Even the highest orders are **"sent forth to minister"**.
4. Christ too was a servant in His temporary humility on earth, now He has a permanent position on the Throne.
5. The objects of angelic ministry are those who shall be **"heirs of salvation"**.

NOTE: One ministry angels are never employed in is that of spreading the Gospel. They guard, protect, and minister to those of us who are to do so.

CONCL: He is perfect, we are imperfect...but we are to be like Him. He is permanent, we are temporary...but we have everlasting life. He is positionally enthroned...we are the **"heirs of salvation"**, joint-heirs with Christ, and we are seated in the heavenlies with Him.

"SLIPPING SAINTS!"



TEXT: Hebrews 2:1-4

THESIS: To warn those who hear the Scriptures, not to let them slip out of their hearts and cause them to slip away from the Savior.

INTRO: A. "Familiarity breeds contempt." It also sends souls to hell and causes Christians to back-slide. The same church, the same Sunday School Class, the same Pastor, the same people, and basically even the same message from the same Bible, causes a wanderlust, a desire for something "new", exciting, and to check out the grass on the other side of the fence. (A friend of mine says the grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence because the devil has been there with his paintbrush.)

ILLUS: The world of entertainment has to constantly introduce something bigger, better, greater, more spectacular, than the last time. More sex, more violence, more frills, spills, chills are introduced to produce the same "high" and keep the audience from becoming bored. The drug addict is the perfect example: he must constantly increase his intake to produce the same euphoria.

B. The writer of Hebrews inserts 7 warnings at key intervals throughout the book designed to produce obedience, maturity, perseverance, and faith. They contain threats of chastisement, discipline, and loss of spiritual privilege. He is writing to Jews who have embraced Christ, but show signs of returning to Judaism, a system God had abandoned. He is also concerned that his beloved brethren who had heard the Gospel would "neglect so great salvation" and slip away from **"the things which (they) had heard"...**

I. A GREAT SAVIOR: V. 1a

A. The Superiority of the Messiah: "Therefore..."

1. **"Therefore..."** is a conclusion of the preceding arguments concerning Christ's greatness over the angels.
2. Because He is God's Son...Heir of all things...made the worlds...upholds all things...purged our sins...shares the throne in heaven...will rule over an everlasting Kingdom, etc.....He must be obeyed!

NOTE: Verses 1-4 are an aside or parenthesis. It is a temporary digression from his arguments concerning Christ's superiority over angels. He will pick that thesis up again at **v. 5**. This is a strong appeal from Paul's heart to his brethren. It is an invitation. (Invitational preaching is biblical. Truth presented without the objective of a response is useless.)

B. The Solemnity of the Message: "earnest heed..."

1. Paul presses the responsibility of his readers.
2. Paul presses for a response from those who were beginning to drift or slip away.
3. Paul speaks of "the things which we have heard."
 - a. The Gospel must be believed to be efficacious.
 - b. The Gospel must be understood to be believed.
 - c. The Gospel must be attended to to be understood.

ILLUS: It is the preacher's job and every believer's job to repeat the message again and again. The message demands a hearing. We must risk over-familiarity with the contents.

II. A GREAT WARNING: V. 1b

A. Positive:

1. The body of truth is identified to which these Hebrews were exposed and should have been conversant: **"heard"**.
2. This message is identified as the Gospel in **v. 3: "so great salvation"**.

B. Negative:

1. The warning seems to be 2-fold: to the Gospel hardened lost and the over familiar believer.
2. Accountability is implied: we are accountable for what we hear and know.

ILLUS: The image here is "slipping away from a dock". The person is in a boat and slips past the dock which pictures the revealed, heard truth of the Gospel. He faces the moral consequences for a willful refusal to attach himself to doctrinal and spiritual absolutes.

III. A GREAT SALVATION: V. 2-3a

A. Preceded by the Law: v. 2

1. The Law came from God via the angels. Acts 7:53
2. That Law was valid and binding: "**steadfast**"
 - a. It was absolute and firm.
 - b. It could not be challenged.
3. That Law could be and was disobeyed:
 - a. Via transgressions: violations of negative commands. Doing what the Law prohibited.
 - b. Disobedience: violations of positive commands.

ILLUS: In both cases there was willful rebellion, not ignorance of the Law. The point is that violators were judged and punished. In some cases, restitution and penalties were to be made and paid and in others, capital punishment followed. cf. **Numbers 15:30-36**

B. Proclaimed by the Lord: v. 3a

1. Argument: the Law, which was inferior to "**so great salvation**" through Christ demands more than it could, therefore, "**How shall we escape...?**"
2. Neglect of "**so great salvation**" is a shortcut to hell for the unsaved.
3. Neglect for the believer of "**so great salvation**" reveals apathy and indifference and invites loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

NOTE: The question is rhetorical...there is no escaping the consequences of willful neglect of God's grace by saint or sinner.

IV. A GREAT WITNESS: V. 2-4

A. The Witness of Angels: v. 2

B. The Witness of Christ: v. 3b

1. Christ was the first Gospel preacher.
2. The gospels record His witness.

C. The Witness of the Apostles: v. 3c (cf. Acts)

D. The Witness of Signs, Wonders and Miracles: v. 4a

E. The Witness of Gifts of the Holy Ghost: v. 4b

- a. The word for gifts here is not "charismata", but "merismoi" or "distributions".
- b. The emphasis is on the distributor of the gifts "**according to His will**" not on the recipients.
- c. The Spirit's sovereign will, not the believer's desire, ability, or power is underscored.

CONCL: A clear warning is sounded for "**DRIFTING DISCIPLES**", either possessors or professors.

ILLUS: A man once decided to explore a dark winding cave filled with dangerous pitfalls. To help find his way out, in the event his light was extinguished, he fastened one end of a large spool of twine to the outside of the cave and unwound it as he progressed into the dark interior. In this manner he walked a great distance until he

came upon a fairly large chamber filled with many stalactites and beautiful rock formations. Filled with curiosity, he set his lamp and ball of twine down and began walking around, looking at these wonders of nature.

Suddenly the lamp went out and the darkness closed in on him. In his excitement and confusion he tried to find the ball of twine, but all in vain. Long afterwards searchers found his lifeless body where he had fallen over a precipice. So, too, there is danger that the saints of God become so enamored with the things of this world that they allow the light of their testimony to flicker out and thus let slip the string of sacred fellowship.

"THE WORLD TOMORROW"



TEXT: Hebrews 2:5-8

THESIS: To show that man, through Christ, will achieve superiority over the angels and rule and reign with Christ.

INTRO: A. The writer of Hebrews again picks up the theme of the superiority of Christ to the angels. He is aware of the high position angels held in the Jewish mind. What they knew of angels tended toward minimizing Jesus Who was only a man to them.

ILLUS: They knew man was confined to planet earth whereas angels were capable of space travel. Angels had supernatural power and strength. Angels had continual access to God's throne. Angels are spirit beings, man is made out of dust. Angels never die; all men must die and Jesus Himself died.

B. In order to counter what seemed to be an insurmountable problem in the superiority of Christ over angels, Paul moves from the past and the present to the future and how things will be in **"THE WORLD TOMORROW"**.

I. ANGELS WILL NEVER REIGN: V. 5

A. The Subject Identified:

1. The term (hupotasso) is a military term dealing with administration or command.
2. The point will be made that angelic superiority over man is temporary.
3. When the new world comes it will not be ruled by angels.

ILLUS: Presently angels do administrate in God's behalf. **Daniel 10** speaks of this angelic administration. It also reveals how that is opposed by another fallen angel being (cherubim) who rules principalities and powers and is the **"prince of the power of the air"** and the **"god of this world"**.

II. MAN ONCE REIGNED: V. 6-7

A. Scriptural Support: v. 6a "one..."

1. He does not quote his source here or in any other reference to the Old Testament.
2. He knows his readers knew the ultimate source of all Scripture was God.

B. Positional Comparison: v. 6b "What is man...?"

1. Why would a self-existent God Who is so powerful and almighty, that He can fill the universe without being a part of it (!), waste time with fallen man?
2. Why would a God who can keep track of planets and every thought, word, and motive of 7+ billion inhabitants of earth bother with man?

ILLUS: *"What is man...?"* He is a being you can cremate and suck up in a vacuum cleaner. Man is a speck. The most famous men living; the Pope, the President of the United States, rock stars, movie stars, and sports superstars, even with the aid of computers, satellites, TV and lasers, will live and die with several billion people on the planet not knowing who they were, what they did or when they died. Nobody much will miss you when YOU die! Hardly anyone remembers the heroes of World War II, Korea, or Viet-Nam today who gave their lives for us or who today rot in prison camps. **IF GOD DIDN'T CARE FOR US--WHO WOULD?!?!**

C. Original Sovereignty: v. 7-8a

1. Man was *"lower than the angels"*.
2. God crowned him King of the earth.
 - a. Everything (!) was put under Adam's control or subjection.
 - b. King Adam controlled every fish in the sea, every bird in the air, every beast on the earth, every bug in its place, and every plant in the ground. **Genesis 1:26ff**
 - c. Talk about sovereignty! *"(God) didst set him (man) over the works of His (God's) hands."*

ILLUS: The "man" or *"the son of man"* includes God's original plan for man. But something went wrong. Look at the *"but now"* and the *"not yet"* of v. 8. What God promised and gave to Adam he lost. He ended up buried in the earth he was to have dominion over. Adam was told to *"replenish the earth"* through painless childbirth. Eve could have had as many children as she wanted without pain or discomfort or hospital bills! If she had only 1 child every 5 years, someone has calculated there would have been 500 million people on the planet before Noah was born!

This is a mathematical, scientific argument evolutionists refuse to discuss. If man has been here 500,000 years (or 2 million years- Leakey) and each family only had 2 children, where are all the people who should have been here before Columbus?!

If man had not sinned, he would have lived forever and would have had to populate the planets. But after he sinned, God couldn't let that happen! What is the point in populating planets with sex-crazed, money-mad, Bible-rejecting, self-righteous sinners bent on destroying themselves and everyone else? Star wars would be a reality, ...not just in the movies.

III. MAN WILL REIGN AGAIN: v. 8b

A. God's Plan: *"all things put under him"*

1. God hasn't abandoned His original plan, He just postponed it. *"but now...not yet..."*
2. "The world tomorrow" will establish man's reign without wars, turmoil or conflict.

B. God's Man: (cf. v. 9 *"But...Jesus..."*)

1. Jesus purchased not only man's soul, but He brought back his dominion.
2. Christ's redemption includes the planet, not just the people on it! (**Romans 8:17-23**)

CONC: This is *"not yet"* but will become a reality in "THE WORLD TOMORROW" (Armongstrongism is not all wrong...the timing is off!) Jesus, though made *"lower than the angels"*, has been elevated again above them through His completion of God's plan to redeem the fallen planet and people. Are you ready for your crown and sceptre? Positions in the Kingdom are still open, but they must be earned. Salvation alone is free.

"PERFECTING PERFECTION"



TEXT: Hebrews 2:9-13

THESIS: To show the details, extent, purpose, and effects of Christ's humiliation.

INTRO: A. Can something perfect be *"more perfect"*? Can Jesus, the sinless Son of God, become *"more perfect"*? **Verse 10** says that Jesus "The Captain of (our) salvation" was made *"perfect through suffering"*. Wasn't Jesus "perfect" before He suffered? Wasn't He always God? Isn't God always perfect?!

B. Before addressing the question of "PERFECTING PERFECTION" in **v. 10**, we must deal with the subject of Jesus' superiority over the angels, the thesis of this entire passage. Two problems must be addressed: How could Christ be superior to the angels if He was a man? And How could He be superior since He died?!

TRANS: A principle is expressed in this passage which Jesus Himself taught: Humiliation precedes exaltation. The humiliation of Christ is the topic here. (The point is that Jesus humbled Himself and became a man that He might save us, elevate us to the position of a son of God, and be exalted Himself as the Captain of our salvation.

I. THE DETAILS OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION: v. 9a

A. His Humanity: *"we see Jesus..."*

1. His human name is used to stress His condescension.
2. His humanity was what men had to see first. (**John 12:21**)
 - a. God became visible and knowable.
 - b. Deity became approachable and sympathetic.

B. His Humility: *"lower than the angels..."*

1. The Creator of man and the angels took a lowly position with the ultimate purpose of redemption.

ILLUS: Question: Why bother?! Why not just annihilate the planet and its sinful inhabitants? Why make this stupendous effort? Why all this humiliation in the Creator becoming as one of His creatures? The only answer is unfathomable love!

2. God not only bridged the infinite gap between Himself and the angels, but humiliated Himself to a position *"lower..."*.

C. His Horror: *"for the suffering of death..."*

1. He was made lower than the angels to become man.
2. He became man so He could die!
3. He came to die because only His death could save man.

ILLUS: His hands were fashioned for Roman spikes. His feet were made to climb up Calvary. His head was formed for spittle, buffeting, and a crown of thorns. His body was built to be pierced by a spear, beaten to a pulp, and wrapped in grave clothes. His death was no accident. His horror was no tragedy. His humiliation was part of a perfect plan.

D. His Honor: "crowned with glory and honor"

1. We "see Jesus" as King with eyes of faith as did the repentant thief.
2. Apparently Christ's coronation is a reality in heaven now and will become a reality on earth in the Millennium.

II. THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION: v. 9b

A. The Context:

1. The subject is the Adamic race, not just "the elect". (6-7)
2. Christ in His humiliation "*taste(s) death for every man*".

NOTE: The next verse refers to "**the elect'...'many sons...**" MANY out of EVERY!

B. The Conclusion:

1. Christ drinks the bitter dregs of "*the cup*" He spoke of in Gethsemane.
2. He Who was guilty of no sin, tasted death for all sin.
3. What He "*tasted*" on the cross was the total agony of every soul in hell for all eternity.
4. The conclusion is that no one need go to hell...Jesus paid the price of your sin.

III. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION: v. 10

A. The Creator/Governor: "for whom...by whom..."

ILLUS: We have already detailed His creatorship and governorship of "*all things*" in **1:2,3 and 10**. Satan could not tempt Peter, or test Job, or attack you without God's permission.

The demons could not leave the man and enter the swine without His command. A sparrow does not fall without His knowledge and will.

B. The Captain/Leader:

1. The word "*captain*" means one who leads the way.
2. Jesus led the way in obedience, suffering, and glory.

NOTE: RV = "author"; RSV = "pioneer"; LB = "leader"; NIV, NASV = "author"; NWT = "prince" etc. (Yeah, right!)

ILLUS: This is one of more than 300 titles given to our Savior. The implication of this one is that we are passing through hostile territory ruled by Satan and his cohorts. There are pitfalls, mines, mantraps, anti-personnel devices, bombs, and bullets everywhere. We need someone who knows the way to lead us through; to "*bring many sons unto glory*". ("*Then where I am, ye may be also*".)

IV. THE EFFECTS OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION: v. 10b-13

A. Perfect Through Suffering: v. 10b

1. Christ was sinless because He was God.
2. Christ became perfect via the obedience of suffering. **5:8-9**
 - a. He "learned" obedience as a man...He always knew of it as a member of the Godhead.
 - b. The difference is between knowledge and experience.

NOTE: Perfection was perfected through obedience and suffering. God cannot learn, obey (obey whom?!), or suffer. But as a man, Jesus could do all three! In so doing, He was "**PERFECTING PERFECTION**"!

B. Brethren Through Sanctification: v. 11-12

1. We are **"of one"** with Christ our Savior and Sanctifier.
2. The One who sanctifies is Christ and the ones who are sanctified or "made holy" are believers.

NOTE: We may not act holy, but we have been made holy by Christ. A child doesn't always act like his father or please his father, but he is still his father's son. In thought and practice we are far from holy, but positionally, we are holy.

3. Because of His death and resurrection, He can call us **"brethren"**. (**Matt. 28:10**)
4. Paul uses the word **"church"** in place of **"congregation"** when quoting **Psalm 22:22**. (**v. 12**)

C. Children Through Salvation: v. 13

1. He considers us His children, His brethren, and His bride.
2. These are all the effects of His humiliation.

CONCL: The Sinless One has been made the Perfect One through His suffering and His obedience. We too can be made perfect through obedience to Him and suffering with Him. The One **"lower than the angels"** has been crowned in heaven with **"glory and honor"**. Perfection has been perfected!

"Lord, please give me the love for You that the Apostle John had, the conviction of Paul, the boldness of Peter and Stephen, the faith of Abraham, the patience of Job, the power of Elijah and Elisha, the character of Joseph, the discipline of John the Baptist, the courage of Daniel and Joshua, the meekness of Moses, the sweetness and devotion of David, the wisdom of Solomon, the tenderness of Jeremiah, and the practicality of James."

- Pastor Fedena

"THE LORD DEATH"



TEXT: Hebrews 2:14-18

THESIS: To show Christ as the Conqueror, Deliverer, Reconciler, and Succourer.

INTRO: A. According to the passage before us Satan was **"the lord of death"**. But he has been neutralized by the Lord of Life. But even the Lord of Life had to die to strip him of his power.

B. The subject is still Christ's superiority over the angels. In closing out this section, the writer shows the necessity of the Lord stooping a **"little lower than the angels"** to become man. He will show that it was necessary so He could: **1)** strip Satan of his power of death, **2)** deliver His people of the fear of Satan's power, **3)** show that He had to assume "flesh and blood" to accomplish those tasks, **4)** become God's Reconciler or High Priest, and **5)** to minister to His own.

TRANS: Let's examine these five reasons for Christ's humiliation. He became man to become our Conqueror, Deliverer, Reconciler and Succourer...

I. Conqueror: v. 14

A. His Humanity: **"flesh and blood..."**

1. God cannot die, so Christ became man.

2. Death must cancel out death.

ILLUS: As in algebra, a negative times a negative produces a positive, so Christ's death canceled out Satan's power over death, producing positive benefits for us.

3. This could only be done through resurrection, but death must precede resurrection.

NOTE: Jesus had sinless flesh and pure blood, therefore, death could not hold Him in the grave. He took our sin and paid our penalty and because God was satisfied with His payment, He raised Him and made Him death's Conqueror. Jesus had real flesh and blood. His earthly life was not that of a Theophany. He became a man with flesh and blood. His blood no longer courses through His veins. Now His is a "flesh and bones" body (**Luke 24:39**), like Adam I, before the fall.

B. His Victory: "*destroy...the devil*"

1. Paul points out that His death was not a tragedy, as it appeared to them, but a triumph.
2. He died to nullify the power of "the lord of death".
3. After Calvary, the executioner has been stripped of authority.

NOTE: The word "destroy" doesn't mean to annihilate, but "to render powerless". In **I Cor. 1:28** translated "bring to naught" and in **Romans 3:31** "make void".

II. DELIVERER: v. 15

A. Fear-Remover:

1. We will still die, but we need not fear death.
2. By faith we believe that Christ, not Satan, is the one with the power over death and eternal life.
 - a. Death is still a terror to those without a Deliverer.

NOTE: Death, caskets, graveyards, corpses, and morgues still strike fear in men's hearts and have ominous overtones. Hollywood capitalizes on this fear. But the real terror of death is the Judgment which follows, which the world ignores!

- b. Facing God without the Deliverer is foolish and unnecessary.

B. Bondage-Breaker:

1. The unsaved man is in bondage to the fear of death all his life.
2. Christ breaks this bondage for every believer.

ILLUS: As David, a type of Christ, slew Goliath, a type of Satan, and delivered Israel from their bondage of fear, we too have been delivered.

III. RECONCILER: v. 16-17

A. Abraham's Seed:

1. He is the "**seed of Abraham**" (Jew - not Gentile), the "**seed of Adam**" (human – not angelic), the "**seed of David**" (royal - not common) "**according to the flesh**".
2. He is God's seed according to **Genesis 3:15** which alone was able to bruise the head of the serpent.

ILLUS: Cf. **I Timothy 3:16**, possibly the greatest verse in the Bible. ("God" removed in ASV, NASV and NIV!!!)

B. High-Priest:

1. To reconcile man to God, He must first become sinless Man.
2. To reconcile man to God, He must become a High Priest.

ILLUS: How unlike other high-priests of Israel and "priests" today is our High Priest! He is unlike the "priests" in Catholicism or Episcopalianism who marry two queers because it is their "duty to relate to such people...by giving them the 'Holy Sacrament' (!) of marriage". How unlike Archbishop Stepinac who personally supervised the forced conversion of 100,000 Serbians under threat of having their throats slashed in 1942!

3. As the "Reconciler", He touches man and God.

NOTE: The word "reconciliation" is one of several words ending in "tion" that form a "salvation vocabulary" unique to the Bible. Salvation, redemption, justification, regeneration, propitiation, adoption, imputation, sanctification, and glorification. Most radio, TV, and Neo preachers have shunned these "tion" words for such sorry substitutes as "sharing", "make a commitment", "decide for Christ", "renewal", "relevant", "dialogue", "decision", "confrontation", "lifestyle evangelism", etc.

IV. SUCCOURER: v. 18

NOTE: He suffered temptation, never yielded. We do not "suffer" when we yield, the flesh takes pleasure in yielding!

A. Suffered Temptation:

1. To be tempted is not sinful. The sin is conceived when we DEBATE as to whether or not to submit to the temptation after we know it is wrong; sin hatches in the will ("I will") - shuts the Lord and the Bible out!
2. There are three main temptations that all others are connected with found in three passages of Scripture: **I John 2:16; Genesis 3:6 and Luke 4:1-13:**
 - a. Lust of flesh: "do it yourself"...good for food
 - b. Pride of life: "let God do it for you"...show off
 - c. Lust of eye: "let the devil do it for you"...take what looks good

B. Succours the Tempted:

1. To "**succour**" means to rescue, help or come to the aid of.
2. He can do this because He is God Who has the ability and power to help us.

CONCL: "THE LORD OF DEATH" has been vanquished by "THE LORD OF LIFE"...Our Conqueror, Deliverer, Reconciler, and Succourer. He is all these things to God's children...what is He to you? Do you still fear death? Have you been reconciled? Will you let Him help you?

"HOW GREAT THOU ART" or "STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN!"



TEXT: Hebrews 3:1-6

THESIS: To show the superiority of Christ over Moses!

INTRO: A. Someone has said that the "wherefores" and "therefores" of Scripture are like the "STOP, LOOK and LISTEN" signs at railroad crossings, designed to raise our alertness. The first verse of our text is such a signpost. It reminds us to review all that has been said up to this point about Christ. He has been shown as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and superior to all the hosts of heaven's angels.

B. If the Jews revered the angels, they practically worshipped Moses. Moses was responsible for their national existence. God had miraculously protected him as a baby and personally provided for his burial. Between those two points in his life were miracle after miracle. He was a prophet to whom God spake face to face, a priest who ordained the first High Priest of Israel and a King over the nation in the theocracy. He led the nation out of bondage in Egypt, protected, prayed for them and provided for them for 40 years. He gave them God's Law and built the Tabernacle. For this reason Christ must be shown to be superior to Moses if He is to be followed.

TRANS: Some professing Jews were ready to abandon Christ to go back to following Moses. Thus **verse 1** says; **"Wherefore...consider...Christ Jesus..."**

I. CONSIDER JESUS' SUPERIOR OFFICES: v. 1,2

NOTE: To "CONSIDER" Christ means to meditate and ponder Who and What He is; to attentively weigh His dignity, majesty, excellency, authority, and position as presented in **chapters 1 and 2**. (see attached)

CONSIDER HIM

"Wherefore, holy brethren...consider...Christ Jesus." Hebrews 3:1

The first word in **Hebrews 3:1**, "Wherefore," tells us to review the preceding verses if we are to get the full import of that which is to follow. Surveying the first two chapters, we find many **"consider Christ."** We read:

He was **"appointed heir of all things" (1:2).**

He **"made the worlds" (1:2).**

He is **"the brightness of his [God's] glory" (1:3).**

He is **"the express image of his [God's] person" (1:3).**

He upholds **"all things by the word of his power" (1:3).**

He **"purged our sins" (1:3).**

He was **"made...better than the angels" (1:4).**

Yea, **"...all the angels of God worship him" (1:6).**

Unto Him the Father said, **"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever" (1:8).** In fact, the writer of the book of Hebrews says of Christ: **"...the earth; and the heavens...shall perish, but thou remainest" (1:10-11).**

He is **"the same, and...[His] years shall not fail" (1:12).**

All things have been **"put in subjection" to Him (2:5).**

He has been crowned with **"glory and honor" (2:7).**

He who is **"the captain of [our] salvation,"** was made **"perfect through sufferings" (2:10).**

He delivers **"them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (2:15).**

Finally, we are told He was **"made like his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest" (2:17)!**

No wonder the Apostle cries out in the opening words of **Chapter 3**, **"Wherefore, holy brethren...consider...Christ Jesus."** Yes, CONSIDER HIM! When we do, we cannot help but worship, praise, and love Him. In adoration and rapture we cry: **"My Lord and my God!"**

- R.W.D.

**Lord of Glory, we adore Thee!
Christ of God ascended high!
Heart and soul we bow before Thee,
Glorious now beyond the sky.**

- Anon.

THOT: We must make a choice: we cannot enjoy both the world and Christ! - H. Taylor

A. He is the Apostle:

1. The word literally is "sent one." **"As the Father hath sent Me..."**
2. Jesus chose 12 Apostles, but He was THE Apostle of God.
 - a. Those invited to consider Him are called **"holy brethren."** cf. **2:11**
 - b. They are **"partakers of the heavenly calling"**, unlike Old Testament believers who had an earthly call and reward.

NOTE: "Holy" always precedes "heavenly"! We must be justified and sanctified before we can possess a heavenly hope and home. "Holy" = position; "brethren" = partnership; "heavenly" = privilege.

B. He is The High Priest:

1. The Levitical priesthood was done away with at the cross, the sacrifices were finished, and the Temple would soon be destroyed; the new High Priest has taken His position at the right hand of God.
2. As the new High Priest, He was sympathetic and was able to succour them. **2:18**
3. He has already been described as a **"merciful and faithful High Priest"** in **2:17** and this is repeated in **v. 2**.

NOTE: He was a faithful Apostle, Ambassador, and High Priest. The writer is careful in exalting Jesus, not to demean Moses. **v. 2**

II. CONSIDER JESUS' SUPERIOR WORK: v. 3-4

A. The Great Builder: v. 3

1. In **v. 3** Moses and Jesus are both seen as men.
2. Moses' "house" (**v.2**) was the "house of Israel".
 - a. In a literal sense, Moses never "built" Israel into a great nation.
 - b. Moses was a member of the house that God built, the faithful custodian of the house.
3. The writer is saying **"this man"** (Jesus) was the real Builder of Israel and is entitled to more **"glory"** than Moses.
4. The **"honor"** goes not to Israel, or to Moses, but to the great Builder Himself.

ILLUS: Christ has already been shown to be the Great Architect of the universe. We may admire a building, but the compliments go to the builder. Without him there could be no building! The question today is not "which church did Christ build?", but "Do you know the Builder?!"

B. The Great Creator: v. 4

1. Every house must have a builder, but God is the ultimate Builder.
2. He created all the materials in every "house" ever built.
3. The "house" He is building today is **"the house of God"** and we are **"living stones"** in that building. cf. **v. 6a**
4. That "house" is the Lord's Body and if one **"living stone"** got out of that **"house"** part of the Lord's Body would go to hell!!!

ILLUS: **"Consider"** that last statement. It is crucial! The believer is absolutely secure in Christ. He can lose confidence, joy, and the fulness of the Spirit, but CANNOT LOSE CHRIST. He can backslide, sin, and even blaspheme, but cannot be condemned!

III. CONSIDER JESUS' SUPERIOR PERSON: v. 5-6

A. Moses, a Servant:

1. Overall Moses was a faithful servant, AFTER he got out of Pharaoh's "house" and got into the **"house of Israel"**.

ILLUS: He became a murderer to get there! Even after he became a servant in "his house", he disobeyed God and struck the Rock. But this sin is "overlooked" here, as David's adultery in **Hebrews 11**, Sarah's infidelity in **Romans 4**, Rahab's lying in **James 2**, Samson's immorality in **Hebrews 11**, and as your sin and mine will be "overlooked" at the Judgment Seat of Christ! Isn't grace wonderful?

2. All that Moses did, said, and built was **"a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after"** concerning Christ.

ILLUS: Every board, rope and tent peg in "God's house", the Tabernacle built by Moses, spoke, not of Moses, but of Christ Who came after Moses. Moses was indeed a **"faithful servant"**!

B. Christ, a Son:

1. A son is always superior to a servant in any house.
2. The 7-fold superiority of the Son of God over the servant Moses is seen in this passage:
 - a. Moses was a member of a house; Christ the Builder of one.
 - b. Moses was identified with a single house; Christ built "all things".
 - c. Moses was an Apostle; Christ THE Apostle.
 - d. Moses was a man; Christ the God-man.
 - e. Moses just a servant; Christ the Son.
 - f. Moses witnessed of things to come; Christ was the substance and fulfillment of it all.
 - g. Moses was a servant in the house of Jehovah; Christ was the Son over His own house.

NOTE: Indeed: "HOW GREAT THOU ART"!

CONCL: Here, the writer gives Moses an honorable burial and a glorious epitaph on his grave-stone: "Moses, a faithful servant of the Lord." Moses fades; Christ is honored. The passage closes with a warning to those who would substitute Moses for Christ, Israel for the church. It is the first major warning sign in a book full of warnings.

"HARD HEADS and HARD HEARTS" or "UNBELIEVING BELIEVERS"



TEXT: Hebrews 3:7-19

THESIS: To show that hardness of heart produces unbelief which results in loss of privilege and reward.

INTRO: A. In **chapters 1 and 2** of Hebrews Christ is shown to be superior to those fantastic and supernatural creatures, the angels. These beings were held in high esteem by Hebrews. In **chapter 3** Christ is revealed to be superior to Moses, the greatest leader and prophet, priest, and king of Israel. Moses was practically worshipped by Israel. To elevate Christ above the angels and Moses was really bold and daring of the Apostle Paul.

B. Paul dwells on Moses' faithfulness as a servant of God and says that Christ is superior in that He is faithful as the Son of God. Moses was presented as the Law-giver; Christ as the Law-fulfiller. Moses was a part of

the household of Israel, sinful and imperfect as his brethren; Christ was the Lord of the household of Israel and was holy and sinless.

TRANS: The mention of Moses immediately calls to mind the story of Israel in the wilderness.

I. FOCUS ON FAILURE: (Past) v. 7-11

A. Faithfulness and Failure:

1. Moses was faithful (along with Joshua and Caleb).
2. Israel was unfaithful.

NOTE: The whole section is a quotation from **Psalm 95:7-11**. The writer:

1. Attributed the Old Testament Scripture to the Holy Ghost (not David)!
2. Believed the history recorded there was accurate, and
3. Used the passage with these Jewish believers as an illustrative example of the results of **"HARD HEADS and HARD HEARTS"!** (UNBELIEF)

B. Works and Ways:

1. The 40 year period was a time of daily miracles; **"my works". v. 9**
 - a. The New Testament writer, under inspiration, changes the singular **"work"** in **Psalm 95** to **"works"**.
 - b. They had witnessed fantastic things unparalleled in human history.

ILLUS: They saw the Red Sea parted, the Egyptians and Pharaoh drowned, water pour from a rock, manna rain from heaven, quails delivered to their doorsteps, a pillar of cloud by day to protect them from the sun's rays, a pillar of fire by night to ward off enemies, provide warmth and security, miraculous renewal of shoes, clothing, etc., etc.

- c. Conclusion: Miracles do not produce faith or faithfulness.

ILLUS: In spite of the miracles, they murmured. In spite of the demonstration of Deity, they doubted. Instead of praising, they pouted. Instead of worshipping God, they worshipped gods. Instead of looking ahead to the promised land, they looked back to Egypt. Instead of being thankful for His provision, protection and power, they proved, provoked and grieved God.

2. The 40 year period revealed God's works, but the people were ignorant of God's ways. **v. 10**
 - a. They saw His **"works"**, but couldn't see His **"ways"** so they experienced His **"wrath"** (**v. 11**) and missed out on His **"rest"** (**v. 11**).
 - b. God's love rejected brings God's wrath.
 - c. God's provision rejected results in losing God's rest.

NOTE: The **"today"** of **v. 7** is a period of time...as it is in **v. 13** and **v. 15**. God's **"rest"** here is Caanan or the promised land...not heaven. They had "believed" and had faith when they left Egypt. (They painted blood on their doorways by faith.) They grieved and provoked the Lord by their unbelief in the wilderness so they lost their reward!!

II. WARNING AGAINST WAVERING: (Present) v. 12-14

A. The Sin of Unbelief: v. 12-13

1. All sin begins in the heart.
2. The sin of unbelief is departure from the Living God.

ILLUS: The unbelief of Israel made a few days journey into 40 years of wandering in circles and a denial of entrance into Caanan. The unbelief of these Hebrews Paul is writing to are in danger of also losing out. If Hebrews is a transitional book dealing with the Tribulation and Millennium, then they would lose out on Millennial blessings.

3. The sin of unbelief involves a hard head and ends up with a "hardened" heart.

B. The Sentence of Unbelief: v. 14

1. The writer used an Old Testament example for these Hebrews.

- a. They could not enter the land...not because of worshipping the golden calf, false gods, murmuring, etc., but because these "believers" committed the sin of unbelief.
- b. Notice the similarity between **v. 6** and **v. 14**: "**if**", "**steadfast**", "**holdfast**", and "**the end**" in both verses.

ILLUS: This is not "the end" of a person's life. This is "the end" of a period. The Tribulation saint has to endure to "the end" without taking the mark of the beast to be a partaker of Christ and have a Millennial reign with Christ. cf. **Daniel 12:4** "**the time of the end**" and **12:9** "**sealed till the time of the end**" and **Matthew 24:4** "**then shall the end come.**" Tribulation verses!! Those in the church age do not have to "endure to the end", or "overcome", or "hold out", or "hold on" to get to Heaven. They have a guarantee sealed with Christ's blood and can't "lose it"!

III. UPBRAIDING UNBELIEF: (Past and Future) v. 15-19

A. Hardened Hearts: v. 15-17

1. Repeated warning: **v. 15**
2. The majority rebelled; the minority obeyed. **v. 16**
3. God's grief and the sinner's punishment. **v. 17**

NOTE: It doesn't just say "they died in the desert", but "**whose carcasses fell in the wilderness.**" This statement indicates God's contempt and indignation. God will "make men who have been wickedly exemplary in sin, righteous exemplary in their punishment." A.W. Pink, P. 186

B. Inexcusable Iniquity: v. 18-19

1. Rebellion was induced by unbelief and unbelief results in lost privilege. **v.18**
2. Unbelief excludes forgiveness and is the antithesis of faith.

NOTE: Today, as always, unbelief is the unpardonable sin.

CONCL: "**HARD HEADS and HARD HEARTS**" are nothing new. They, like the poor, are always with us. "**UNBELIEVING BELIEVERS**" abounded in the past and continue today. How many of God's special blessings do we miss out on by being an "**UNBELIEVING BELIEVER?!**" Maybe you are just simply an unbeliever! Become a believer! Now!

"TWO 4-LETTER WORDS" or "UNPROFITABLE PREACHING"



TEXT: Hebrews 4:1-2

THESIS: To illustrate the two key words of fear and rest in the context.

INTRO: A. There are various kinds of **"UNPROFITABLE PREACHING"**:

1. Preaching without content, with little doctrine or teaching.
2. Preaching which doesn't press for a commitment.
3. Preaching which leaves the hearers confused or bewildered.

These all place the burden on the preacher. Our text deals with **"UNPROFITABLE PREACHING"** from the hearers standpoint. The hearer is responsible to respond to preaching!

ILLUS: Many come expecting the preacher to be Spirit-filled, but attend preaching services filled with the world themselves. "The person in the pew is just as obligated to be filled with the Spirit as he listens as is the man of God in the pulpit as he preaches." - Hyles

B. Preaching must have an audience. The audience must pay attention. They must then act upon what they hear. Preaching is not an end in itself. Preaching is unprofitable without a response. Preaching degenerates to entertainment without a response. Preaching is not a spectator sport, it is designed to lead to a response. The hearers are to participate, to take action, to be led to a point of decision. It is to be dynamic, not didactic.

TRANS: When preaching is one-way, it is disastrous. If the preacher alone participates, it is a wasted effort. There are **"TWO 4-LETTER WORDS"** in v. 1 which will drive our point home: **FEAR and REST...**

I. FEAR:

A. The Warning:

1. The illustration Paul used was the nation of Israel in the wilderness losing their promised land **"rest"** because of their UNBELIEF. (Cf. **3:18-19**)
2. The ill-fated decision at Kadesh-Barnea to heed the report of the 10 spies instead of accepting the promise of God resulted in the death of an entire generation.
3. The warning in v. 1 is based on that situation and applied to these Hebrew Christians.

B. The Application:

1. The believer should contemplate with fear the consequences of his spiritual decisions.

NOTE: We should not fear man or even Satan and his agents, but a genuine healthy fear of God will keep us from sin, presumption and sacrilege. We need **"Theophobia"** - a fear of God. We must "work out our own salvation, with fear and trembling." Israel failed at Kadesh because they feared the inhabitants of Caanan rather than God.

2. The sequel to Caanan-rest today is the Spirit-filled life; take care you don't miss it is the application of this warning.

C. The Interpretation:

1. Israel missed their rest because of unbelief:

- a. In the wilderness: **Exodus 19:5-6**
- b. In the land: **Judges 2:1-3**

2. Israel forfeited their rest because of unbelief:

- a. Under the Kings: Result? Captivity.
- b. Under the Christ: Result? Dispersion.

NOTE: Christ came offering the Millennial rest to Israel. Their response to His preaching? UNBELIEF. Cf. **Luke 19:41-44** Result? Postponement of the Kingdom, abandonment of the nation (temporarily), and dispersion in the earth.

TRANS: Preaching is not just a man "lecturing", delivering a sermon, bringing a nice "talk", or entertainment! It is serious spiritual business. **"Let us therefore FEAR...lest the Word PREACHED...(does) not profit (us) not being mixed with faith..."**

II. REST:

A. Definition:

1. The word **"rest"** here means cessation of exertion.
 - a. God's **"rest"** means He ceased or completed His specified activity, e.g. creation, salvation (**"finished"**).
 - b. Our **"rest"** means we trust in His completed work for our salvation and cease self-effort.
 - c. Spiritual **"rest"** doesn't mean freedom from hassles or problems, but a peaceful composed attitude toward them.
 - 1) It means freedom from guilt and worry over forgiven sin.
 - 2) It means confidence in Him and not ourselves.
 - 3) It means trusting His Word and will.

B. Application:

1. There is Caanan-rest. cf. **3:18-19**
2. There is creation-rest. **v. 4**
3. There is salvation-rest. **v. 9-10**
4. There is physical-rest.
5. There is Millennium-rest or National-rest.
6. There is eternal or heaven-rest.

C. Interpretation:

1. The point of this warning is perseverance:
 - a. The Israelites left Egypt full of hope and song at the Red Sea.
 - b. The trials and testings destroyed their hope as they walked by sight and not by faith.
 - c. Murmuring replaced praise, hardness of heart replaced trust, and fear replaced rest.
2. The preaching was unprofitable to them:
 - a. The "Gospel" preached to Israel was in **Exodus 6:6-8**, but they did **"not profit"** from it because of UNBELIEF.
 - b. The "Gospel" will not profit people today either, unless believed, acted upon, and rested in.

QUES: How many sermons have you heard...with profit?! How many have you accepted and applied? How many others were **"UNPROFITABLE PREACHING"** to you?!

CONCL: The **"TWO 4-LETTER WORDS"** of **"fear"** and **"rest"** summarize what we have tried to say from this text. Do you fear hardness of heart and unbelief? Are you "resting" in His promises, provision, and protection?

"REST"



TEXT: Hebrews 4:3-11

THESIS: To reveal the five types of "rest" taught in the text.

INTRO: A. If "exercise" or "work" are the most dreaded words in the English language, "rest" must be the most liked and sought after. "REST..." the word sounds wonderful. It speaks of relaxation, vacation, getting away from the daily grind, peace, and tranquility. To a mother it may mean that quiet time when the kids are all in bed, the housework is done, the clothes are folded and put away, and she can sit down and relax. To dad it may mean coming home from work, eating a good meal, taking a shower, and just sitting quiet or taking a nap. To the career person it may mean having all the work pile caught up, no overtime for a change, an empty briefcase, no phones ringing, and stretching out on the couch and putting the mind into neutral. **REST!**

B. There are probably as many meanings to the word "rest" as there are people. There are also several kinds of "REST" in our passage...

I. SALVATION-REST: v. 3a

A. Requirements:

1. "**Hearing**" (Romans 10:17) cf. v. 2
2. "**Believing**" - v. 3a or faith cf. v. 2

C. Results:

NOTE: There are 3 different Greek words translated "rest". The 1st refers to the rest of sleep (*anapausis*) - not in Hebrews. The 2nd stresses cessation from activity (*katapausis*) here. The 3rd speaks of the Sabbath rest (*Sabbatismos*) -- only in **Hebrews 4:9**.

1. Salvation rest means we have ceased our work and are trusting solely in His work for us.
2. Salvation rest means we believe God, trust Him, and relax in His provision and promises. cf. **v. 10**

NOTE: The warning in **v. 1-2** is that there is a danger in hearing the message and not responding with belief in the heart. Salvation rest includes rest from guilt, sorrow, and bereavement, fear of God's wrath, hell, anxiety, and rest from religious works!

II. SABBATH-REST: v. 3b,4

NOTE: God obviously doesn't need to rest. No diminished energy occurs when He works and thus no fatigue. It also doesn't mean He became inactive...only as to creation. His providential care, preservation, protection and government of His creation continues.

A. Significance:

1. Spoke of His satisfaction in His creation: **"very good"**
2. Set forth an example for His creatures; man.
 - a. Obviously He could have completed His creation in one day or even one instant.
 - b. He gave man an example to follow.

ILLUS: Since God uses His seventh day rest as man's example, it is obvious that these days were "solar days" or 24 hour periods, not day-ages or geologic periods.

3. It was the prophetic pledge of earth's **"rest"** during Christ's Millennial reign.
4. It was a foreshadowing of the eternal Sabbath when God shall **"rest in His love"**. (*Zeph. 3:17*)

B. Symbolism:

1. God was giving man a picture to imitate to show their trust in Him.
2. Obedience in not working one day in seven demonstrated they believed He could sustain them in seven days even though they only worked six!

NOTE: There is no "Christian Sabbath", but the "one in seven" principle still applies and we would all be better off if we changed our routine at least one day per week and gave God 1/7th of our time.

III. MILLENNIAL-REST: V. 5-6

A. Christ's Message:

1. He preached to Jews concerning the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.
2. Those to whom **"it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief."**

NOTE: Had they believed, the Millennium would be over! The "rehearsal" for the Millennium was **Numbers 12, 13, and 14** where the Israelites "blew it" at Kadesh-Barnea because of unbelief. (Could it be that the KJV translators translated **"Jesus"** for **"Joshua"** here in **v. 8** because they realized the Millennial nature of the context?!) It will be Jesus "the Captain", not Joshua then!! **2:10**

B. Israel's Millennium:

1. In writing to these *professing Hebrew Christians*, Paul states **"that some must enter therein..."**
2. Cf. **Romans 11:25-31**

IV. CAANAN-REST: V. 7-8

A. Specific Time: v. 7 "today"

1. The Sabbath-Rest was every seventh day.
2. The Millennial-Rest is for 1,000 years.
3. The Caanan-Rest was from Joshua's entrance into the Promised land forward.

B. Specific Limits: v. 8

1. If that rest had been all that God had for His people, no other rest would be needed.
 - a. It was only an earthly inheritance.
 - b. It was dependent on their faithfulness and obedience.
 - c. It was filled with enemies which had to be fought and routed.
 - d. It was temporal and temporary.
2. Another better and more complete rest was spoken of.

V. PRESENT-REST: V. 9-11

A. The Promise: v. 9

1. The present tense ("*remaineth*") rules out Caanan-Rest and Sabbath-Rest.
2. It also rules out Heaven-Rest which only comes after death.
3. It is not Salvation-Rest because it is promised to those who are already "*the people of God.*"
4. It is not Millennial-Rest because that is future.

This "*rest*" is available to the believer now!

B. The Position: v. 10

1. Some had already entered this "*rest*". v. 10a
2. This "*rest*" is the rest of the Spirit-filled life, which like salvation, is acquired by faith.

C. The Picture: v. 11

1. The "*example of unbelief*" referred to is Israel at Kadesh-Barnea.
2. They lost out on Caanan-Rest...a picture of the Spirit-filled life.
3. The warning of failure is not losing salvation (!), but losing out on God's fulness in the Spirit-filled life.
4. Falling is the opposite of standing or advancing...that's how a Christian "falls"!

CONCL: "*Rest*" - what a wonderful word and an even more wonderful promise for every believer! Claim your "*rest*" today! Start living in Caanan today!

"THE RAPIER OF REVELATION"



TEXT: Hebrews 4:12-13

THESIS: To show the seven-fold perfection of the Word of God in the text.

INTRO: A. The Bible is the only perfect thing on earth (The Holy Ghost is perfect, but not a "thing"). The Bible is described in our text with seven statements. Seven reflects its perfection. Because the term "*Word of God*" is used, some believe this refers to the Living Word. Both are perfect and as Spurgeon said; "Christ and His Word must go together. What is true of the Christ is here predicated both of Him and "His Word." What can be said of one can be said of the other, but since the "*two-edged sword*" is specified the Written Word is in sharpest focus here (**Ephesians 6:17**). *The word "rapier" means "a slender, sharp-pointed two edged sword."* Thus we are dealing here with "**THE RAPIER OF REVELATION.**"

B. The word "*for*" in v. 12 connects us with what has gone before. The last exhortation was that believers must strive to enter into the rest of Spirit-fulness, by simple faith. The opposite of faith is unbelief. God searches our hearts to see if there is faith or unbelief and He does so through His Word.

TRANS: Let's examine the seven-fold perfection of "**THE RAPIER OF REVELATION**" or The Sword of the Lord...

THE SWORD OF THE LORD IS...

I. DIVINE IN ITS ORIGIN: *"The Word of God..."*

A. Given by Divine Authority:

1. Does not mean He spoke all the words in it, but that He overruled in the record of those words.

NOTE: The words of men, angels, demons, and Satan are recorded within its pages, but collectively it is God's revelation of those words. Therefore every word in it is of divine authority.

2. God authored it, the Holy Spirit transmitted it, the Son is the expression and subject of it, and men penned it.

B. Imparted with Divine Supervision:

1. He supervised its transmission and its recording.
2. He promised continual supervision of its *copying and translation*.

NOTE: Revelation and Inspiration without Preservation guarantees the extinction of God's Word. If man lost it, or messed it up or garbled its message and its words... God failed!!!

II. LIVING IN ITS NATURE: *"alive..."*

A. It is Alive: cf. John 6:63 with Proverb 6:22-23

1. The "seed" of the Word is alive and can germinate and produce fruit.
2. The Word of God written reflects the nature of its Author.

B. It is Life-Giving:

1. You need not bring life to the Scriptures, you draw life from the Scriptures.
2. Cf. **I Peter 1:23** *"Being born again...by the Word of God which LIVETH and abideth forever."*

ILLUS: As sinners we are like the dead man buried in Elisha's tomb (**II Kings 13:20-21**) who, when his body touched Elisha's bones in the grave, came to life. Even so these "bones" of the prophets, written ages ago, will impart life to those who come into contact with them.

III. POWERFUL IN ITS OPERATION: *"powerful..."*

A. Energetic:

1. The word "powerful" comes from the Greek *"energes"*.
2. It is not only living, but active.

ILLUS: A snail is alive, but not energetic or active and surely not powerful. God's Word not only tells us what to do, but provides the power to do it.

B. Transforming:

1. God's Word is the source of power for salvation and for the believer.

ILLUS: An infidel member of the "Hell Fire Club" in London was imitating the preaching of George Whitefield with accuracy. Midway through the sermon the Word of God converted him. He sat down broken and confessed the power of God's Word. The club dissolved.

2. The fulness of the Spirit is channeled through the word.

IV. SHARP IN ITS PENETRATION: "*sharper...*"

A. Doubled-Edged: (Spurgeon: "Scripture is edge all over.")

1. It slashes two ways.
2. The two edges suggest the two testaments or its temporal and spiritual applications and blessings.
3. It may also suggest its application to the saved and the lost, as it is the basis of salvation and condemnation.

V. PIERCING IN ITS SEPARATION: "*dividing asunder...*"

NOTE: While it has two keen razor edges like a sword, it also has a point like a rapier.

A. The Soul and the Spirit: (spiritual)

1. Man has three parts, two invisible to the physical eye.
2. The soul has a bodily shape with eyes, a tongue, and a mouth and can wear clothes! **Rev. 6:9,11**
3. The spirit is like the wind and is shapeless.
4. The soul or psyche speaks of man in relation to himself (the soul probably has the same shape, etc. of the body).
5. The spirit or pneuma deals with man in relation to God.

ILLUS: R.B. Thieme says the soul is in your head and is synonymous with your brain. But his "head-bone" isn't connected to his "neckbone". Like the little boy who was asked how he liked his new two week old brother: "I love him, mommy but his head's on loose."

B. The Joints and Marrow: (carnal)

1. It divides and separates things that shouldn't be together.
2. It goes down deep to dislodge the "marrow" of our most beloved sins, prejudices and false ideas.

VI. DISCERNING IN ITS JUDGMENT: "*discerner...*"

A. It Criticizes: Greek "*kritikos*"

1. The Word criticizes us...we are not its critic.
2. It labels one thought: "carnal, unspiritual" and another: "Christ-like, spiritual".
3. It goes beyond thoughts to motives: "intents" (Apparently when we read it, it reads us!).
4. It always gives constructive criticism: even when it indicates we are wrong, confused, misled, or deceived.

B. It Discriminates:

1. A person with discernment can always differentiate between things which are different; discrimination is a good quality, not a bad one!
2. The Word of God is designed to show us things which are so and things which are not so - truth and error!

VII. REVEALING IN ITS EXPOSURE: V. 13

A. It Exposes:

1. Note the masculine pronoun "*his*" referring back to God's Word!!! cf. **Rom. 9:17** and **Gal. 3:8**.
2. The Word removes the hypocrisy and facade and gets down to the bare ("naked") essence of the sinner.

B. It Reveals:

1. The word "*open*" is related to the Greek word for "neck" ("*trachelos*").

2. It was used of the gladiator who put the point of his sword to his opponent's neck as a sign of victory.

CONCL: Oh, **"THE RAPIER OF REVELATION"**! The Sword of the Spirit! Men are rebels determined to resist God, but they are vulnerable to His swift sword and need to cry out for mercy. The powerful, living, sharp, penetrating, Sword of the Lord... **"THE RAPIER OF REVELATION"**: will win!

ILLUS: A prisoner sneered when given a New Testament. "It is just the right size to make my cigarettes from!" He smoked his way through Matthew, Mark, and Luke and when he got to **John 10** he decided to read a bit before there was nothing left. He began reading and read himself to Christ. **"THE RAPIER OF REVELATION"** claimed another captive.

"For the word of man is dead and powerless and duller than any paper knife, which cannot pierce between the body and soul or the skin and bones and cannot discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." Gentiles 6:66 R.S.V. (Robert Shuller Version!)

**"THERE IS A GOD-MAN IN THE GLORY,
FOR THE MAN OF GOD IN THE VALLEY"**



TEXT: Hebrews 4:14-16

THESIS: To show we have a great, sensitive, and gracious High Priest in heaven interceding for us.

INTRO: A. Often fundamentalist preachers are described as preachers of hell-fire and damnation and that is true, but only half-true. While we do preach hell-fire and damnation, we also preach heaven's glory and forgiveness. Salvation not only saves from spiritual death and hell, but brings spiritual life and heaven. We preach not only what will happen if we reject Christ, but what the results will be if we receive Christ. We preach not only His wrath, but also His grace. We picture Him not only as a Judge, but also our merciful High Priest.

ILLUS.: "Preachers" like Joel Osteen and Rick Warren take the teeth out of God's Word. Osteen says he will never mention hell – it is too negative. Let him try to start his car (or jet plane!) without a negative terminal on its battery.

B. The passage before us introduces Christ's High-Priestly ministry to us and emphasizes His mercy and grace. Not only did the God-man die on that gory cross, He ascended the holy of holies in Heaven to become our Mediator and High Priest. As one preacher put it: **"THERE IS A GOD-MAN IN THE GLORY FOR THE MAN OF GOD IN THE VALLEY!"**

TRANS: The three verses here speak of what we have, what we don't have, and what we can have...

I. WHAT WE HAVE: (A GREAT HIGH PRIEST) V. 14

A. He is Great: "a GREAT High Priest"

1. Better than the prophets, angels, Moses, Joshua, Canaan rest, and the Old Testament High Priests:
 - a. Because He is the fulfillment of what they pictured.
 - b. Because He didn't just offer a sacrifice, He became the Sacrifice.
 - c. Because He didn't enter the holy of holies on earth, but **"is passed into"** the Holy of Holies in **"the heavens"**.

ILLUS: There were three parts to the Tabernacle; the outer court, the holy place, and the holy of holies. Christ, like the Old Testament High Priest, passed through the first division, the atmospheric heaven, the planetary heaven, and finally into the holy of holies and the throne room of God Himself - to offer up His blood! Then to prove His sacrifice was accepted, He returned to earth briefly before taking up residence permanently at the mercy SEAT!

The annual Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur is still celebrated by the Jews as a holy day, but they have no Temple, altar, or High Priest and cannot offer a sacrifice! **"IT IS FINISHED"!!!**

2. Israel held the High Priest in the highest regard.

B. He is God: "*Jesus, the Son of God*"

1. The title here shows us His humanity and His Deity.
2. He is not "A" son of God, He is "THE" Son of God.
3. This makes any other priest or High Priest a phony!

NOTE: No special order of priesthood or sacrifices is taught or recognized in the New Testament. Any "priest" who attempts to atone for sin or mediate between God and man is a sinful imposter! Any religious priesthood of any religion on earth is an affront to God and implies that the work of the God-man, the GREAT High Priest, was incomplete. It is akin to the sacrilege of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whom the earth swallowed because of their wicked presumption. (P.S. Allah had no son!!!)

II. WHAT WE DON'T HAVE: (AN INSENSITIVE HIGH PRIEST) V. 15

A. He is sympathetic: "*touched with the feeling of our infirmities*"

1. He has an unequalled capacity for sympathizing with us.

NOTE: Jesus not only had all the feelings of love and concern, disappointment, grief, and frustration we have, but much greater love, infinitely more sensitive concerns, infinitely higher standards of righteousness, and perfect awareness of the evil and dangers of sin. In fact, His Deity made His temptations and trials immeasurably harder for Him to endure than for us.

We have a limited capacity for pain and temptation. We will go into shock, become numb, or unconscious if the pain is too great or in the area of temptation we will succumb if it becomes too great. But He had no such limit... He had no shock system, no weakness limit. He never succumbed and so experienced every temptation to the maximum and every trial to the extreme!

2. We are part of His body, so He feels what we feel.

ILLUS: When you're sick, He feels it. When you're tired, depressed, or discouraged He is "*touched*". Your griefs and sorrows are His!

B. He is Sinless: "*yet without sin...*"

1. Though "*tempted like as we are...*"

NOTE: His sinlessness increased His sensitivity to sin. Before you were saved you indulged in sin. You didn't realize how awful sin was. Now when you hear someone else use the Lord's Name in vain you feel the pain. When you smell their cigarette smoke, it sickens you. When you hear of their abortions, your heart breaks.

2. Temptation and testing are not sinful but both may become so, depending upon our response.
3. Christ did not and could not respond to sin since He had no sin nature, but His temptation was nonetheless valid.

ILLUS: Merely experiencing something doesn't give us understanding. A person can have many surgeries without understanding surgery itself. A doctor can perform countless complex and successful operations without having

experienced the surgery himself. It is his knowledge of the disease or disorder and his skill and training which qualify him, not having the disease.

III. WHAT WE CAN HAVE: (A HIGH PRIEST WHO GIVES GRACE) V. 16

A. Immediate Access: *"Let us come boldly..."*

1. Because of our profession (v. 14) and His sinlessness (v. 16), we can come **"boldly"** to **"the throne of grace"**.

ILLUS: You don't have to go through Mary, Joseph, St. Peter, the Pope, a priest, a pastor, or "blessed St. John the Baptist". You can come directly without an appointment and without fear. My children don't have to make an appointment to enter my office. My family can come in anytime!

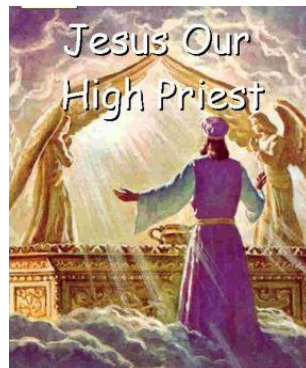
2. We come expecting mercy.

B. Immeasurable Grace: *"grace to help..."*

1. It is a throne of grace, not a bar of judgment for the believer.
2. This is not saving grace, but grace to bear up under a trial or to help you deal with a situation that would ordinarily produce despair, sin, or even suicide.
3. When the "time of need" stretches into months or years, the believer learns to live in the throne room.

CONCL: It is during the "time of need" that you find out there really is **"A GOD-MAN IN THE GLORY FOR THE MAN OF GOD IN THE VALLEY"**. And grace from the throne becomes real! Is He your High Priest?!

"THE PARADOXICAL PRIESTHOOD"



TEXT: Hebrews 5:1-4

THESIS: To show how Christ fulfilled the qualifications, ministry, and call to be our High Priest.

INTRO: A. The concept of a priesthood suggests that man is estranged from God and is in need of a mediator. In order for sinful man to be represented before a holy God, a mediator must be appointed. The grace of God is evidenced in His ordination of a priestly class and the Levitical sacrificial system.

B. Christ has already been referred to as our High Priest three times in Hebrews: **2:17**; **3:1**; and **4:14**. The Levitical, Old Testament priesthood has been fulfilled in Christ. The contradictions inherent in sinful men interceding for, making sacrifices for, and mediating for other sinful men are answered in our "Great High Priest".

TRANS: The passage before us deals with **"THE PARADOXICAL PRIESTHOOD"**.

I. THE HIGH-PRIEST'S QUALIFICATIONS: V. 1

A. His Humanity: v. 1a "taken from among men..."

1. An angel or other superhuman being would not qualify.
 - a. He would not possess man's nature.
 - b. He would not be subject to man's temptations.
 - c. He would not have experimental acquaintance with man's sufferings.
2. Thus, Christ could qualify because He became human.

NOTE: This entire passage is introductory to the subject of the high-priestly ministry of Christ and will continue for several chapters. So although Christ is not specifically mentioned in these four verses, He is definitely in view.

- a. He does possess man's nature.
- b. He was subject to man's temptations.
- c. He is acquainted experientially with man's sufferings.

B. His Ordination: v. 1b "ordained for men..."

1. This truth teaches that man cannot approach God directly.

ILLUS: The tree of life in Eden was able to bestow immortality and was a symbol of God Himself. So, when Adam sinned, he was excommunicated and not permitted to return lest he should partake of that immortality. (**Genesis 3:24**) He was alienated from God.

2. Someone must be "**ordained**" to represent others.
 - a. Noah was the High Priest for his family. (**Genesis 8:20**)
 - b. Abraham was the High Priest for his family. (**Genesis 12:8**)
 - c. Job was the High Priest for his family. (**Job 1:5**)
 - d. Aaron and his sons are ordained to be High Priests for the nation of Israel and anyone who would approach God.

C. His Representation: v. 1c "in things pertaining to God..."

1. He had one function in life... he could not be a prophet, King, businessman, or farmer.
2. He had no portion when Canaan was divided... Israel's God was his inheritance.

NOTE: The life of the High Priest revolved around the Tabernacle or Temple, the religious calendar, and the sacrificial system.

II. THE HIGH PRIEST'S MINISTRY: V. 1d, 2, 3

A. To offer Gifts and Sacrifices for Others: v. 1d

1. The "gifts" were voluntary, the "sacrifices" obligatory.
2. The "gifts" were non-bloody offerings, the "sacrifices" were bloody.
3. The "gifts" were for worship, the "sacrifices" for men's sins.

B. To Have Compassion on Others: v. 2

1. The High Priest had to maintain a balance between apathy and emotionalism.
2. The source of the people's sins was ignorance and the result was deviation from the law.
 - a. The Law distinguished between sins of ignorance and sins of presumption. (**Numbers 15:24-31**)
 - b. There was *no sacrifice for presumptuous sins and the sentence was death.*

ILLUS: The danger was that because the priest himself was a sinner he might condone their sins or be too severe in his judgment. His humanity, with its infirmities and extremes, might contribute to defective sympathy and distorted understanding.

But Christ, our High Priest, though human, was without sin. He cannot condone failure, neither will He judge capriciously or harshly. His holiness would cause Him to judge severely, but His perfection would make Him compassionate, tender and merciful to the sinner. When we mature and become more Christlike, we too will show more tenderness and mercy.

3. His compassion was to stem from his own *"infirmity"*.

C. To Offer Sacrifices for Himself: v. 3

1. Though considered positionally holy, he had to be constantly reminded of his own sins.
2. Here is another paradox between the Old Testament High Priest and Christ, The Great High Priest.
3. The Spirit of God here presents the marked contrast between the Aaronic priests and our High Priest.

III. THE HIGH PRIEST'S CALLING: V. 4

A. Man-called Priests: v. 4a "no man..."

1. Korah and company tried it and God killed them! (**Numbers 16**)
2. King Saul invaded the priesthood and lost his kingdom! (**I Sam. 13**)
3. King Uzziah tried to enter the Temple and burn incense and God smote him with leprosy. (**II Chronicles 26:16-21**)

NOTE: Today every believer is a part of a "royal (not Catholic!) priesthood." All other priests today are man-called, church-appointed, man-made charlatans who have usurped a Jewish priesthood that was done away with on Calvary.

B. God-called Priests: v. 4b "honor... called of God"

1. God alone can "call" men into the ministry.
2. God called Aaron (and his sons) and verified it with a miracle.

ILLUS: Divine confirmation of His call came when 12 dry twigs engraved with the 12 tribes names were placed in the Tabernacle along with one with Aaron's name. Only Aaron's budded and PRODUCED FRUIT! Supernatural fruit was (and is) the sign of God's calling. *When God calls a man, He doesn't send him on any fruitless errands.* (Often men claim to be called to preach but can't find a congregation called to listen! DUH!)

CONCL: The reason the Old Testament priesthood was a paradox was because though God initiated and instituted it, it was never satisfactory and was always insufficient. It was temporary until the 'Great High Priest' came and offered Himself a sacrifice. He met all the QUALIFICATIONS, had a MINISTRY which included compassion and sacrifice for others, and was God called! He can be your High Priest if you choose.

"WAS JESUS AFRAID TO DIE?"



TEXT: Hebrews 5:5-10

THESIS: To set forth Jesus' qualifications for His high priestly ministry: His call, crying and His compliance, or obedience.

INTRO: A. Our text, especially **v. 7**, seems to suggest that Jesus was afraid to die. But was it death He feared? In order to understand **v. 7**, we must examine its context. What we will find is powerful truth.

B. The subject of the passage is the comparison and contrast between the Old Testament Levitical High Priest and Christ our High Priest. One of the criticisms of the Jews who had accepted Christ as Savior would have been that they had no High Priest to represent them before God. The reverse was true and it is that which is dealt with here. In fact, the unsaved Jews no longer had a High Priest! His office and function was merely typical and that type had been fulfilled in Christ.

TRANS: Christ is presented as a High Priest better than those in Aaron's line...

I. BETTER BECAUSE OF HIS CALL: V. 5-6, 10

A. A Higher Position: v. 5

1. He is called by God and is the Son of God.
2. The quotation is from a messianic prophecy in **Psalms 2:7**, (cf. **1:5**)
 - a. Christ holds a higher position than Aaron's sons - He is the Messiah.
 - b. No son of Aaron could be the Messiah because they were from the tribe of Levi; the Messiah must come from the tribe of Judah.
 - c. Christ is only like Aaron in His calling to the priesthood, in that He is God-called. (cf. **v. 4**)

B. A Higher Priesthood: v. 6-10

1. Melchizedek was a mysterious man who shows up after Abraham receives Lot from Sodom.
2. Melchizedek is only mentioned in 4 or 5 verses in **Genesis 14** and in **Psalms 110:4** (another prophetic, Messianic Psalm).
 - a. He is both a King and a Priest - as is Christ.
 - b. He has no (recorded) **"beginning of days" nor "end of life"**.
 - c. He was not a humanly appointed High Priest.

ILLUS: Abraham somehow recognizes his greatness and priesthood, pays tithes to him, and goes beyond and reverses the order of giving and only keeps a tithe for himself! (**Genesis 14:18-24**) Nearly three chapters will be devoted to this "mystery man" in Hebrews to show his resemblance to Christ and to demonstrate that Christ's priesthood is greater than Aaron's.

II. BETTER BECAUSE OF HIS CRYING: V. 7

A. Prayers and Tears:

1. Three times the Scripture records our Savior's tears: at Lazarus' funeral, at the unbelief of Israel, and in Gethsemane.

NOTE: In Gethsemane prayers and tears are connected. The reference here seems to fit that experience.

2. Was Jesus afraid to die?

B. Death and Fear:

1. He prayed that the cup (the wrath of God poured out on sin) would be removed...it wasn't! (Cf. **John 12:27; 18:11**)
2. He prayed **"unto Him that was able to save Him FROM DEATH"** - that was answered!

NOTE: He didn't pray to be saved "from dying", but He prayed to the One Who was able to save Him *"from death"* and He did! This speaks of resurrection! *"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it (DEATH!)."* Acts 2:24 *"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah."* Psalm 49:15 *"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."* Revelation 1:18

Christ prayed He would not stay in the grave after He died. God promised this to Him cf. Titus 1:9

3. What did He fear? The second death of separation from God.

- a. The punishment for sin is both physical and spiritual. Double death!
- b. Christ would experience both deaths...but resurrection would free Him forever!
- c. His prayers were answered in that He was restored to fellowship with the Father after being judicially forsaken by Him at the resurrection!

III. BETTER BECAUSE OF HIS COMPLIANCE: V. 8-9

A. Obedience: v. 8

- 1. Here His humanity is stressed: *"A son" "learned" "suffered"*
- 2. There was never a question about His obedience in the Trinity.
- 3. It was in His humanity that *"He learned obedience"*.

CONCL: Jesus was NOT afraid to die. He died as an act of obedience to qualify Him as our High Priest and as Author of eternal salvation. His call, His crying, and His compliance make Him a better High Priest than any other!

"ONWARD and UPWARD!"



TEXT: Hebrews 6:1-3

THESIS: To urge believers to grow up and go on to maturity.

INTRO: A. Hebrews is a book of warnings. So far three warnings have been sounded:

- 1) Heed spiritual instruction (2:1-4);
- 2) Guard against unbelief (3:7-9), and
- 3) Keep your spiritual senses sharp (5:11-14).
- 4) Now, yet another red flag is waved: Hold fast to your profession (6:1, 2). Obviously the readers of this epistle were on dangerous ground. They need to check their position and their progress, their state, and their stance.

B. This latest warning/rebuke follows hard on the heels of his last scolding, where he likened these *professed believers* to little, bottle-sucking babies. This new admonition tells them they need to grow up and go on to perfection. They need to progress "ONWARD and UPWARD."

TRANS: The two key words in the text are obviously "*principles*" and "*perfection*".

I. A CALL TO PROGRESS: "*leaving the principles...*" V. 1-2

A. Leaving the Principles:

1. This does not mean to abandon foundational truths.
2. The picture is that of a building "leaving" its foundation, yet resting its weight on it.

ILLUS: In the context (5:11-14) note the "*therefore...*". It portrays a milk-drinking baby growing up to be a meat-eating man. He may still drink milk, but milk is not his strength source. This "*leaving*" could also be likened to a tree leaving its root yet never letting go.

No one can escape coming into the world as a baby- it's the only way to get here! But it is tragic when a baby fails to mature. Every grandparent loves to hold the baby, but they desire that baby to grow up, not remain an infant.

B. Identifying the Principles:

NOTE: Most authors make the six principles Old Testament doctrines, but the text calls them "*principles of the doctrine of Christ.*" I believe them to be early church, New Testament principles. Their number may be significant, just short of 7, the number of perfection.

1. Two Inward Experiences:

a. "*Repentance from dead works...*"

- 1) Repentance marks the initiation of the spiritual life.
- 2) All works of man and even biblical (Old Testament) works are incapable of imparting spiritual life.
- 3) Works FOR salvation produce death, not life.

b. "*Faith Toward God*":

- 1) Faith and repentance are two sides of the same coin.
- 2) It is "*FROM works*" - "*TOWARD God*".

NOTE: These two doctrines are basic to biblical Christianity and reveal a marked contrast to Judaism which was characterized by works. Those Old Testament "works" could never "take away sin" though designed as visual aids to promote "faith toward God." Now that substance has replaced shadow and the antitype has fulfilled the type, these "works" are "*dead*".

2. Two Outward Ceremonies:

a. "*the doctrine of baptisms*":

- 1) John's baptism and Christian baptism may both be referred to here.
- 2) The Jews had been familiar with both.

NOTE: Tracing the evolution of Baptism in Acts is an interesting and fascinating study. The baptism of converted Jews in **Acts 2** ("for the remission of sins" **2:38**) is surely different than the baptism of the Philippian Jailor and the Ethiopian Eunuch. **Acts 19** reveals the difference, where "John's baptism" and Christian baptism are contrasted.

b. "*Laying on of hands...*":

- 1) The action of the laying on of hands in the New Testament symbolized recognition, identification, and approval.
- 2) Both of these "ceremonies" spoke of a person's relationship with the local church.

3. Two Future Events:

a. **"Resurrection of the dead...":**

- 1) This doctrine was given in seed form in the Old Testament and grew to maturity in the New Testament.
- 2) It is basic to salvation and hope of our future state.

b. **"Eternal judgment...":**

- 1) This doctrine is basic to any concept of a Supreme Being Who is offended by sin.
- 2) It is foundational to Christianity - all will one day answer to God.

NOTE: If any of these six doctrines are **"strong meat"** to you, then you are either lost or a bottle sucking baby believer.

It is interesting how much confusion concerning these things exists in the commentaries! Maybe these "scholars" are really babies!?!

TRANS: Paul is demanding that those who are saved among his readers grow up. This is a call to progress. It is also a call to perfection or spiritual maturity...

II. A CALL TO PERFECTION:

A. Onward: **"let us go on..."**

1. Foundations are laid so buildings can be erected.
2. Milk is given so meat can be eaten.
 - a. Paul is trying to show that Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Melchizedek, were all shadows and types.
 - b. He is trying to get them to turn from animal sacrifices to the perfect Sacrifice, from the good to the better, from the symbol to the substance.
 - c. He is trying to divorce them from the temple, altar, priests, and the ark and marry them to the Bridegroom Who is all of these in perfection.

B. Upward: **"perfection..."**

1. They were to leave kindergarten and the ABC's and graduate from the university of spiritual instruction.
2. They needed the ABC's but did not have to keep learning the basics, but to use them to go on to better things.

ILLUS: The ABC's help you form words and enable you to read words, sentences and books... in fact anything written. Mastering the **"principles of the doctrine of Christ"** they were to go on together (**"us"**) **"unto perfection."** **Verse 3** is not a wish, but a positive declaration.

CONCL: Many believers are like the man who worked for 25 years in the same company doing the same old job for the same pay. Finally he went to the boss to complain. "After all" he said, "I've had a quarter of a century of experience." The boss sighed and replied, "You haven't had a quarter of a century of experience. You've had one experience for a quarter of a century."

"Onward and upward" is the admonition of the text. If you are still on milk, get weaned and start growing up!

"WHEN REPENTANCE IS IMPOSSIBLE" or "BEWARE BUSHES THAT BURN"



TEXT: Hebrews 6:4-9

THESIS: To show that spiritually immature believers may arrive at a time **"WHEN REPENTANCE IS IMPOSSIBLE!"**

INTRO: A. Hebrews is filled with flashing red warning lights. One of the most serious is in our text. It speaks of people who "fall away" from their original position to a place and time **"WHEN REPENTANCE IS IMPOSSIBLE."**

B. The question then is who are these people? When is this time? and How can WE avoid a similar fate?

C. The context deals with those who had become **"dull of hearing" (5:11)**, baby, milk drinking believers (**5:12-13**) and kindergarten Christians (**6:1-2**) still playing with the ABC's of Christian faith and doctrine.

TRANS: Are Paul's readers unbelievers who have only sampled Christ? Believers who lose their salvation? Saints who backslide? Let's try to identify the recipients of this epistle...

I. IDENTIFICATION OF THE RECIPIENTS: V. 4, 5

A. They were "once enlightened": v. 4a

1. The word **"once"** means "once for all".
2. The word **"enlightened"** is used of true believers in **Hebrews 10:32**. (cf. **II Cor. 4:3-6**; and **Ephesians 1:18**)

B. They had "tasted of the heavenly gift": v. 4b

1. The word transcends knowledge and implies experience.
2. Surely Jesus did not merely "sample" death on the cross- He experienced it! (**Hebrews 2:9**)
3. The **"gift" they "tasted" was "the gift of God which is eternal life." (Romans 6:23)** (Or the Holy Spirit or the gift of God's grace)

C. They were "partakers of the Holy Ghost": v. 4c

1. Speaks of "sharing" - cf. **3:1, 14**
2. The writer uses language to positively identify these recipients as believers.

D. They "tasted the good Word of God": v. 5a

1. Only a true believer evaluates God's Word as "good" (appetizing, flavorful, and digestible).
2. The enlightenment of salvation, the gift of God which is eternal life, and the partaking of the Holy Spirit leads to an appetite for the Word of God.

NOTE: W. Griffeth Thomas said: "...occupation with Christ will mean occupation with His Word... it is impossible to exaggerate the necessity and importance of the Bible in relation to the spiritual life. Just as the body requires four things for its proper condition: water, air, food and exercise- so the Christian needs the washing of water by the Word (**Ephesians 5:26**), the atmosphere of prayer, the food of the Word, and the exercise of consecration."

E. They *"tasted...the powers of the world to come"*:

1. Only the genuine believer has any real idea of what the future holds.
2. The linking of God's Word and the powers of the world to come may reveal the Source of this information.

NOTE: Paul seems to search his spiritual vocabulary to describe these people as believers. John MacArthur says they were merely exposed to the Gospel, sampled the bread of life, were associated with the Holy Spirit, and merely listened to God's Word and saw His power.

II. IMPOSSIBILITY OF REPENTANCE: V. 4, 6

A. Turncoats: *"it is impossible... if they fall away..." v. 4*

1. The words *"fall away"* are not from the Greek "apostasia" or apostasy.
2. The word here is "parapipto" or "to fall by the wayside".
 - a. These are believers who forfeit earthly blessings through a neglect of spiritual growth and maturity context).
 - b. A mere "professor" could not go on to maturity and it would accomplish nothing to warn such a person (you can't lose what you don't have!).
 - c. This *"fall"* is not accidental, but willful, not backsliding, but deliberate departure.

B. Traitors: v. 6

1. God cannot *"renew them again unto repentance"* as long as they persist in crucifying Christ afresh, and putting Him to an open shame by their rebellion and spiritual immaturity.

NOTE: The words "crucify" and "put" are present participles.

2. Active hostility to Christ CANNOT be a matter of restoration- but when the cause ceases to operate, the effect will cease to follow. (When rebellion ceases repentance becomes possible)

III. ILLUSTRATION OF REAPING: V. 7-8

NOTE: Natural laws are linked with spiritual laws because they have the same Originator.

A. Fruitfulness: v. 7

1. The *"earth"* = the believer and the *"rain"* = God's provision for fruitfulness and productivity. cf. **v. 10**
2. The obedient believer receives *"blessing from God"*; here...answered prayer, growth, maturity, inner peace, satisfaction, and joy; hereafter...Divine commendation and rewards for eternity at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

B. Fruitlessness: v. 8

1. The thorns and briars are the carnal works of the believer which will all be burned at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
2. Note that it is the *"thorns and briars"* that are *"burned"*, NOT the field!

QUOTES: W. Griffith Thomas: "On the one hand, the earth receives rain, produces fruit, and obtains blessing; on the other, there is production of thorns with rejection and burning at the end. This seems to indicate that nature provides the truth of persistence in one course leading inevitably to one end." "Understanding of the higher truths is God's blessing on goodness and destruction of the faculty of spiritual discernment is His way of punishing moral depravity."

(Edwards, P. 89) "As neglect of proper cultivation of land leads to worthless results, so neglect of the means to maturity leads to spiritual bankruptcy."

IV. INCLINATION OF READERS: V. 9

NOTE: After warning comes encouragement.

A. Better Things:

1. Paul feels it is not too late for them to harvest a crop of spiritual blessings and go on to maturity.
2. He speaks of his confidence in them, that they will not continue in spiritual immaturity.

B. Accompanying Things:

1. Things that go beyond milk, the first principles, and a carnal crop.
2. Things that will produce "*herbs meet for them*" instead of "*thorns and briars*". (cf. v. 7-8)

CONCL: Beware believer! A state of spiritual immaturity perpetuated will lead to a time "**WHEN REPENTANCE IS IMPOSSIBLE**" and rewards will be "burned"! "**BEWARE BUSHES THAT BURN!**" - Produce a harvest of herbs.

"THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION" or "CONVERSION IS NOT THE CROWN"



TEXT: Hebrews 6:9-12

THESIS: To show what should follow salvation as the believer matures.

INTRO: A. The Pastor of a church needs to keep his finger on the pulse of the church and to be alert to the spiritual condition of his flock. As the wise man wrote in **Proverbs 27:23:** "*Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks...*" Paul knows the people to whom he was writing. He has pointed out their weaknesses. He said they were "*dull of hearing*" (5:11), milk-drinking babies instead of meat-eating adults (5:12-14). He said they needed to mature and leave the ABC's of their faith (6:1, 2). He warned them of the consequences of those who are saved and produce "*thorns and briars*" instead of "*herbs*". Their works will be burned and they will suffer loss of reward. (6:4-9)

B. After this scathing warning, he speaks loving words of encouragement to them. He uses the term "*beloved*", a term of endearment God used of His own Son to show he recognized they were saved and they had great potential. He comforts them by saying he is "*persuaded better things*" of them, though he of necessity spoke harshly to jar them out of lethargy and provoke them to maturity. He speaks of the fruit in their lives which he sees as positive, "**THINGS WHICH ACCOMPANY SALVATION...**".

I. THEIR WORKS: V. 10a

A. God's Record:

1. God never forgets anything done "toward His Name".
2. Works must accompany salvation, though they cannot secure it.

NOTE: Conversion is the common cement, not the crown of the Christian life. Conversion is the root, works are the fruit of the believer. The genuineness of conversion is always measured by what it produces as a tree is known by its fruit.

3. God records our names in the Lamb's book of life at conversion, but He also records everything we do after conversion.

B. God's Remembrance: cf. Mal. 3:16

1. The Lord diligently and carefully records all we do **"toward His Name."**
2. Otherwise His reward system would be arbitrary and unfair and He would be "unrighteous".

II. THEIR LABOR OF LOVE: V. 10b

A. A Working Faith: (cf. Eph. 2:8-10)

1. A living faith is a working faith.
2. Being enamored over doctrine for doctrine's sake is fruitless and futile (**6:1-2**).
3. Doctrine is foundational and must be translated into practical ministry.

B. A Loving Ministry:

1. The phrase **"labor of love"** stresses the strenuous effort put forth in their work **"toward the Lord"**.

ILLUS: The study of the nature and attributes of God is wonderful, but unless it helps us to help others it is useless information. Our ministry **"toward His Name"** becomes practical when we **"minister to the saints"**. We need to work strenuously as we minister - till we perspire!!!

2. Their motivation was Theocentric not auto centric; there were no ulterior motives or selfish rewards in view.
3. They were simply expressing their love **"toward His Name"** by acts of hospitality and mercy **"to the saints"**.

NOTE: When our love for the Lord is right, our love for others will be right. We won't need to whip up love for others when we have proper love for Him. The proof that his readers were saved was their works **"toward His Name."**

4. They continued their ministry which showed that they had the potential for maturity.

III. THE WRITER'S DESIRE:

A. Their Maturity: v. 11

1. He was concerned that they would rest on their achievements and not press on to full maturity.
2. He knew his audience and recognized that some were becoming **"weary in well doing"** and his desire was that **"every one"** of them **"show the same diligence"**.
 - a. Not all who start well, end well.

ILLUS: Marty Jones started well- was faithful in services, soulwinning, even surrendered for full-time service...but turned back, **"crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame"** (ruined his testimony and brought reproach on our Savior). Repentance was impossible while engaged in this activity and so he didn't end well! (Marty died in a tragic motorcycle "accident.")

- b. Some seemingly lack the diligence to "hang in there" and not grow weary in well doing.

B. Their Diligence: v. 12a

1. The term "slothful" was translated "dull" in **5:11**. (Greek: "nothroi")
2. He wanted them not to be lazy, but active; not dull, but alert; not hardened, but teachable; not stiff-necked, but sensitive to God's Word and will.

C. Their Followers: v. 12b

1. The word "**followers**" = "mimetai" (Greek) from which we get our word "mimic".
2. He wanted them to follow the example of those successful godly men and women of faith he will write about in **Chapter 11**.
3. Those had remained faithful and patient even though they had not inherited all the promises of God.
 - a. The writer links "**faith and patience**" because some have faith but no patience.
 - b. The word "**patience**" here means "not easily out of breath", "long-tempered", "keeping things going".
 - c. The word "**inherit**" is not like our word concept of "heir apparent", but an inheritance in the present sense.

CONCL: Again, conversion is the commencement, not the crown of the Christian life. Salvation is wonderful, but in order to please our Savior we must go on to maturity with "**THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION**", "**better things**" than immature Christians produce. Faith is the root and works are the fruit of our salvation. How are **you** growing?!

"ANCHORED UPWARD" OR "SPIRITUAL SECURITY"



TEXT: Hebrews 6:13-20

THESIS: Every believer, like Abraham, can rest upon God's promise, God's oath and God's Son.

INTRO: A. The emphasis for the last two chapters has been spiritual maturity. Now the emphasis is on "**SPIRITUAL SECURITY**". His point is that though we may falter and fail and lose fruit and rewards. We can **NEVER** lose our salvation because our spiritual security depends on **GOD, NOT** on us or our performance.

B. In this passage he shows that our spiritual security is "**ANCHORED UPWARD**" in God's promise, God's oath, and God's Son...

VISUAL: A heavy rope from the platform to the ceiling.

I. GOD'S PROMISE: V. 13-15

NOTE: The "**faith and patience**" of those who "**inherit the promises**" is now illustrated by the life of Abraham.

A. The Promise Stated: v. 13-14

1. God's promise to Abraham was not based on reason, logic or intellect.
2. The only guarantee of its fulfillment was the unconditional Word of a God of integrity.

NOTE: This is the same foundation our faith has. We simply take God at His Word!

- a. This promise was given when Abraham and Sarah were humanly incapable of child-bearing and had to just trust His Word.
- b. The promise was confirmed, not on Abraham's character, but on God's character and faithfulness.

B. The Promise Fulfilled: v. 15

1. Twenty-five years elapsed between the promise and the birth of Isaac.
2. But Abraham ***"patiently endured..."***
 - a. He had a slight lapse in faith which resulted in the "Ishmael incident" - with ongoing repercussions.
 - b. But over all he ***"patiently endured"*** and thus ***"obtained the promise"***.

NOTE: He only lived to see the beginning of the promise, but, again by faith, he saw Christ's day (**John 8:56** ***"your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad"***). Abraham's spiritual maturity and progress was based upon faith in God's promise. We have more of God's promises today than Abraham- what hinders **our** spiritual progress? (The words ***"patiently endured"*** are the exact opposite of ***"slothful"*** in **v. 12.**)

ILLUS: The farmer plants the seed (faith), but cannot just sit on the porch to reap a harvest. He must fertilize it, cultivate it, weed it, and even water it. The believer who neglects church fellowship, prayer, Bible reading, soul winning, etc. is not going to reap much of a harvest. **Psalm 126:5-6**

II. GOD'S OATH: V. 16-18

A. Confirmation: v. 16-17

1. Men make oaths and call on ***"the greater"***.

ILLUS: "So help me God" is what we say in court with our hand on a **KJV Bible!** Even when we don't believe it, but we are saying it and Who it represents is ***"greater"***. We never say; "So help me Buddha" or "By Mohammed I will do this..." or "Confucius damn it!" If God answered all the "prayers" of people to "damn" things, none of us would be safe.

2. The idea of an oath is to end controversy.
3. God confirmed the immutability of His promise by swearing ***"by Himself"*** - ***"because He could swear by none greater."***
 - a. God's promise contained the content of the Covenant and the oath guarantees its fulfillment.
 - b. It is really an accommodation to man since God's Word is assured on the faithfulness of His character.
 - b. God did not need to confirm His promise by an oath and His doing so is not a reflection on His credibility but on man's perversion.

B. Consolation: v. 18a

1. These ***"two immutable things"***, His promise and His oath, should provide ***"strong consolation"*** for any believer as they did for Abraham.
2. God is no liar and His promises to His children are not designed to mislead.

ILLUS: God will allow a prophet to give a false answer to those who put other gods before Him (**Ez. 14:1-10**), will allow lying spirits to draw sinners to their death (**I Kings 13:17ff**), and will send strong delusion to those who have ***"pleasure in unrighteousness"***, but He always keeps His promises to His children.

III. GOD'S SON: V. 18b-20

A. Our Refuge: v. 18b

1. The phrase "**fled for refuge**" suggests Old Testament cities of refuge (**Num. 35:9ff and Joshua 20**); three on each side of Jordan for those who had accidentally killed someone where they could stay till the death of the High Priest.
2. We have fled to Christ as our High Priest and He will **NEVER** die! No avenger can touch us there.

B. Our Anchor: v. 19

1. We are "**anchored upward**" - not downward.
2. We are anchored not to stand still, but to move ahead.
3. Our Anchor is "**sure**"; cannot break and "**steadfast**"; it cannot slip.
4. Christ is our Anchor and He is in the throne room "**within the veil**".

NOTE: An anchor is invisible and out of sight, but real and we can feel its influence. Like the boy flying the kite out of sight- "I can't see it, but I can feel it tugging!"

C. Our Forerunner: v. 20

1. No Old Testament High Priest was a "forerunner" because no one could follow him "**within the veil**" into the holy of holies.
2. But Jesus has gone to heaven as our Forerunner so that we may follow.

CONCL: Believers have "**SPIRITUAL SECURITY**" because they are "**ANCHORED UPWARD**" to their "Forerunner" Who is in Heaven. We may lose fruit and rewards, but we can **NEVER** lose our Savior or our salvation. We are bound to our Anchor by unbreakable "**CORDS OF SALVATION**".

"THE MYSTERY MAN REVEALS THE MIGHTY MAN!"



TEXT: Hebrews 7:1-3

THESIS: To show how Melchisedec reveals the priestly ministry of our Savior.

INTRO: A. Mysterious Melchisedec! He suddenly appears in **Genesis 14** where the father of the Jews, Abraham, pays tithes (and more) to him. He is not mentioned again for over 800 years until **Psalms 110:4** where a brief and prophetic statement is made concerning the Messiah. Approximately 1,000 years later the writer of Hebrews resurrects him. Only three references in almost 2,000 years.

B. Mysterious Melchisedec! Some rabbis, Martin Luther, and Peter Ruckman speculate that he was Noah's son Shem ("**blessed be the Lord God of Shem...**"). Philo made him a nebulous picture of the human soul. Origen thought he was an angel. Others thought that he was Michael the archangel. Hierakas (third century) said he was an incarnation of the Holy Spirit. Many see him as Christ incarnated or at least as a Christophany. One group, known as the Melchisedekites, made him "greater than Christ, the original of whom Christ was only a copy, through whom all prayer must be brought to God."

TRANS: What can WE say about "Mysterious Melchisedec"? Let's confine ourselves to Biblical evidence...

I. A UNIVERSAL PRIEST: V. 1a "priest of the Most High God..."

A. Not A Jew:

1. Abraham was the father of the Jews.
2. Melchisedec appears before Israel is formed as a nation.
 - a. The Levites (later) were Israel's priests and ministered to Israel and only for Jehovah.
 - b. The Israelites were Jehovah's people and the Levites were Jehovah's priests.

B. Not A Gentile:

1. The term "Gentile" has little meaning before Israel becomes a nation; lit. = heathen.
2. Jehovah was the covenant God of Israel; Melchisedec is a priest of "***the Most High God***" (El-Elyon, not Jehovah).
 - a. Melchisedec, like Christ, is a priest who represents **all** men, not just Jews.
 - b. Melchisedec, like Christ, served as a priest without national or dispensational restrictions.

NOTE: The significance is that Paul is telling these Jews that even their own Scriptures and the father of their nation recognized a priesthood that was universal in scope and one that existed before there was a nation or a national (Aaronic) priesthood.

II. A ROYAL PRIEST: V. 1-2

A. A King:

1. In two verses, Melchisedec is referred to as a King four times.
2. The concept of a priest-King was foreign to the Levitical priesthood.
3. But the concept was spoken of prophetically in the Messianic/Melchisedekian **Psalm 110:1,4** and **Zech. 6:12-13**.

B. A Kingdom:

1. A King must have a kingdom and a seat of authority.
2. God had chosen Jerusalem (Salem) as His earthly seat of authority (**Psalm 132:13,14**). (cf. **Psalm 76:1,2** "Salem")

NOTE: Jerusalem had a King long before David and God had a Priest long before Aaron! Think of the power of these words to those who revered David, Abraham, and Aaron.

III. A RIGHTEOUS AND PEACEFUL PRIEST: V. 2

A. The Order:

1. The terms "***first***" and "***after that***" denote the nature and chronology of the first and second Advents of Christ.
2. His first Advent set forth His righteousness, His second Coming will usher in Peace. (The angelic chorus in **Luke 2** was heralding His second Coming.)

B. The Implications:

1. There can be no Kingdom of Heaven until there is a Kingdom of God.
2. There can be no peace till there is righteousness.

NOTE: Where these two concepts are mentioned in Scripture the order is **always** the same. **Psalm 85:9,10; Isaiah 32:17; Psalm 72:7**. This order holds true individually, nationally, and universally, as well as practically and spiritually.

- a. "Salem" = "Shalom" or peace in Hebrew.

b. Jerusalem is Salem and is the city of peace because it is the city where all wars will end!

IV. A SUPERIOR PRIEST: V. 1b,2a,4

A. The Greater Blesses the Lesser: v. 1a (cf. v. 7)

NOTE: In Chapter 6, Paul closed with Jesus as our High Priest entering into the Holy of Holies in Heaven as our Forerunner. Now he shows the divinity of His priesthood that it is royally majestic and infinitely greater than any other.

B. The Lesser Tithes to the Greater: v. 2a,4

1. Since Abraham, the father of the Jews, had to tithe to Melchisedec, he acknowledged his superiority.
2. Since Christ is the anti type of Melchisedec, the point and power of the passage is to set forth His ultimate superiority.

V. AN ETERNAL PRIESTHOOD: V. 3

A. Without Genealogy: (*agenealogêtos*)

1. This word is used nowhere else in Scripture nor in Greek literature - humanly speaking it has no meaning - everyone has a genealogy!
2. In the Aaronic priesthood genealogy was everything; if you were descended from Aaron you could serve, if not, you could not.
 - a. Thus, priests were often more concerned with pedigree than with holiness.
 - b. A man who served as priest did so because he was born into the right family, not because he lived a right life.

NOTE: Nothing is said about the genealogy of Melchizedek in Genesis, the book of genealogies, so that he can be presented as a perfect type of Christ or Christ Himself! (Compare the phrase "*made like unto...*" (v. 3) and the words "*this man*" (v. 4).)

B. Without Termination: "abideth a priest continually"

1. The Aaronic priesthood lasted a maximum of 25 years (at 25 served other Levites, at 30 began public duties, at 50 forced into retirement).
2. The Melchisedekian priesthood had no boundaries, suggesting eternity.

CONCL: "Mysterious Melchisedec!" "**THE MYSTERY MAN REVEALS THE MIGHTY MAN!**" Though shrouded in mystery, the One he pictures is stripped of His mystery. Through the Mystery man of the Bible, we learn much of the revealed Man of the Bible. He **is** a UNIVERSAL, ROYAL, RIGHTEOUS, PEACEFUL, and SUPERIOR PRIEST with an eternal priesthood! Do **YOU** know Him?!

"AND IN THIS CORNER..."



TEXT: Hebrews 7:4-10

THESIS: To show the greatness of Abraham and Melchisedec and the superiority of Christ over both.

INTRO: A. If Paul was the announcer at a prize fight, he might say; "IN THIS CORNER we have the contender for the title of world heavyweight High Priest Aaron, the Levite." He might continue; "AND IN THIS CORNER we have the undisputed champion and greatest High Priest of all, Melchisedec, the Mystery Man..."

B. He might even add; "Ladies and gentlemen, visiting with us tonight is the retired champion of the Jews, Abraham, the father of the greatest nation on earth." At least these are the characters Paul introduces us to in **Hebrews 7**, with a view toward showing us their greatness. First he speaks of...

I. ABRAHAM THE GREAT: V. 4,6

A. The Patriarch: v. 4 "Even the patriarch Abraham..."

1. The word means "father" (pater) and "ruler" (archein).
2. Abraham was considered the founder and father of the Jews.

B. The Promisee: v. 6 "him that had the promises..."

1. God had promised Abraham that through him would come a nation innumerable.
2. God had promised Abraham that through him and his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed.
3. God had promised Abraham a land for that great people.

NOTE: Abraham was so great as to be referred to as "*the Friend of God*" three times in Scripture. (**James 2:23; Isaiah 41:8; II Chron. 20:7**) The reason given for this was his faith and his obedience. If you wish to be called the friend of God and be considered great in God's sight "go and do thou likewise."

II. MELCHIZEDEK THE GREATER: V. 4-7; 9-10

A. Received Tithes of Abraham: v. 4

1. Melchizedek was a priest before the Law. (c. 400 years)
2. Melchizedek received tithes before the Law.
 - a. It is simply stated in **Genesis 14** as if expected, thus we must assume tithing was revealed and mandated by God.
 - b. The word "spoils" is a compound word meaning "top" (akros) and "heap" (this). Literally, "top of the pile", indicating the best of the spoils of victorious conquests.

NOTE: Unless you tithed of the "first tenth" and not the leftovers, you are not really tithing! Give the best of your time, talent, and tithes, not the leftovers. God doesn't want your worn out years, your spoiled and soiled life, or your dirty money. Abraham was not under Law but gave the choicest spoils to the Lord.

B. Gave the Blessing to Abraham: v. 6,7

1. Abraham, through whom the nations would be blessed, was here blessed by Melchizedek.
 - a. "**Blessing**" in the Old Testament usually included an inheritance or a bestowal of authority (e.g. Isaac blessed his son Jacob and Jacob blessed his grandsons).
 - b. The greater (in authority, power, and possessions) blesses the lesser.
2. The argument here is that as great as Abraham was, Melchizedek was greater.
3. The logic continues that if he is superior to Abraham, then he must be superior to his descendants, the Levites.

C. Received Tithes of the Levites: v. 5:9-10

1. Abraham's descendants, the Levites, had a divine mandate to receive tithes of their brethren. **v. 5**
2. But since they were seminally in the loins of Abraham, they too paid tithes to Melchizedek. **v. 9-10**

ILLUS: This "headship principle" where one acts in behalf of all who follow is illustrated throughout the Bible. Adam sinned in behalf of humankind (**Rom. 5:12**) and the result was death for all (**Rom. 6:23a**). Abraham acted in faith for Israel concerning God's promises. Christ on the cross acted in behalf of His seed. "When the death sentence of the Law fell on Christ, it fell upon the believer so he can unhesitatingly say '***I am crucified with Christ***' (**Gal. 2:20a**). So too when Christ arose in triumph from the tomb, all His people shared in His victory (**Eph. 2:5-6**). When He ascended on high, they ascended too." – **Pink** Oh, the blessedness of those words "***in Christ!***"

III. CHRIST THE GREATEST: V. 8

A. Levites Die:

1. The Aaronic or Levitical priesthood, though sanctioned of God to receive tithes, was of merely human duration.
2. The Melchizedekian priesthood is greater because it is of infinite duration (cf. **v. 3**).

B. Christ Lives:

1. Two contrasts are given in the verse: "***men that die***" vs. "***he (that) liveth***" and "***here and there***".
 - a. Since Christ is the anti type of Melchizedek, and is the reality of whom Melchizedek is the picture, He is greater than Abraham and Melchizedek.
 - b. Earth bound priests die, the heaven bound High Priest lives. (cf. **6:20**)
2. It is not the great one or even the greater one who lives, it is the Greatest One Himself.

CONCL: It took both the Levitical priesthood and the Melchizedekian priesthood to portray Christ's person and work. Melchizedek pictures His person and Aaron His work. Melchizedek "***abideth a priest continually***"; Aaron and his sons offered continual sacrifices. Christ is indeed the Greatest of all... He retains His title and always will! "Ladies and Gentlemen... **IN THIS CORNER...** is the reigning Champion and Greatest of all... Jesus Christ!"

"THE PERFECT PRIEST!"



TEXT: Hebrews 7:11-17

THESIS: To show how only Christ qualifies as "**THE PERFECT PRIEST.**"

INTRO: A. The argument in **Hebrews 7** so far is: Abraham is great, but he paid tithes to Melchizedek and received blessings from him, so Melchizedek is obviously greater. Also, since the Levites, including Aaron, were in Abraham's loins, Melchizedek is greater than them also. Finally then, it is established that Melchizedek's priesthood is greater and the One Who succeeds him in that line is the Greatest of all. The only One Who qualifies is Christ!

B. The writer anticipates the objection that Melchizedek's order was very fleeting, whereas the priestly order of Aaron was established by God, firmly entrenched in Judaism and highly respected. So he now points out

the inadequacies of the Aaronic priesthood and the Mosaic Law (!) and the need for a successor via Melchizedek. His standard must be nothing short of perfection - a perfect priesthood and **"THE PERFECT PRIEST!"**

I. THE QUESTION: V. 11

A. The Goal: Perfection

1. The word "perfection" demands something the Levitical priesthood could never provide.
 - a. The Levitical priests died. **v. 8**
 - b. The Levitical system only provided a means of approach through various and vicarious sacrifices and could never provide a perfect standing before God. cf. **10:4**
 - c. The readers were admonished to **"go on to perfection" (6:1)** but lacked the vehicle or priesthood to accomplish that, before and apart from Christ's sacrifice.
2. When Christ died on the Cross He used the same basic words translated "perfection" here (tetalestai) - **"It is finished"**.

ILLUS: The word signifies completion (the priest's work was never completed), full payment (sacrifices were always repeated), an end (day by day, the animals must be slain). **The PERFECT PRIEST** alone could cry "Perfection" - **"IT IS FINISHED!!!!"**

B. The Problem: Imperfection

1. God never intended perfection through the Levitical priesthood or the Lord, in David's day (**Psalm 110**) some 400 yrs. after Aaron's priesthood was established, would not be speaking of another order of priests!
2. The Levitical priesthood could not remove sin, give righteousness, or provide justification, sanctification, nor glorification.

NOTE: Spiritual "perfection" involves reconciliation and relationship with God AND a provision for perpetual fellowship with God. The Levitical priesthood was powerless because of the finite humanity of its priests. You need one **"like unto the Son of God"** who **"abideth a priest continually."**

II. THE QUALIFICATION: V. 12

NOTE: We use the word "qualification" here in the sense of modification or CHANGE.

A. Change in the Priesthood

1. What a bitter pill for the Jews to swallow!
2. How could there be a change in a Divinely ordained priesthood?!
3. The Jews believed that the priesthood was forever and unchangeable as well as the laws that regulated it.

B. Change in the Law

1. Their assumptions are proven incorrect.
2. Because the priesthood and the Mosaic Law were inseparable, a change in one implied a change in the other.
 - a. The laws (civil and ceremonial) were bound up with the priesthood.
 - b. If the priesthood was abrogated, then so was the Law.

NOTE: The dispensation of the Mosaic Law served its purpose in God's plan for Israel, but that purpose ended with the cross. It was a "schoolmaster" to bring men to Christ, THE PERFECT PRIEST. John summarized the contrast with **"for the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (1:17)**

III. THE QUANDARY: V. 13-17

A. Genealogy: v. 13-15 "...another tribe...Judah..."

1. Priests came from Levi.
2. Kings came from Judah

ILLUS: Of course the greatest King in Israel was David, of Judah, who was also a priest! (**I Chron. 21:26-28**) The greatest priest was Melchizedek and he was also a King. Jesus of Judah is also a King-Priest.

Jesus' forerunner was a Levite (**Luke 1-2**), John the Baptist, but Jesus was a Judaite and could not qualify as a Levitical priest. He **"ariseth another priest...after the similitude of Melchizedek"**. (**v. 5**) He comes from **"another tribe"** and is **"another priest"** – **THE PERFECT PRIEST!** No one else qualifies or even comes close.

B. Genotype: v. 15-17

NOTE: The word "genotype" means having the fundamental constitution regarding hereditary factors or having the same combination of hereditary factors - but in Jesus' case not necessarily the same parentage - as Melchizedek. (**cf. v. 3!**)

1. The word **"another"** means one of a different kind (from the Levites). **v. 15**
2. Jesus' descent is from Judah as to a man and His likeness is to Melchizedek as to a priest, thus He constitutes a brand new priesthood.

ILLUS: There are only two priestly lines in the Bible: Levitical and Melchizedekian. Any "priest" today who claims the title is a liar unless he possesses these credentials. If he claims he is a Levitical priest, he is out of work! If he claims he is Melchizedekian, he is Jesus Christ or a liar!

3. The Melchizedekian priest of the passage (Christ) is contrasted with the Levitical priest of the Law.
 - a. The contrast is striking.
 - b. Carnal vs. eternal (carnal = related to this world and time; eternal = related to heaven and eternity.)
4. Since Jesus Christ is **"a priest forever"** He never needs nor can be replaced, sin or die -so He is **"THE PERFECT PRIEST!"**

CONCL: You need no other sacrifice, He died for you. You need no other confessor, He intercedes for you. You need no one to absolve you, He paid for your sins. You need no one else to bless you, He is the greatest. You need no one to bow down to, He alone is God. You needn't worry about someone to replace Him, He is a priest **"forever!"** You need never fear He will fail you, He is sinless. HE IS **THE PERFECT PRIEST!**

"UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED FOREVER!"



TEXT: Hebrews 7:18-22

THESIS: To contrast the Law and its priesthood with grace and its Bestower.

INTRO: A. Even though a product has a "lifetime guarantee" or is "unconditionally guaranteed", no-thing is **"UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED FOREVER!"** But because Jesus Christ is a perfect Priest and **"abideth a priest continually" (v. 3)**, He is "made a surety (Guarantor) of a better testament." (v. 22) Thus our salvation - based on Him – is **"UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED FOREVER!!"**

B. I do not believe the Calvinistic doctrine of the "perseverance of the saints," I believe in the Bible's promise of the "perfection of the Savior" and the "preservation of the saints" by His unconditional and eternal guarantee.

TRANS: The text reveals four important truths concerning the perfection of our High Priest and the imperfection of the Law and the Levitical priesthood...

I. CANCELLATION OF THE OLD COMMANDMENT: (LAW) V. 18

A. Because it was Weak:

1. All the Law could do was to focus on imperfection.
2. It could not make anything perfect.
3. Because the Law is cancelled, the priesthood it established is also cancelled.

ILLUS: Barnabas, who was a Levite, is never referred to as a priest in the early church, nor is Paul, Peter or James. There are NO legitimate "priests" in any New Testament church! All so-called priests are religious fakers within a religious monstrosity called "the one true church"! They, as all "priests", have been disannulled or cancelled! Who needs a weak and ineffective priesthood?!

B. Because it was Unprofitable:

1. The logic is: do away with the weak and unprofitable for the strong and profitable.
2. Weak law is replaced by strong grace and weak Levitical priests are replaced by one strong Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

II. ELEVATION OF A BETTER HOPE: V. 19

A. The key word: "Better"

1. Jesus Christ is seen thus far as "better" than: the prophets, the angels, the creation, Moses, David, Joshua, Abraham, Aaron, and the Levitical priests.
2. Now He is seen as offering a "better hope":
 - a. "Better" speaks of comparison - to the Law.
 - b. "Better" speaks of replacement.

B. The Key Thought: "Draw nigh"

1. The Law kept men at a distance from God because of its perfection and man's imperfection.
2. Even the High Priest was kept at a distance from God, separated by the veil in the Holy Place.

ILLUS: Christ has rent the veil and "run interference" for us by entering into the Holy of Holies (cf. 6:19-20) as our Forerunner. Since His sacrifice was perfect, the way is clear for us to "come boldly to the throne of grace." Truly this is **"better"**!

III. DECLARATION OF A GREAT OATH: V. 20-21

A. Priests Without an Oath: v. 21a

1. The Levitical priesthood was instituted by God under the Law according to His Word.
2. At no time did God swear that it would be a permanent priesthood:
 - a. It was written on stone tablets which were broken.

- b. It was referred to as the "old" Covenant, suggesting its replacement. (**Jer. 31:31**)
- 3. The Levites ascended the priesthood via heredity, not via an oath of God.

B. A Priest With an Oath: v. 20-21b

1. **"But this (Christ) with an oath..." v. 21**

- a. The oath doesn't replace greater truthfulness, but puts the emphasis on permanency.
- b. The oath stresses the immutability of God and thus of His promise.

2. **"(with) an oath He (Christ) was made priest" v. 20**

- a. For the sixth time the **"order of Melchizedek"** is mentioned.
- b. For the fourth time the prophetic Psalm (**110:4**) is quoted.
- c. For the first time the oath of God is mentioned: **"the Lord swear"**.
 - 1) The Levitical priesthood rested on the Law (**v. 12**).
 - 2) The Melchizedekian priesthood rests on an oath.

IV. CONFIRMATION OF A BETTER TESTAMENT: V. 22

NOTE: In **v. 7** we have a **"better priest,"** in **v. 19** a **"better hope,"** now in **v. 22** a **"better testament."**

A. Jesus, the Guarantor: "surety"

- 1. The word means "one who makes himself liable for another's debts.
- 2. He became our **"UNCONDITIONAL GUARANTEE FOREVER!"**

B. Jesus, The Testator: "Better testament"

- 1. A last will and testament:
 - a. Rests solely on the determination of its author,
 - b. Aims to bestow its inheritance or treasure,
 - c. Designates its recipients.
- 2. It is a **"better"** testament or covenant.

CONCL: Thank the Lord we do not have to rely upon the "UNCONDITIONAL GUARANTEE" of fallible human beings or some giant corporation. Any guarantee is only as good as the one standing behind it. In this case God wrote the guarantee and because He cannot lie, our salvation and all that goes with it are **"UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED FOREVER!"**

"PERFECTLY and PERPETUALLY QUALIFIED"



TEXT: Hebrews 7:23-25

THESIS: To reveal the contrast between the dying priests of the Aaronic priesthood and the Living Priest of the Melchizedekian priesthood.

INTRO: A. The primary qualification for Old Testament priesthood was to be in the family line of Aaron. Certain physical infirmities would disqualify a man from serving, such as blindness, being a dwarf, etc. **cf. Lev. 21:17-21**), but the ultimate disqualification is found in **v. 23** of our text - *death!*

B. The contrast of the passage is clear. It is between the sons of Aaron who died and the Son of God Who lives!

TRANS: A simple, obvious and yet ignored contrast is set forth between the many dying priests and the One Living Priest...

I. MANY DYING PRIESTS: V. 23

A. Many Priests:

1. From Aaron to the fall of the Temple in A.D. 70, approximately 83 High Priests officiated at the altar. (Josephus)
2. From father to son the priesthood was perpetuated, but death necessitated the constant change.

B. Dying Priests:

1. God seemed to stress this aspect of the earthly priesthood in the strange ritual connected with the first High Priest's death. (**cf. Numbers 20:25-29**)

ILLUS: Visualize the scene. Moses takes Aaron and his successor-son Eleazar to the top of Mt. Hor with the nation gathered to watch a strange ceremony. Moses strips Aaron of his priestly garments, places them on Eleazar, and then God kills Aaron! Thus He shows at the outset of the High-Priestly reign that its nature is temporal and temporary.

2. The picture presented is that neither the human giver of the Law (Moses), nor the human progenitor of the priesthood (Aaron) and the Law and sacrifices they represented, could bring God's people into the Promised Land.
3. From Aaron to Eleazar to Phineas...and on and on, one High Priest died and another had to replace him.

II. ONE LIVING PRIEST: V. 24-25

A. Christ's Uninterrupted Priesthood: v. 24a "*continueth ever*"

1. Christ also bled, but His death did not prevent Him from reigning as priest.
2. He died AS a priest, they died FROM being priests.
3. He died in His office, they died out of office.
4. Their death was not a part of their ministry, but His death was a part of His priestly duty... the chief part.
5. When they died they had no power to extricate themselves and return, but He had the power to lay down His life and take it up again.

B. Christ's Unchangeable Priesthood: v. 24b "*unchangeable...*"

1. No matter how qualified the High Priest was, his son was always standing by to replace him... even though less qualified.
2. Those who entrust their cause to Christ, the High Priest, knows that it is permanently secure in His hands because He is "perfectly and permanently qualified".
3. His priesthood is incapable of transmission to another.

C. Christ's Unequaled Priesthood: v. 25

1. His Power: "***He is able...***"

- a. Other High Priests could offer sacrifices which **"could never take away sins"** – He offered **"one sacrifice FOREVER"** which is ABLE to complete the job.
- b. The word "able" (dunatai) stresses the power to achieve what He will to do.
- c. He is able to save because He is the Savior; His performance is a natural expression of His Person.

ILLUS: Often I have seen people heartbroken, helpless, hapless and hopeless and I was incapable of assisting them. I wanted to help and was willing to help, but was not able to do so. I had no power. Thank God He does!

2. His Potency: **"to save to the uttermost..."**

- a. The term **"to save"** (sozein) encompasses salvation in all its aspects, from election, justification, regeneration, sanctification and glorification.
- b. It involves a total restoration to spiritual soundness.
- c. **"To the uttermost"** (panteles) is based on two Greek words: "pan" (all) and "teles" (complete) and teaches a salvation of total perfection.
- d. Ultimately the total personality of the believer will conform to what God intended in the plan of creation and redemption.

3. His People: **"that come unto God by Him..."**

- a. They are those who bend their will in submission to Him.
- b. "God graciously secures the assent of the will of the sinner without violating the responsibility of the accountable person." - Gromacki
- c. He comes willingly and because the Father draws him to the Son.

4. His Prayers: **"He ever liveth to make intercession..."**

NOTE: Too often we stress only the past ministry of our Savior, but thank God for His ongoing ministry!!

- a. The security of our salvation is His perpetual intercession for us.
- b. We cannot save ourselves nor keep ourselves saved- He has the power to do both.
- c. Constantly, perpetually, and eternally He intercedes for us before the Father.

NOTE: It is not a picture of one pleading our case before a reluctant God, but as an enthroned King-Priest-Son asking what He will from a Father Who always hears and delights to grant His requests.

CONCL: We have a **"PERFECTLY and PERPETUALLY QUALIFIED"** High Priest interceding for us. When we sin, He turns to the Father and says; "Put that on mine account... it was for that sin I died, but I am alive forevermore." The Father says; "I already have!!!"

"PERFECTLY and PERPETUALLY QUALIFIED - II"



TEXT: Hebrews 7:26-28

THESIS: To show Christ's perfections re: His character, position, sacrifice, and consecration.

INTRO: A. The strict qualifications for the High Priest's ministry of Aaron and his sons are listed in **Lev. 21:10-23** to show God's requirement for those who were to serve in His behalf. But because they were sinners, they fell **"short of the glory of God"** - they were imperfect priests. As such they also died, so they were neither

"PERFECTLY NOR PERPETUALLY QUALIFIED." The passage before us shows the contrast between them and our High Priest - Jesus Christ Who IS "**PERFECTLY and PERPETUALLY QUALIFIED.**"

B. Because he was a sinner, the Old Testament priest could be contaminated by others and be tempted and sin himself. Then he would have to offer sacrifices for his own sin or abstain from service till the necessary washings and cleansings were performed and the designated time elapsed. All this pointed to his imperfection. In stark contrast to all this is our Savior and High Priest...

I. CHRIST'S PERFECT CHARACTER: V. 26

A. Holy:

1. The Old Testament priest had "**holiness**" inscribed on his hat band; our High Priest has holiness inscribed on His Person.
2. The Old Testament High Priest was holy in his standing; our High Priest is holy in His state.

NOTE: The Old Testament High Priest was sanctified to the ministry and possessed certain external characteristics which qualified him for the position. (He was not blind, lame, or diseased; he looked normal, no external blemishes, normal as to size, etc.) He was also careful concerning contamination - he couldn't come into contact with dead bodies...not even his own parents! He had to avoid anything which would defile him.

- a. Holiness was a part of Christ's character - it was an inward quality.
- b. His virgin birth exempted Him from the contamination of man's sinful nature.
- c. It was His inherent nature of holiness which guaranteed not only that He would not sin, but could not!

ILLUS: He alone of humanity could declare "***the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.***" (***John 14:30***) There was nothing in His holy nature which the evil one could make a successful appeal to. "***Such an High Priest became us...***" was suited to us.

B. Harmless:

1. "**Holy**" tells us what Christ was Godwards: perfectly conformed to God's will inwardly with conduct to match; "**harmless**" tells us what He was manwards.
2. As "**holy**" He loved the Lord God with all His heart; as "**harmless**" He loved His neighbor as Himself.
 - a. The word means without malice or craftiness.
 - b. In His relations with others His motivations were absolutely blameless.

C. undefiled:

1. Christ came into the world "**holy**" and "**harmless**" and was so when He left, for though He mingled with sinners for 33½ years, He contracted no defilement.
2. Christ was undefiled morally as to His nature as the Old Testament priests were ceremonially.

ILLUS: He touched the leper and the leper was cleansed. He touched the dead and they were raised. He was in Satan's presence for 40 days and never infected with his evil. He remained undefiled.

D. Separate From Sinners:

1. He mingled with sinners but was apart from their sin... remained inwardly free from all participation in their sinfulness.
2. The Old Testament High Priest's separation was merely symbolic and ceremonial, His was actual and real.

II. CHRIST'S PERFECT POSITION: V. 26b

A. His Exaltation:

1. Perfection of character is not the only prerequisite in a High Priest suited for us, He must be possessed with the highest honor and power.
2. He was **"made a little lower than the angels"** for His earthly ministry, He must be **"made higher than the heavens"** for His High Priest ministry.

B. His Elevation:

1. He has been elevated above His creation.
2. He has been **"made higher than the heavens"**.

III. CHRIST'S PERFECT SACRIFICE: V. 27

A. Daily Sacrifices: (Ex. 29:38)

1. The High Priests made regular sacrifices for their own sins as well as the people's.
2. This spoke of their imperfection and inability to TAKE AWAY sins.

B. Single Sacrifice:

1. Because of His perfection, His offering for sinners was a once-for-all transaction.
2. He didn't offer an imperfect animal, but He became both High Priest and sacrifice **"when He offered up Himself..."**.

IV. CHRIST'S PERFECT CONSECRATION: V. 28

A. The Contrasts:

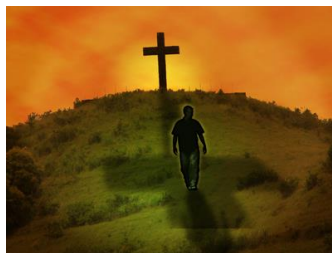
1. The "Law" vs. the "oath" (**Psalm 110**) which replaced it.
2. The High Priests who were mere "men" vs. Christ Who is the Son.
3. The High Priests with their "infirmities" vs. the Perfect, sinless, Son of God.

B. The Consecration:

1. The word implies consecration in the absolute sense.
2. The word is related to what Christ cried on the cross... **"finished"** or **"perfected"**!
3. His consecration is not temporal or temporary like that of the Old Testament priests, it is **"evermore"**.

CONCL: Truly He is **"PERFECTLY and PERPETUALLY QUALIFIED"** to be our High Priest! Is He yours? He can be...

"HIS MAJESTY, THE HIGH PRIEST, ENTHRONED"
or
"WHY SETTLE FOR A SHADOW?!"



TEXT: Hebrews 8:1-5

THESIS: Christ is enthroned in Heaven, the reality of which all else was but a shadow.

INTRO: A. No son of Aaron consecrated as High Priest of Israel ever wore a crown or sat on a throne. Kings did those things, High Priests offered *"gifts and sacrifices" (v. 3)*. But our text declares that *"we have SUCH an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens..." v. 1*

B. We have learned of His perfect qualifications and His perpetual ministry. Now the writer comes to the grand climax of his arguments with this summary of the position of our High Priest and the details of His continuing ministry.

I. SUMMARY: V. 1

A. The Bottom Line: v. 1a

1. He says in effect, "I have said all of that to say this."
2. He is about to capsulize and conclude the main point of his dissertation on Christ as our Superior High Priest.

B. The Top Position: v. 1b

1. The words *"such an high priest"* hark back to His qualifications in **7:26**.
2. The following words speak of His exalted position:
 - a. The right hand of a monarch symbolized honor, exaltation, and power; to stand there was a great honor, to sit there a supreme honor.
 - b. Christ's position is seated at *"the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."*

NOTE: Christ is co-ruler as **"HIS MAJESTY, THE HIGH PRIEST, ENTHRONED"**. No High Priest could ever be seated because his work was never complete. No High Priest could ever wear a crown and sit on a throne because that honor was only for kings. But our High Priest is a King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek- not after Aaron!

ILLUS: Traditionally when Israel's "Supreme Court" (the Sanhedrin) sat in session, a scribe or secretary sat on either side of the presiding judge. The scribe on the left hand recorded condemnations and judgments, the scribe on the right hand wrote pardons and acquittals! Jesus said He came into the world not to condemn the world, but to save it! He sits at the right hand of His Majesty in the position not only of power and honor, but of honor and intercession- *writing acquittals for all who trust Him!!* Cf. **Rev. 3:21** for His promise to us!

II. SANCTUARY: V. 2

A. The Holy Place:

1. Our High Priest ministers in the Holy Place ("sanctuary" = hagian or "holy").
2. He is set apart from us (sanctified) in the **"TRUE TABERNACLE"**.
 - a. This is not to suggest that the earthly Tabernacle was not set apart for God's service.
 - b. This doesn't suggest that the Old Testament sanctuary was false- only that it was symbolic and temporary.

ILLUS: Greek philosophers believed that everything here is but a shadow or reflection of the "real" counterpart in another world. As far as completeness, perfection, and permanence, our physical world IS less real than the eternal realm.

B. The Holy One:

1. The Tabernacle pictured in every detail our High Priest; every article, board, covering, furnishing, et.al. spoke of our Savior.
2. The **"true tabernacle"** surely refers to the heavenly one (**v. 5**), but also to "the Holy One " Him-self.
 - a. The word **"tabernacle"** speaks of a human body. (**II Cor. 5:1**)
 - b. Christ became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) here. (**John 1:14**)

- c. Christ's humanity is referred to in **Heb. 9:11** as a "**tabernacle**" distinguished from the "**holy place**" in **v. 12**.
- d. Israel's tabernacle was God's earthly dwelling place as was Christ (**1:14**).
- e. The virgin birth may be alluded to in **v. 2b** ("**which the Lord pitched and not man**").

III. SACRIFICES: V. 3-4

A. His Qualifications: v. 3

- 1. The work and ministry of a High Priest is to offer "**gifts and sacrifices**".
- 2. Christ has offered Himself as "**the gift of God**" and gave Himself as the One Sacrifice to take away sins "**when He offered up Himself**". (**7:27**)

B. His Disqualification: v. 4

- 1. On earth He never intruded into the Temple to take the place of an Aaronic priest...He didn't qualify.
- 2. He never parted the veil into the Holy of Holies or ministered in the Holy place of the priests.
 - a. Men did not need a mere earthly priest to enter into the Holy of Holies annually.
 - b. They needed a Melchizedekian Priest Who would minister on their behalf in the Holy of Holies in glory!

ILLUS: Jesus, on earth, healed the sick, raised the dead, preached, taught, forgave sins, called Himself God, but never intruded into the earthly priesthood. He was the fulfillment of that priesthood which was but a type or picture. He could not minister the offerings in the old, earthly sanctuary; He ministers the new offerings in the new, heavenly Sanctuary.

IV. SHADOW: V. 5

A. A Picture:

- 1. The earthly sanctuary was not an improved version of the heavenly... just the opposite.
- 2. The heavenly sanctuary existed before its shadow and the shadow is but a woefully inadequate picture of the reality.

B. The Pattern:

- 1. Moses was shown something of the original heavenly sanctuary and was instructed to build its earthly counterpart.
- 2. A copy is never the same as the original and the argument being presented here is why would any Jew be satisfied with a copy when he can have the real thing - the true Priest and the "**true tabernacle**"?
- 3. Why settle for temporary forgiveness through the blood of bulls and goats when you can receive complete and final forgiveness with the blood of the Lamb of God?!

CONCL: Jesus Christ is "**HIS MAJESTY, THE HIGH PRIEST, ENTHRONED**" at the right hand of the Father in Heaven. What a Savior! What a Sacrifice! What a High Priest! What a King! Why settle for a shadow?! No one wants a mere shadow of a car, boat, house, children, or family. Why settle for a shadow in the spiritual realm when you have the real thing?!

"RING OUT THE OLD, BRING OUT THE NEW"



TEXT: Hebrews 8:6-13

THESIS: To point out the three "better" things promised to believers in **v. 6**: more excellent (better) ministry, better covenant, better promises.

INTRO: A. Everything about Christ and His sacrifice is BETTER THAN anything the Old Testament and its sacrificial system had to offer. Christ is presented as BETTER THAN the Old Testament prophets, the angels, the creation, Moses, Caanan-rest, the sacrifices, the priesthood and even the Tabernacle. But now He strikes a blow at the very heart of Judaism itself- the "old" Mosaic Covenant- the sacred Law of Israel.

B. Instead of treating the Law as temporary and symbolic, the Jew clung to it as permanent and the reality. The symbols, ceremonies, types, pictures, and shadows became the substance and the reality.

ILLUS: Like a person who has a beautiful picture of a friend. He looks at that picture lovingly and longingly with hope and expectancy. The picture is a wonderful reminder and representation of his friend and so the picture becomes precious. One day the friend shows up and says, "Here I am, in person - in the flesh!" But the one he has come to see continues to revere the image. He has focused so long on the picture he cannot or will not recognize the one it represents. The symbol has been substituted for the reality. The picture is treated as the real thing and the real thing regarded as unreal. So it was (and is) with Israel and the Law.

TRANS: Verse 6 reveals three "BETTER" things the writer of Hebrews calls to the attention of his Jewish readers concerning Christ...

I. THE BETTER MINISTRY: V. 6a

NOTE: He has just gone to considerable length and great detail to show the better ministry of Christ as the Perfect and Perpetual High Priest.

A. Exercised in a Higher Sphere:

1. The Old Testament priests ministered in a Tabernacle which was only a shadow of the reality. (**v. 5**)
2. Christ, the heavenly High Priest, has entered the heavenly Holy of Holies and is ***"set on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens."*** (**v. 1**)

B. Extends to Greater Numbers:

1. The Old Testament High Priests ministered only to Jews and proselytes.
2. The New Testament High Priest ministers to all mankind and is the ***"Mediator between God and man"*** of every nationality, race, etc.
 - a. He ***"tasted death for every man"***.
 - b. He is the Savior of the whole world.

C. Endures for Time and Eternity:

1. The Old Testament High Priests died and their ministry has passed away.
2. The New Testament High Priest lives and is ***"consecrated for evermore" (7:28), is "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle".*** (**v. 2**)

II. THE BETTER COVENANT: V. 7-9

A. The Old Covenant: v. 7,8a,9

1. Not false, but faulty:

- a. The fault was not in the Covenant - that originated with a perfect Being, but in the people - imperfect beings.
- b. Note **v. 8a** "**for finding fault with THEM...**", i.e. Israel, because of their disobedience and sin. (**Rom. 8:3**)

2. Not unconditional, but conditional:

- a. The blessings of the Old Covenant were contingent upon their obedience.
- b. He would prove faithful and His Law perfect, but only those who obeyed the Law received its benefits.

NOTE: It is striking that it was God, not sinful man, Who recognized the inadequacy of the Covenant and in opposition to Israel who wanted to hold on to it, God sets it aside!

B. The New Covenant: v. 8-9

1. Predicted by Jeremiah (**v. 8b**). (**Jer. 31:31-34**)
2. Promised to Israel and Judah. (**v. 8c**)

NOTE: God never makes and has never made a Covenant with Gentiles. Gentiles may become beneficiaries of the Covenants of Israel, e.g. Abrahamic and Mosaic, and thus benefit from the New Covenant.

- a. Radically different from the old covenant. (six "**I wills**")
- b. It is absolute, not conditional; spiritual not carnal; real not ritual.
- c. Obedience to the old was out of fear; to the new out of love.
- d. Sealed with His blood. (**cf. Matt. 26:26ff**)

III. THE BETTER PROMISES: V. 6c,10-12

A. Internal not External: v. 10

1. Under the Old Covenant the Law was written on tablets of stone, doorposts, walls, wrists, and foreheads.
2. Under the New Covenant God's laws are inscribed in the heart and mind.

B. Universal not Local: v. 11

1. Witnessing and soulwinning will be unnecessary.
2. This New Covenant takes effect for Israel in the Millennium when Christ's presence is on earth - "**Immanuel**".

C. Forgotten not just Forgiven: v. 12

1. Under the Old Covenant penalties were exacted for the simplest violations.
2. Under the New Covenant forgiveness is emphasized and God forgets the iniquities!

NOTE: Better promises indeed!!!

D. Eternal not Temporary: v. 13

1. The New Covenant is the 8th given to Israel.
2. The number 8 speaks of newness and eternal completion.

CONCL: Better ministry, better covenant, and better promises are the inheritance of all who trust Christ- Jew and Gentile. Let us happily "**RING OUT THE OLD AND BRING OUT THE NEW**". Not everything "new" is "better",

but in this case it decidedly is!! Since the New Covenant is sealed with HIS blood and not the blood of bulls and goats, it is indeed better and precious!

"FROM THE SYMBOLS TO THE SUBSTANCE"



TEXT: Hebrews 9:1-10

THESIS: To show how the old sanctuary, services and symbolism have been replaced by the substance and the reality of the Savior.

INTRO: A. Nothing God gives is pointless or purposeless. All has meaning and design. The old or "first" covenant served its purpose. Through it God prescribed a place in which to worship and the kinds of worship acceptable to Him. Though temporary, these things were ordained of God and presented a beautiful, meaningful and detailed picture of Christ.

B. Though the writer of Hebrews makes many comparisons to people and things and declares Christ to be "BETTER THAN" any or all of them, he does not diminish the value of those people or things. He does not try to build Christ up by running them down. Instead he magnifies and praises them and in so doing exalts Christ even more. He now continues to exalt Christ by showing Him to be "BETTER THAN" the Old Testament Tabernacle and the worship carried on in that Holy Place. He takes his readers **"FROM THE SYMBOLS TO THE SUBSTANCE"...**

I. THE WORLDLY SANCTUARY: V. 1-5

NOTE: Verse 1 speaks of the two primary subjects of this passage: *"the ordinances of divine service"* and a *"worldly (earthly) sanctuary"* - the Tabernacle.

A. The Tabernacle: v. 1

1. Only **two chapters** are devoted to the Creation account.
2. About **fifty chapters** are given to describing the Tabernacle.
3. The overall dimensions: 75' X 150' long.
4. The dimensions of the Holy Place: 15' wide X 45' long.
5. The dimensions of the Holy of Holies: 15' X 15' X 15'.
 - a. There was a single entrance to the Tabernacle: 30' wide and 7½' high.

NOTE: Jesus is the only door to heaven, but He is accessible to as many as desire to enter through Him.

- b. The external appearance was drab and unassuming.

NOTE: *"... He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him."* (Isaiah 53:2b)

B. The Typology: v. 2-5

1. The "first" Tabernacle: The Holy Place:

- a. Only the priests could enter here to daily trim the wicks on the seven limbed candlestick and light the lamps, and weekly to eat the shewbread and replace the loaves, and daily place incense on the altar.

- b. They pictured Christ in His never ending work of enlightening, feeding and interceding on our behalf. His work is perpetual and unceasing.

2. After the "second veil": The Holy of Holies:

- a. Annually the High Priest alone entered here to offer incense in the censor and the blood of the sacrifices for his and the people's sins.
- b. The Ark of the Covenant was a chest containing the three items of **v. 4** overshadowed by the wings of the holiest of created beings with a solid gold lid called the "*mercy seat*" (**v. 5**).
- c. Christ is our Mercy Seat and has fulfilled the broken Law (tables of the Covenant), is our resurrected High Priest (Aaron's rod that budded) and is the Living Word of God (golden pot of manna).

II. THE WORSHIP SERVICES: V. 6,7

A. The Priests: v. 6

1. Made daily sacrifices for their sins and the people's on the brazen (judgment) altar, where the fire (judgment) consumed them.
2. Daily cleansed themselves at the laver (God's Word) for service in the "*first tabernacle*"
3. They were daily and CONTINUALLY in and out of the Holy Place ministering in behalf of the people. "*Always...*"

B. The High Priest: v. 7

1. The priest's work was never complete because the people (and priests) continually sinned.
2. Many unknown or forgotten sins would accumulate for which no sacrifice was made so the Day of Atonement was intended for those "*errors (literally "ignorance") of the people*".
 - a. On the Day of Atonement the High Priest first cleansed himself.
 - b. Then put on robes of glory and beauty with a breastplate (with the 12 tribes) over his heart and shoulder stones (with the 12 tribes) representing his power and authority.
 - c. He sacrificed some 20 or more animals – he was busy and bloody.
 - d. He bathed completely and put on a plain white linen garment (picture of Christ within the flesh without His majesty and glory, but with all His holiness and purity).
 - e. He purchased a bullock with his own money for sacrifice for his own sins, sacrificed it and took the blood to sprinkle on the mercy seat.
 - f. Two goats were then selected for the people, one to be sacrificed and one for the scapegoat, driven into the wilderness.

NOTE: Christ paid for our sins and removed its penalty and carried our sins far from us removing our guilt and giving us peace of conscience (**cf. v. 9**). (The scapegoat MIGHT return so the conscience was never clear completely!) The two goats represented propitiation and pardon.

- g. He then put the robes of glory and beauty on. (**cf. John 17:5**) "Give me back my robes - my work (and humiliation) is finished".

III. THE WONDERFUL SYMBOLISM: V. 8-10

A. No Access to Complete Access: v. 8

1. The people could not enter the Holy Place.
2. Even the priests could not enter the Most Holy Place.
3. Now the veil has been rent and we can come boldly to the throne of grace.

B. Imperfect Cleansing to Perfect Cleansing: v. 9

1. Everything was a symbol or figure (literally *parabole* = setting alongside for comparison).
2. The old sacrifices were only meant to symbolize cleansing.

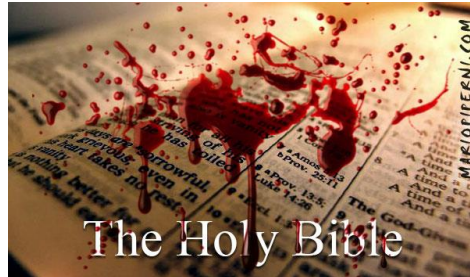
3. The conscience was never clear or clean.

C. Regulations to Reformation: v. 10

1. "Reformation" = "to make straight... to re-form".
2. Man could never be re-formed externally, through regulations and ceremonies, but internally by regeneration and cleansing.

CONCL: The old sanctuary, services and symbolism had a purpose, but they were limited, imperfect and temporary and thus unsatisfactory. They only pictured the perfect and perpetual High Priest - they could never do His work!

"TAKE REGULAR BLOOD BATHS"



TEXT: Hebrews 9:11-14

THESIS: To show the power of Christ's precious blood.

INTRO: A. From the first blood shed in Eden to cover (not cleanse) the sins of Adam and Eve, through the blood shed by Abel, whose sacrifice was accepted on the basis of blood (and whose blood was shed by Cain because he refused to shed the blood of an animal), to the sacrifices of Noah and the Patriarchs, and on to the blood of bulls and goats and lambs of the Mosaic Covenant, down to the blood of the Lamb of God shed on Calvary - open the Bible anywhere and IT BLEEDS!!!

B. We are called "blood-washed believers". We sing about the cleansing blood of Christ. We preach the blood. We are to "plead the blood" for our sins. We are saved by His efficacious blood. Our souls have been washed by His blood. Tribulation saints will wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb (future) and they will come out white.

ILLUS: For those who ridicule us as "blood-washed fanatics" it is interesting to see their preoccupation and fascination with human blood. There is enough blood shed in the average living room in one night to match the priests experience on the Day of Atonement as they sloshed around ankle deep in blood!

TRANS: We were not only plunged beneath the fountain of His blood for salvation, but we need to **"TAKE REGULAR BLOOD BATHS..."**

I. A BETTER PRIEST: V. 11a

A. Christ the Sacrificer:

1. The main function of a High Priest is to offer blood sacrifices (**"not without blood" 9:7**).
2. Christ as the better High Priest offered His own blood, not mere animal blood.

B. Christ the Sacrifice:

1. Our High Priest is not only the Sacrificer but the Sacrifice.
2. He fulfilled the promise of **"good things to come" (10:1)**. (Our full redemption is yet future but secured by His blood sacrifice.)

II. A BETTER SANCTUARY: V. 11b

A. It is Greater:

1. Whatever this Tabernacle is, it is described as **"greater"** than the one on earth in Moses' day.
2. **"Greater"** means it is impossible to find further comparisons with this one, unlike the earthly one.

B. It is More Perfect:

1. The Old Testament earthly Tabernacle was an inferior, man-constructed copy of the real and original one in Heaven.
2. **"Heaven itself" (v. 24)** is the true prototype of the earthly Tabernacle.
3. Christ's better sacrifice was required to purify the **"heavenly things"** there! (BLOOD!)

III. A BETTER SACRIFICE: V. 12

A. The Key:

1. The High Priest in the Old Testament could only enter the Holy of Holies with **"the blood of goats and calves"** - that was his key.
2. The greater High Priest could only enter the better sanctuary **"by His Own Blood"!**

NOTE: If there is a literal, **"better Tabernacle"** which was the pattern for the earthly one and the blood of animals was literal and enabled the High Priest to part the veil and enter the Holy of Holies, then the blood of Christ was literal and gave Him the key to enter the heavenly sanctuary!

B. The Blood:

1. "Blood" is more precise than "death" since many deaths are bloodless.
2. In sacrifice, the blood is shed so that the life goes out in death.
3. What Christ shed was **"His own blood"** and not just something to picture His death.
4. It is not Christ's blood = His death, but when the Scriptures speak of His death they refer to His bloody death, His expiatory, sacrificial blood!

NOTE: The animals in the O.T. used for sacrifice were not clubbed to death or drowned, etc. they had their throats slit so that the "bled out."

"The blood sacrifices of the Old Testament expiatory and cleansing rituals possessed efficacy only because God connected them with the eternally efficacious blood of His own Son." (Rev. 13:18) - Lenski

5. Blood is the instrument God used to secure and obtain our **"eternal redemption"**.

NOTE: Notice the obvious contrast with the continuing sacrifices of the Old Testament implied in the word "once".

IV. A BETTER RESULT: V. 13-14

A. The Purifying of the Flesh: v. 13

1. Uncleanliness was a common condition of the Old Testament believer.
2. Uncleanliness was caused by sins and purified by **"the blood of bulls and goats"**.
3. Uncleanliness was also caused by contact with a dead body, death in a family, visiting a family where death had occurred, etc. and was purified by **"the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean"**.
4. This acceptance was ceremonial, cultural and social in Israel and spoke of the covering of sins before God.

B. The Purging of the Conscience: v. 14

1. The acceptance based on **"the blood of Christ"** is continuing, certain and spiritual and speaks not of mere covering but of cleansing.
 - a. The means of cleansing is Christ's blood.
 - b. The basis of cleansing is Christ's voluntary death.
 - c. The object of His cleansing is to secure fellowship.
 - d. The goal of His cleansing is for service.

2. The purifying of the flesh was surface and fleshly; the purging of the conscience was deep and spiritual.
 - a. Christ's blood is a purging agent: a catharsis.
 - b. Christ's blood is presently available NOW for purging.

ILLUS: Do NOT make an appointment with a "Christian" psychologist or call for an exorcist - PLEAD THE PURGING BLOOD of Christ to **"purge your conscience from dead works..."**. Try it! It works! You need to "TAKE REGULAR BLOOD BATHS" to stay clean.

CONCL: Every person needs to be "washed in the blood of the Lamb" for salvation and "TAKE REGULAR BLOOD BATHS" to keep his conscience clean and clear!

I know a fount where sins are washed away,
 I know a place where night is turned to day.
 Burdens are lifted, blind eyes made to see.
 There's a wonder-working power in the blood of Calvary.

I have a peace this world could never give,
 Wonderful peace, for now in Christ I live.
 From condemnation He hath made me free,
 What a wonder-working power in the blood
 of Calvary!

"THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF JESUS CHRIST"



TEXT: Hebrews 9:15-22

THESIS: To contrast the "old" and "new" Testaments!

INTRO: A. Donald Trump, the billionaire, has a wife who shares in his wealth now and no doubt other members of his family and close friends receive some benefits now, but when he dies, all of his wealth will suddenly become available to whoever is named in his last will and testament.

B. Jesus Christ, the Heir of all things from the Father, provided some wonderful and even miraculous benefits for His disciples during His life. But it wasn't till His death that they (and we) be-came **"heirs and joint-heirs with Christ"**.

I. A TESTAMENT DEMANDS DEATH: V. 15-17

A. The Means: "this cause..." v. 15a

1. Note **v. 14:** **"the blood of Christ"**.
2. **"for this cause"** - because of the superior nature and efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, His last will and testament is in force and important to all.

B. The Mediator: "He (Christ)..." v. 15b

1. A mediator is one who stands between two parties, usually hostile parties (e.g., God and man).
2. In this case He is both the Executor and Testator of His own will and testament.

C. The Method: "the New Testament..." v. 15c,16

1. All the other versions translate the word Covenant.
2. But **"testament"** alone fits the context because a covenant may or may not be ratified **"by means of death"**, but death is required for a **"testament"**.
 - a. Any covenant involving death could be called a testament, but the reverse is not true.
 - b. The collective deaths of Old Testament sacrifices from Moses to Matthew constituted an **"Old Testament"**.
 - c. The singular death of the Lamb of God constitutes the New Testament. (**Matt. 26:26**)

D. The Mystery: "by means of death..." v. 15d,16

1. He can be both the Testator and the Executor because He died and is **"alive evermore"**.
2. We can not only be heirs with Him because of His death, but joint-heirs because of His resurrection.

E. The Memorial: "eternal inheritance..." v. 15c,17

1. All other testators left perishable inheritances.
2. Ours alone gave us an **"eternal inheritance"** in His "Last Will and Testament".

NOTE: Old Testament saints had to await the **"death of the Testator"** before receiving an **"eternal inheritance"**. All comes from God, but none of it can reach man apart from the God man, our High Priest, Sacrifice, Testator and Mediator.

Imagine the arrogance of Jesus saying; **"No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me"**, if He wasn't God manifest in the flesh.

II. FORGIVENESS DEMANDS BLOOD: V. 18-22

A. Sacrificial Blood: v. 18-21

1. In **v. 15-17** death is spoken of, but in **v. 18-22** he shows that sacrificial death – bloody death - is in view.
2. An ordinary "testament" or "will" may become effective through an ordinary death, without blood shed.
3. The two testaments spoken of here go beyond mere human testaments that only require death, but as Divine Testaments which require a sacrificial death with sacrificial blood.
 - a. At the inauguration of the "first" (old) testament, blood was shed. (**v. 18**)
 - b. Many sacrifices (**"the blood of calves and of goats"**) were slain and their blood sprinkled on **"the book, the people, the tabernacle and all the vessels..." (v. 19 and 21).**

NOTE: Everything man-made (even if "God-breathed" or "God-designed") became defiled because it was touched by sinful man. Thus it had to be **"purged with blood" (v. 22)**. The blood sprinkled on people or furniture or the Bible or the Tabernacle did not change the nature of that thing, but it changed God's relationship to it!

ILLUS: Note that "the Book" is sprinkled with blood. Since "the life is in the blood" we have a "Living Bible"! It is a bloody Book. Often its edges are coated with gold, like the gold overlaid furniture in the Tabernacle... A Divine Book. Often edged in red - a bloody Book. It usually has limp, black covers - speaking of sin and death. (Note how the new versions "dress up" their books to counterfeit THIS Book – the King James Bible!.)

- c. Notice, Moses' words spoke of "blood" not death!

ILLUS: John MacArthur says; "It was not Jesus' physical blood that saves us, but His dying on our behalf, which is symbolized by the shedding of His physical blood. If Christ's own physical blood, in itself, does NOT cleanse from sin, how much less did the physical blood of animals." P. 237, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary - Hebrews. **HERESY!!!**

B. Shed Blood: v. 22

1. Here the writer equates **"the Law"** with the **"first Testament"**.
2. Here the principle of remission and forgiveness and purging by sacrificial death and shed blood is established.

NOTE: It is well said that "The blood of animals cannot cleanse from sin because it is non-moral. The blood of sinful man cannot cleanse because it is immoral. The blood of Christ alone can cleanse because it is moral." (i.e. pure, undefiled!!)

The "unbloody sacrifice" of the Roman Catholic Mass is as unbiblical and heretical as MacArthur's unbloody efficacious "death" of Christ.

CONCL: The Old Testament saints "testament" was ratified by the sacrifice of sinless substitutes which secured "remission" of sins by looking forward to the sacrifice of the Testator - Christ - as the Sinless, Sacrificial Substitute Who not only secured remission of sins but also our "eternal inheritance". That was **"THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF JESUS CHRIST"**! Are you one of His heirs?!

"NOW APPEARING..."



TEXT: Hebrews 9:23-28

THESIS: To show the significance of Christ's three "appearances" in the text.

INTRO: A. The world is always interested in where their heroes or superstars are appearing. They eagerly search the entertainment sections of their papers/magazines or listen for reports to see in what night-club, lounge, casino or theatre they will be appearing.

B. God's people and all the angels in Heaven are interested in where their "Superstar", their "Hero", their Savior is appearing.

ILLUS: If Jesus were to suddenly appear anywhere on earth, nearly every believer would make any effort needed or spend any amount necessary to go to see Him.

TRANS: The passage before us tells us where and when He has appeared (**v. 26**), where He is appearing (**v. 24**) and where He will appear (**v. 28**).

I. JESUS IS NOW APPEARING: V. 23-24 (IN HEAVEN AS HIGH PRIEST)

A. For Purification: v. 23

1. The argument is: that if the patterns needed purified with the blood of animal sacrifices, the reality had to be purified with **"better sacrifices"**.

2. The "patterns" were: the book, people, tabernacle and **"all the vessels"**.
3. The purging or purifying element was the blood of animal sacrifices.
4. The **"heavenly things themselves"** include the true tabernacle and everything and every being there.

NOTE: Sin and its effects entered heaven itself when Satan and those who followed him rebelled against God.

5. The **"better sacrifices"** (plural) is Christ's blood (singular) which answers to all five of the Old Testament offerings for sin and sins: the burnt, meal, peace, sin and trespass.

NOTE: This is a figure of speech called an "enallagé" - the plural being used in place of the singular for emphasis.

B. For Representation: v. 24

1. Jesus went into the true tabernacle (**"into heaven itself"**) as our Representative.
2. He was accepted there because of His shed blood!
3. He appears there on our behalf daily, continually, now as our Propitiation.

NOTE: The word **"appear"** is a judicial term here, as an attorney appears before a judge in behalf of the defendant. He is there pleading the merits of His blood sacrifice on our behalf to appease God's wrath against our sin. He not only loved us by dying on the cross for us, but loves us now by appearing on our behalf **"for us"**.

II. JESUS HAS APPEARED: V. 25-28a (ON THE CROSS AS OUR SACRIFICE)

A. One Offering, One Time: v. 25

1. Note the contrast of the word **"often"** (v. 25) with the word **"once"** (v. 26-28a)
2. The absolute sufficiency and singularity of Christ's offering Himself is taught here.

NOTE: God chose men to be His High Priests under the Old Covenant, to typify Christ, to appear before Him, to represent man, to atone for sins, all of which Christ did. Yet when it came to shedding his blood, as Christ did His, God spared him and accepted the blood of animals. How He loved man, yet spared not His own Son! **"with blood of others"**

B. One Priest, One Sacrifice: v. 26-28a

1. He **"appeared"** on earth to die on the cross and thus **"to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself"**.
2. He became sin for us. He had our sins on Him in His own body (**I Peter 2:24**) at His First Advent. He will NOT when He appears again!

ILLUS: As the Scapegoat carried the sins of the Israelites away- so Christ carried our sins away. Where are they now if they are not on you and not on Him? He deposited them in hell when He went down there through it.

- a. Christ kept man's **"appointment"** as a man and died. (v. 27)

NOTE: This verse states a general rule. There are some exceptions. Enoch and Elijah never died. Lazarus, Jairus' daughter, the widow's son, etc. died twice. Moses will die twice.

- b. This verse also teaches that judgment is not in this life, but after death.

TRANS: Christ became the sin bearer when He appeared on earth and now appears in Heaven as our Representative **"in the presence of God for us"**, and He will appear again... (v. 28a)

III. JESUS WILL APPEAR: V. 28 (ON THE EARTH AS OUR KING)

A. The Picture:

1. **The Old Testament High Priest's work on the Day of Atonement was in four parts:**

- a. Made the sacrifice outside the Tabernacle.
- b. Entered the Holy of Holies with the blood.
- c. Sprinkled the blood on and around the Mercy Seat.
- d. Reappeared afterwards having accomplished his work.

2. Christ must fulfill all four aspects of the High Priest's work.

B. The Perfection:

1. What an exciting moment when the High Priest reappeared with his work completed! A time for shouting and singing!
2. When Jesus reappears He will be **"without sin"** in Him or on Him, but with completed salvation by Him!

CONCL: Thus **"the Man of Sorrows"** Who appeared the first time, now appears as our High Priest in heaven representing us to God as now sinless because of His blood and will reappear as **"the King of Kings"** with 10,000's of His saints. He Who has appeared as our Savior and is now appearing as our High Priest will soon appear as our King. Are you ready?!

"LIVING IN THE SHADOWS"

TEXT: Hebrews 10:1-4



THESIS: To show the deficiency of the Old Covenant with its sacrifices to bring perfection to the believer and clear his conscience.

INTRO: A. A shadow of a house may suggest its shape, point to its reality and even outline its special features (size, additions, fireplace, etc.), but no one wants to buy or live in a shadow.

B. The Old Testament saints were doing just that, i.e., **"LIVING IN THE SHADOWS"**. The Old Testament Law of Moses spoke of a High Priest better than those in Aaron's line, of a sacrifice better than bulls and goats, of a forgiveness and cleansing better than and with more substance than that offered under its precepts and ordinances. The ceremonies and rituals, statutes and laws were suggestive of the reality, but not the reality itself.

I. SHADOWS, NOT SUBSTANCE: V. 1

NOTE: Why did God establish the Old Covenant with its shadow ceremonies, shadow rituals and shadow sacrifices? The shadows served a three-fold purpose:

A. Pointed to **"Good Things to Come"**:

1. Though a shadow is not the reality it points to the reality and is attached to it.
2. It provided evidence as to the reality to come.
 - a. If those under the Old Covenant were diligent they could track down the reality by following the shadows. Cf. **1 Peter 1:10-12**

- b. The shadows were designed to make them expectant and to provide evidence of the reality.

B. Pointed to the "very image":

1. The reality of the "**very image**" (éikona/icon) was Christ. Cf. Col. 2:14-17
 - a. A shadow is never a complete revelation of its object.
 - b. A shadow only gives the general outline of the reality.
 - c. A shadow becomes irrelevant once the true form is seen.

ILLUS: In spite of the impressiveness of Old Testament ceremonies and symbols, they could never match the reality which is Christ. But to ritualists the shadow was looked at as the reality! That is the reason Hebrews was written! They became so comfortable "**LIVING IN THE SHADOWS**", THEY DIDN'T WANT TO CHANGE TO THE REALITY. They liked the pictures more than the Person.

2. The "**very image**" was sent to replace the shadows.

C. Pointed to "Perfection":

1. The shadows were to picture, not to perfect.
2. "Perfection" means bringing a thing to the state of completion it was designed for.
3. Doctrinally it is producing the satisfactory and final relationship God designed for Himself and His people.

NOTE: It is not the perfection of the people ("**comers**"), but perfection of their relationship! Shadows cannot achieve that, the "**very image**" can.

II. REPETITION, NOT REMISSION: V. 2

A. Cessation of Sacrifices: v. 2a

1. Repetition of a symbol or shadow is like multiplying with zero; repeating the process never increases the result.
2. The sacrifices for those "**LIVING IN THE SHADOWS**" were never satisfactory.
 - a. They merely covered sin, but could not cleanse from sin.
 - b. Those making sacrifice without seeing the image beyond the sacrifice were not even covered ceremonially.

NOTE: Compare Amos 5:21-25

- c. Those who offered in faith received covering for their sin, till the next sin!

B. Cleansing of Conscience: v. 2b

1. Since the Old Testament sacrifices never "finished" anything, the Old Testament saint never had a guilt-free conscience.
2. The New Testament saint has a finished sacrifice and has no more conscience for sins as long as he rests in that once-for-all Sacrifice.

ILLUS: "**No more conscience of sins**" = freedom from an apprehensive or terrifying sense of what they deserved...complete deliverance from the fear of God ever imputing them to us."

This is the difference between the Bible-believer and the religionist. The Catholic, charismatic, cultist and ritualist has to keep on attending Mass, getting born-again and again, doing his works and going through his ceremonies. If he misses Mass he is messed up, if he sins he loses it, if he doesn't peddle his Watchtowers he will never make it and if he doesn't participate in some ritual he will miss out!

The believer may regret his sins, reap the consequences of his sins, be sorry for his sins and know he must confess his sins, but he knows they are all PAID FOR! His conscience has been purged.

III. REMEMBRANCE, NOT REMOVAL: V. 3,4

A. Memorial Sacrifices: v. 3

1. Those continuing sacrifices were reminders of the way sin would be removed, but not effective as the agent to remove them.
2. Those sacrifices also reminded God's people of the wages of sin - death.

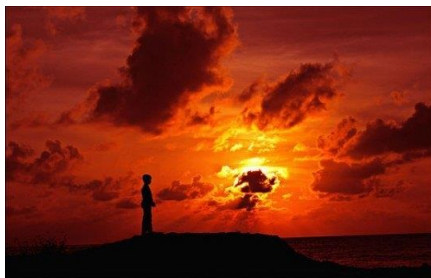
ILLUS: Under the Old Covenant the priests were constantly killing animals from sunrise to sunset. At Passover as many as 300,000 lambs would be slain in a week. Blood in the Temple would be ankle deep and the drains would channel blood into the brook Kidron so it literally ran with that red, warm fluid!

3. The repetition of the sacrifices was an emphatic and eloquent statement of their insufficiency.

B. Amoral Sacrifices: v. 4

1. It is precisely because they were **"bulls and goats"** and oxen and lambs that they could never **"take away sins"**.
2. Moral defilement (sin) by moral beings (sinners) can never be atoned for by amoral creatures.
 - a. There was no real relationship between a person's sin and an animal sacrifice.
 - b. The relationship was only symbolic and typical - Christ alone, the God-man, the perfect union of Deity and humanity, could satisfy God and purify man.

CONCL: He is the substance of which the sacrifices were but shadows. They were repeated again and again but could never bring remission of sins. They were a source of remembrance of the price on sin, but could never remove that sin. Thank God we are no longer **"LIVING IN THE SHADOWS"** but **"basking in the Sonlight!"**
"... TO DO THY WILL, O GOD"



TEXT: Hebrews 10:5-10

THESIS: To point out the driving force behind Christ's incarnation and crucifixion - God's will.

INTRO: A. The chorus says "Obedience is the very best thing..." God says **"To obey is better than sacrifice."** (**I Sam. 15:22**) A shepherd said: "The reward of sin is more sin and the reward of obedience is the power to obey again." Someone else said: "All heaven is waiting to help those who will discover the will of God and do it." The Son of God in His earthly ministry declared: **"I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me."** (**John 5:30**) Our text gives the summary of Jesus' life, stated by Him to the Father in the corridors of eternity past: **"Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God..."**

B. In this passage three major works of Christ are revealed to show us what His obedience included. They will constitute our outline: Incarnation, Crucifixion and Sanctification...

I. INCARNATION:

A. The Contrast: v. 5-6

1. The **"wherefore"** connects us to the previous discussion of Old Testament sacrifices.

2. In **vv. 5-6** the writer sets the animal sacrifices of the Levitical system in contrast to Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice.
 - a. He lists all four types of sacrifice offered there: sacrifice (peace or trespass offering), offering (meal, burnt-offerings and sin offerings).
 - b. These offerings spoke of the people's need for atonement for sin, consecration and fellowship.
 - c. The implication is that Jesus' one sacrifice provided the satisfaction of all these human needs.
3. The statements: **"thou wouldst not" and "thou hast had no pleasure"** do not minimize the Old Testament scriptural demand for these sacrifices, but their inability to accomplish what His sacrifice alone could do.

B. The Conclusion: v. 5,7

1. Christ's entrance into this world came about through His incarnation: "when He cometh...a body..." **v. 5**
2. Christ's **"better sacrifice"** required **"a body": v. 5**
 - a. Because He had to die as our Substitute and Sin-bearer.
 - b. Because He had to bleed! cf. **9:22**
 - c. So the "Head" could conform to "the Body" who were **"partakers of flesh and blood"**.
 - d. To clothe **"that holy thing"** born of Mary in a form which could express obedience.

NOTE: As Deity it was impossible for Him Who was co-equal with the Father, to come under the Law, so He required another nature which could be submissive to the Father.

3. His coming (**v. 5a,7a**) was a part of His total obedience to His Father.

NOTE: These words were obviously spoken by the Son, to the Father in heaven, eons before the Incarnation. They reveal the absolute agreement within the Godhead before the Incarnation. They also reveal the absolute obedience of the Son to the Father. They further illustrate the fact that God's Word was "settled in heaven" before being penned on earth.

II. CRUCIFIXION:

A. The Repetition: v. 8-9a

1. The passage is a quotation from **Psalm 40:6-8**.
2. When quoted the first time the words are placed into the mouth of the Son, even though originally penned by David. **"then said I..."**
3. Note that the wording is different than the "original"! cf. **Psalm 40:6-8 "Mine ears hast thou opened..." vs. "a body hast thou prepared Me." (v. 6)**

NOTE: Scofield's explanation is satisfactory, P. 1300, note 1. Also since the passage is dealing with obedience, the ears are the obvious body-part associated with obedience. We hear, then we do.

ILLUS: A missionary-translator was stymied to find a word for "obedience", one day whistled for his dog and it came running. Native commented: "Your dog is all ear." That was their word for obedience. Christ was "all ear" - so should we be!

4. Note too the reference to **"the Book" in v. 7** and **"the Law" in v. 8** - the point is that Jesus Christ was always obedient to God's Word.

B. The Results: v. 9b

1. God's will resulted in the crucifixion of His Son.
2. That aspect of the fulfillment of God's will cancelled the Old Testament sacrifices. (**"taketh away the first"**)

NOTE: "Christ didn't come to improve the Law, but to fulfill it." - Gromacki

III. SANCTIFICATION: V. 10

A. The Benefit: *"sanctified"*

1. The *"will"* spoken of is Christ's submission and obedience to His Father's will. (**vv. 7,9**)
2. The sanctification deals with our position or standing with God due to HIS obedience, not ours.
 - a. The word means "set apart by God for God."
 - b. We are sanctified (positionally) by Christ's obedience unto death, we should be being sanctified (practically) by that same obedience!
 - c. We should be obedient as He was.

B. The Body:

1. His obedience was contingent upon a "once-for-all" * sacrifice of His body on the cross.
2. That sacrifice secured our sanctification - or He would have had to be sacrificed again and again.

CONCL: **"TO DO THY WILL O GOD"** was the theme and driving force of Christ's life. He was obedient in the INCARNATION and CRUCIFIXION so we could enjoy SANCTIFICATION. The hymn "Once for All", expresses best, perhaps, the benefits and blessings of His obedient sacrifice!

"OUR SEATED SAVIOR"



TEXT: Hebrews 10:11-14

THESIS: To contrast the Old Testament sacrifices and priesthood with Christ and His once-for all sacrifice.

INTRO: A. Only one religion comes to mind to any unbiased reader of **Hebrews 10:11**. It isn't Chick Publications which is most negative toward Catholicism, it is the Bible! It isn't Pastor Fedena who is anti-Catholicism, it is God's Word! By the way, neither the Bible nor any of the above are anti-Catholic (people), but anti-Catholicism (religion). The Bible and its Author are 100% anti-religion! (In America it is okay to be anti-American, or anti-Fundamentalist, or anti-Bible-believer or anti-Baptist, but you cannot be anti-religion or anti-Catholicism!) God loves every Catholic and hates every mass, rosary, Eucharist, statue and confessional.

B. Priestcraft is outdated and outmoded. The Old Testament Priesthood was replaced by our High Priest, Jesus Christ. The sacrificial system is fulfilled in His one vicarious, efficacious, sacrifice. In this age, priestcraft is blasphemous, anti-Bible, and anti-Christ. Priestcraft and the Papal system are sacrilegious. The indictment against priestcraft and religion are summarized in **vv. 29-31**. (Our text is missing in the *"oldest and best manuscripts"* (Yeah, right!) - Sinaiticus and Vaticanus.)

TRANS: Let's examine this anti-Judaism, anti-Catholicism, anti-priestcraft, anti-Protestantism, anti-religion, anti-ritual passage in detail...

I. SUCCESSIVE PRIESTS VS. A SINGLE PRIEST: V. 11-12

A. "Every priest..." v. 11

1. Surely if the God-ordained priesthood could not atone for man's sin, no man-ordained priest-hood could or can.

NOTE: The Levitical priesthood had MANY priests - 24 orders of hundreds of priests who each took turns serving at the altar and sacrificing animals. That system didn't lack for priests, but it did lack effectiveness.

2. At the time of the writing of Hebrews the priests continued to daily offer "**the same sacrifices**" which were ineffective.

ILLUS: Catholicism and heathenism in jungles, Asia, India, Europe, et.al. continue with priestcraft offering bloody and "unbloody" sacrifices "**which can never take away sins**". From "civilized" nations to savage cultures, the tragedy of religion without power to save continues. Look at the spiritual poverty revealed in their faces. Through the empty smiles shows the guilt, heartache, sorrow and worry; a conscience heavy with sin. No priest, no religion, no ritual can take away a single sin, but...

B. "This man..." v. 12

1. One single man - the God-man - did what thousands of priests and sacrifices then and now could never do! **9:14**
2. One sinless Man - the God-man - did what no Pope, priest, Rabbi, preacher - all sinners - could ever do!

II. STANDING PRIESTS VS. A SITTING PRIEST: V. 11,12

A. "Standeth..." v. 11

1. Because there were no chairs in the Tabernacle or Temple.
2. Because his work was never completed.

ILLUS: It is the nature of priests to perpetually sacrifice. This is true even of the spiritual priesthood of believers today. Our work is never done. There is no retirement from our ministry. We will never "rest" till we enter His eternal rest. (cf. **Rev. 14:13**)

B. "Sat down..." v. 12

1. On Calvary, Christ cried "**it is finished**" and completed the only sacrifice which could take away sins.
2. Those who follow any priest but Him can NEVER be cleansed from sin or have their consciences purged.
v. 2

III. PERPETUAL SACRIFICES VS. A PERFECT SACRIFICE: V. 11,12

A. "The same sacrifices..." v. 11

1. Lamb after lamb, ox after ox, bullock after bullock...
2. Over and over and over... without one single sin removed!

NOTE: No Pope, priest or preacher can do any work, perform any ritual or pray any prayer that will forgive one single sin.

B. "One sacrifice..." v. 12

1. Think of the impact of this statement on Jewish ears. (About like how a Catholic reacts today.)
2. The statement is blasphemous if Jesus is not God.

IV. LIMITED SACRIFICES VS. A LIMITLESS SACRIFICE: V. 11,12

A. "Can never take away sins..." v. 11

1. They could cover sins, temporarily, till Messiah came.
2. They contained a "planned obsolescence".
3. They simply served as shadows till the Substance showed up.

B. "One sacrifice for sins for ever, ..." v. 12

1. This speaks of the absolute finality of Christ's sacrifice.
2. The comma is in the correct place in the King James Version (after **"for ever"**), not in the corrupt place as in other Roman Catholic Bibles (after **"sins"**)!

NOTE: He will NOT sit down **"forever"** - He is coming again! But His sacrifice is **"forever"** and will continue in its efficacy into the future.

V. VAINGLORIOUS SACRIFICES VS. A VICTORIOUS SACRIFICE: V. 12-14

A. "The same sacrifices" v. 11

1. The Jews had become prideful and boastful of their Judaism and sacrificial system (vainglory).
2. The writer points out that they are worthless, without merit, useless and wasteful.

B. "One offering..." v. 14

1. We know His **"one offering"** was victorious because of its singularity and also because of its accomplishments.
2. Because of His **"one offering"** Christ was:
 - a. Elevated to **"the right hand of God..."**
 - b. Placed over His enemies and they would become **"His footstool"**. (**Psalm 110:1**) (He is obviously seated!)
 - c. Able to work on those who are (being) sanctified. (Present continuous tense - state)
 - d. Able to **"perfect forever"** His saints and sons (standing).

CONCL: "OUR SEATED SAVIOR" is in marked contrast to all other priests. His work is completed forever and secures eternal benefits to those who trust in His "one sacrifice"!!! Sing "Once for All!"

"IT'S ALL IN YOUR MIND (and HEART)"



TEXT: Hebrews 10:15-18

THESIS: To show how the Trinity joined together to bestow God's forgiveness and place a desire to love and obey in believer's hearts.

INTRO: A. The Bible says that **"two or three witnesses"** are required to establish a truth. In salvation we have the external witnesses of the Word of God and the human messenger of God (soul-winner, preacher, etc. - **"How shall they hear without a preacher?"**) and the internal witness of the Spirit of God (**"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God..."**). Thus salvation is not subjective based on feeling, but objective based on fact, with sufficient witnesses to establish that fact.

B. The phrase "It's all in your mind" usually denotes a fantasy or figment of imagination. According to our text however, God has placed in our minds (and hearts) His laws. They are indelibly stamped upon the conscience and consciousness of His children.

I. THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS: V. 15

A. His Person: "*He... said...*"

1. The One speaking is a living Being - not just a force or influence.
2. Our witness testifies to the truth of **v. 14** and preceding: "*whereof...*"
3. His witness is not just to the "*house of Israel*" (**8:10**), but "*to us...*"
 - a. The New Covenant about which He witnesses has a double fulfillment: to Israel and to the Church.
 - b. It will become a reality to Israel in the Millennium (**8:10-13**) and is "*to us*" now.

B. His Partnership:

1. In the Trinity: comparing the two quotations of the promise to Jeremiah concerning the New Covenant here and in **Chapter 8**, we see that it is identified with the Spirit equally with the Father.
2. In the truth: (Scripture) when the Holy Ghost speaks, God speaks, in His Word: "*He had said before...*"

NOTE: The Divine order is origination with God, revelation to men, inspiration by the Spirit, inscripturation by men, illumination by the Spirit, preservation by Spirit-guided men.

II. THE FATHER'S WORD: V. 16,17

A. The New Covenant: (Jeremiah 31:31-34) v. 16

1. All of the Covenants are made specifically between Jehovah and the wife of Jehovah (Israel).
2. The New Covenant is unique in that it was made with Israel, it is unconditional ("I will..."), it was sealed with Christ's blood (**Luke 22:19,20**), becomes effective for Israel in the Millennium and is "*to us...*" in this dispensation.

B. The New Conditions: (cf. 8:10 with 10:16 with Jeremiah 31:33) v. 16-17

1. In **Jer. 31:33** God says "*I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts...*"
2. In **Heb. 8:10** God is quoted as saying "*I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts...*"
3. In **Heb. 10:16** God is quoted as promising "*I will put by laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.*"
 - a. Israel would relate to God's "Law", recognizing it included many parts (precepts, rituals, civil regulations)
 - b. In **Heb. 8:10** "*inward parts*" is translated "*mind*" and is listed before "*hearts*" to reveal the Divine order of operation.
 - 1) The mind is first informed before the heart is transformed - understanding must precede affection.
 - 2) No one can love an unknown God nor understand His requirements.
 - c. In **Heb. 10:16** "*hearts*" and "*mind*" are switched to reveal the Divine standard.
 - 1) An intellectual acquaintance with God's laws is no proof of regeneration, but a heart acquaintance is. (cf. **John 1:12**)
 - 2) Question: Do I really desire to be regulated by the revealed will ("laws") of God?

ILLUS: The more we love God the less burdensome are His "laws". The lawbreaker always chaffs under restrictions. The obedient need not fear the consequences of broken laws and he recognizes they are in his best interests. **"I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love... Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them."** Ps. 119:113,129 **"The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."** Ps. 119:72

4. God's **"forgetfulness"** (v. 17) means that He can never recall our sins in His capacity as Judge.

NOTE: Any reference to our sins by Satan, our conscience or others, will be **"thrown out of court"** by our Great Judge as **"irrelevant, immaterial and inadmissible!"**

III. THE SON'S WORK: V. 18

A. Remission:

1. This doctrine means we have been released from all expectation of payment of any debt for our sins.
2. Jesus paid a debt He did not owe because we had a debt we could not pay.

B. No Repetition:

1. Since our debt is paid-in-full, further payment (offering) would be redundant.
2. Only a fool tries to pay a debt already paid for!

CONCL: God's Word (the external witness) is inscribed on our hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit (the Internal Witness). The Father, Son and Holy Ghost joined together to complete our salvation and sanctification. Our debt is PAID! Our conscience is clear. Our sins are forgotten and **"IT'S ALL IN OUR MIND (and HEART)!"** It must be translated into practical service for Him! **"THE GREAT FORGETTER!"**

"GROUPED FOR GRACE"



TEXT: Hebrews 10:19-25

THESIS: To show how Christ's sacrifice provided for all Christian's needs.

INTRO: A. After Adam sinned, God sent a powerful being with a flaming sword to keep him from the place of former fellowship. Under the Law, only one man was permitted, annually, to enter the Holy of Holies behind the heavy veil. When Jesus died, the veil was torn in two so all believers could have access to the Mercy Seat. We are to come individually, but as members of His Body we have been "GROUPED FOR GRACE".

B. Because of His perfect sacrifice, we can come courageously into His presence and are even urged to gather together as often as possible and not to forsake **"the assembling of (ourselves) together"**. In fact, the New Testament knows nothing of isolated believers. We are all members of His family and **"GROUPED FOR GRACE"** into units called local churches for mutual blessings, encouragement and strength...

I. BOLDNESS and BLOOD: V. 19

A. Our Boldness:

1. This whole concept of courage and confidence before a holy God is foreign to the Old Testament where fear and trembling prevailed.
2. The word "having" speaks of present benefits of a completed sacrifice:
 - a. The argument thus far is that Christ is the perfect Sacrifice, the perpetual Priest and has fulfilled all God's righteous demands, offering to all mercy, love and grace.
 - b. The arguments have been given, now the applications are to be made.

NOTE: The logic of the passage is "having therefore..." (v. 19 and previous), "Let us..." (v. 22-24 and following)...

B. His Blood:

1. The **"holiest"** was always forbidden and foreboding because **"the blood of bulls and of goats"** could not take away sin.
2. But **"this man's"** blood could and did!
3. The basis for our boldness is not our goodness nor some sacrifice we can bring, but the blood of Christ alone.

II. CONSECRATION and COMMUNION: V. 20

A. His Consecration:

1. The word **"new"** (prosphatos) is only used here and means "freshly slaughtered"!
2. This means that Christ's sacrifice never grows old or outmoded, but has continual power to consecrate or "set apart".
3. If **"new"** speaks of His sacrifice in death, then **"living"** speaks of His resurrection – it took both to provide access to **"the holiest..."**

B. Our Communion:

1. Because "His flesh" has been opened, the "veil" separating men from God is also open.
2. The veil in the Tabernacle/Temple was a door which could only be opened annually by the High Priest bearing animal's blood and then closed again.
3. Christ as "the Door" said **"I am the Door: by Me if any man ENTER in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture". (John 10:9)**

NOTE: The only key which opens "THE DOOR" is Christ's shed blood! Any other "key" locks the door eternally.

III. FELLOWSHIP and FAITHFULNESS: V. 21-25

NOTE: Now that we have "the Key" that opens "the Door", God's people are **"GROUPED FOR GRACE"**. **"Having therefore...let us..."** The doctrinal section or foundational section of the book give way now to the practical application and illustrations of the benefits provided by this new **"High Priest over the house of God..." (v. 21)**

A. "Let us draw near..." (make use of the entrance)

1. In genuine sincerity, without hypocrisy: **"with a true heart"**
2. In biblical confidence: **"full assurance of faith"**
3. With clear conscience: **"hearts sprinkled...evil conscience..."**

NOTE: Again reference is made to the New Testament believer with a clear conscience, something the Old Testament saint, with its continuing sacrifices, could never provide.

4. With daily cleansing: **"bodies washed with pure water."**

ILLUS: This is not "holy water" or baptismal water, but **"the washing of water by the Word..." (Eph. 5:26)** Neither "hearts" nor "bodies" appear to be physical here.

B. "Let us hold fast..." (Don't quit after entering)

ILLUS: In **Acts 27**, God promised Paul that the lives of all with him would be spared, but Paul warned the Centurion that they would be lost unless they remained with the ship! Here is God's sovereignty and human responsibility.

1. Humanly, we are to cling to the truths of Scripture and their promises **"without wavering"** (leaning away).
2. Supernaturally, our profession of faith rests on God, not on us. (**"for He is faithful Who promises"**)

C. "Let us consider..."

1. We need to be faithful and we also need fellowship.
2. By exhortation and example, we are to incite other saints to **"love and good works"**.
 - a. We do this by our example of faithfulness and fellowship. (**"not forsaking", cf. Acts 2:42, "steadfastly"**)

ILLUS: Some do **"forsake the assembling"**. They don't like the people, preacher, music, choir, song leader, et. al. I thank God for a poor memory regarding the sins and imperfections of the saints in the church! **"Assembling"**, for me, is always a blessing! I don't come because you do or don't, I come out of duty and desire!

- b. We do this by **"exhorting one another"**.

QUES: Do you exhort or exasperate? Do you provoke to love and good works or just provoke? Do you inspire love or incite hate? Do you set an example of good works or show an example of bad works? Do you exhibit a bitter spirit or exemplify a better spirit? Are you "grouped for grace" or "gathered for disgrace"?

CONCL: The local assembly should be a refuge, a place of blessing, a place where God's people are **"GROUPED FOR GRACE"**. What is the local church to you? A chore or a choice? A duty or a desire? A blight or a blessing? God created it. Christ bled for it. The Holy Spirit is calling it out. The archangel will call it up. Your attitude toward it will make it or break it. Your faithfulness will build it or bust it. Your loyalty will fill it or kill it.

"SAINTS IN THE HANDS OF THE LIVING GOD!"



TEXT: Hebrews 10:26-31

THESIS: To deal with this controversial passage in its context and apply it to believers today.

INTRO: A. When Jonathan Edwards preached the message that started the greatest American revival, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God", conviction was so great upon the unsaved in the congregation they held onto the pews and screamed because hell was so real. The passage before us which describes **"SAINTS IN THE HANDS OF THE LIVING GOD"** should strike similar terror in the hearts of sinning saints living in deliberate disobedience to God.

B. This is the fourth great warning in Hebrews. The first spoke of DRIFTING from the Word (**2:1-4**), the second of DOUBTING the Word (**3:7 - 4:13**), the third becoming DULL toward the Word (**5:11 - 6:20**) and this warning against DESPISING the Word.

TRANS: The evidence of this *"despising"* is deliberate disobedience or *"willful"* sin...

I. A DESCRIPTION OF THE SIN: V. 26

A. Willful Sin:

1. This is not some specific sin, but an attitude of repeated disobedience.
2. The context reveals this to involve:
 - a. A lack of faith: **v. 22**
 - b. A lack of faithfulness: **v. 23**
 - c. A lack of firing up others (to love and good works) **v. 24**
 - d. A lack of fellowship: **v. 25**

NOTE: When we forsake Christians, the next step is to forsake Christ. It is vital to identify those being warned here. The writer includes himself (*"we"*) which reflects back to the *"brethren"* in **v. 19** and the *"us"* in **v. 22-24**. While there are undoubtedly unbelievers amongst those to whom he is writing, the exhortation is primarily to saints.

3. This is "first degree" sin or sin which is committed with full understanding of its nature and results.

ILLUS: Gromacki said: "Sinning without the impartation of all the facts is bad, but sinning when all of the Divine truth is revealed is worse."

4. This is sin against the body of revealed truth of God's Word. (*"the truth..."*)

B. Without Sacrifice:

1. Under the Old Covenant there were no sacrifices for deliberate, conscious and willful or presumptuous sins, only punishment.
2. Presumptuous sinners who despised Moses' Law and broke it were stoned. (**Numbers 15:27-31**)

ILLUS: That's why David prayed as he did in **Psalms 51:4,16-17**. He deserved death, pleaded for mercy and offered the sacrifice of a broken heart over his sin.

3. Christ's sacrifice was once-for-all and could not be repeated.

II. A DECLARATION OF THE PUNISHMENT: V. 27-29

A. Indignation: v. 27

1. Because grace is so much more precious and greater than legal requirements, sin against it brings greater indignation from the Lord.
2. Grace doesn't provide immunity from judgment in the form of chastening. In fact, it should produce expectation of chastisement. (*"a certain fearful looking for..."*)

B. Illustration: cf. Deut. 17:1-7 v. 28

1. The logic is: note how God handled presumptuous sins under the Law.
2. Presumptuous sin doesn't deserve sacrifice or mercy.

C. Insult: v. 29

1. There is a contrast here consistent with previous "better than" teaching.
2. Since the New Testament Covenant is better than the old, sinning against it is greater and brings greater consequences.
3. Since Christ's sacrifice is better than animals, the sin is greater.

- a. To count Christ's blood as common or profane or "unholy" or put it on a level with animal or other merely human blood is the same as treading underfoot the Son of God.
- b. To willfully sin not only makes the holy profane, but brings "despite" or treats insultingly the "(Holy) Spirit of grace."

NOTE: God's people have always been taught to make a distinction between the holy and the profane.

4. The person who sins willfully after applying the blood of Christ sets himself up for chastisement worse than that of the Old Testament saint.

ILLUS: The believer saved by the blood out of Egypt didn't automatically enter the promised land (Spirit-filled life). Most died in the wilderness due to presumptuous, willful sin. **"There is a sin unto death"** for the New Testament saint too. (Ex. Corinthian Christians, Ananias and Sapphira) God doesn't always take the life of the rebellious believer, but He always chastens him.

III. A DISCLOSURE OF THE JUDGE: V. 30,31

A. The Lord Our Judge: v. 30

1. God forgave David's sins, but David suffered the consequences for years. (**II Sam. 12:7-15**)

ILLUS: A believer may commit adultery, repent and receive forgiveness but he may also contract a venereal disease, have a blind child and even lose his wife. He has been forgiven.

2. This is a stern warning of *"the sad consequences of forgiven sins"*.
3. The statement: **"The Lord shall judge His people"** reinforces the idea that believers are in view. (**Chapter 12** details the discipline of sinning saints.)

B. The Living God: v. 31

1. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, for His chastening smarts.
2. It is a wonderful thing to fall into His hands for cleansing, restoration and mercy.

NOTE: David said; **"Let me now fall into the hand of the Lord; for very great are His mercies."** (**I Chron. 21:13**) Note the choices God gave David: three years of famine, three months destruction by Israel's enemies or three days pestilence. David chose the three days. Seventy thousand men died by God's hand in those three days!

CONCL: The message is loud and clear: BEWARE PRESUMPTUOUS SINS! It is a fearful thing for saints to fall into the hands of the living God in chastisement. Beware sinning saint! Beware unbelieving sinner!

"FOCUS ON THE FAR VIEW"



TEXT: Hebrews 10:32-39

THESIS: To show that trials and afflictions should not deter or detour us if we focus on Heaven and the rewards God has for us.

INTRO: A. During the great famine in Egypt, when Joseph opened his vast storehouses of grain, he is said to have the chaff or husks thrown into the Nile river. The object was to let those starving people downstream know there was abundance farther along. The Christians of Hebrews are reminded that their earthly losses should be compared to heavenly abundance farther along. (**v. 34**) Too often we focus on the near view, but God wants us to **"FOCUS ON THE FAR VIEW"**.

ILLUS: One method of avoiding sea sickness is to avoid watching the rolling waves near the boat and **"FOCUS ON THE FAR VIEW"** of the steady horizon.

B. Paul had given a stern warning about willful sin and its consequences. Now he gives words of encouragement designed to bring stability and to help his readers avoid sin. He first reminds them of past afflictions and their steadfastness and then exhorts them to **"FOCUS ON THE FAR VIEW"**...

I. CONVERSION and COURAGE: V. 32-33

A. Remember Your Conversion: v. 32a

1. One of the most stabilizing forces in the believer's life is to relive his/her conversion experience.
2. The illumination he speaks of was the opening of their Satanically blinded eyes to the truth.

ILLUS: Like the healed blind man interrogated by the hostile Pharisees stated; **"One thing I KNOW, that, whereas I was blind, now I see!" (John 9:25)**

3. Strength against temptation or courage in the face of affliction can be gained by reliving our conversion experience.

B. Recall Your Courage: v. 32b, 33

1. As is often the case, the new convert is quickly faced with trials and testings.
2. The word **"fight"** is the word from which we get our English word athlete.
 - a. These believers immediately entered the arena of spiritual contest with Satan, the demons and the ungodly.
 - b. This **"fight"** resulted in **"afflictions"** or sufferings.
3. Their afflictions were both direct and indirect:
 - a. They were **"made a gazingstock"** - lit. = "theatron" or theater

ILLUS: These young converts were compared to foolish clowns on the theater stage of life. It was customary for the audience to hurl verbal abuse and material objects at rejected actors. The unsaved hurled **"reproaches"** (oral ridicule and mockery) and **"afflictions"** (harm to person and property) at these young converts.

- b. They became **"companions"** ("koinonoia") of others who were also suffering for their profession.

NOTE: They are being commended now for their courage after a sharp warning against willful sinning.

II. COMPASSION and CONVICTION: V. 34

A. Respond with Compassion: v. 34a

1. They had somehow sympathized (lit.) with Paul when he was in prison.

NOTE: Cf. the different response of some believers to Paul's imprisonment. Some turned away (**II Tim. 1:15**) and others stayed by his side (**II Tim. 1:16**) and **"refreshed"** him. How do you respond to fellow believers' afflictions? cf. **James 1:27**

2. The same concept is taught in **Hebrews 4:15** of Christ and His sympathy with our afflictions and temptations.

B. Rejoice with Conviction: v. 34b

1. Their enemies had destroyed their material possessions.

ILLUS: Satan is aware how we value our possessions. He came to the Lord when accusing Job and said: ***"Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face."*** (Job 1:9-11) He underestimated Job's faith in his God!

2. The response of these believers was not natural, they took the test ***"joyfully"***.
3. They had a conviction that earthly possessions were inferior and temporary, while ***"treasures in heaven"*** were ***"better ... and enduring"*** and of real substance.

ILLUS: Thomas DeWitt Talmage said that many people think they will enjoy everything Heaven has to offer the minute they arrive. He didn't agree. "We can't travel over all of London in two weeks, nor explore Rome or Venice in a month," he said. "Nor do I believe we will see all of the great city of God in a day." He further explained that it will probably take us all of eternity to examine and enjoy the many wonderful things the Lord has prepared for those who love Him.

4. They focused on the far view!

III. CONFIDENCE and CONCLUSION: V. 35-39

A. Revitalize Your Confidence: v. 35-37

1. He encourages them to remember their past victories and thus to regain confidence.
 2. Their past victories (like ours) became blurred in their memories and weakened them for the present fight.
 3. They were to be reassured that renewed confidence would be repaid (***"recompense"***) and rewarded.
- v. 35**

NOTE: This ***"recompense of reward"*** speaks of the joy of salvation being renewed, living the Spirit-filled life now, glorifying God and getting prayers answered.

4. Future blessings also would become a part of the reward for a revival of confidence. **v. 36**

NOTE: Paul reminds us not to be weary in well doing: ***"for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"***. (Gal. 6:9)

5. They are to look forward to Christ's coming ***in "a little while"*** (imminent) to set things in order, right wrongs and reward rights.

B. Remember the Conclusions: v. 38,39

1. Justifying or saving faith is persevering faith. **v. 38**

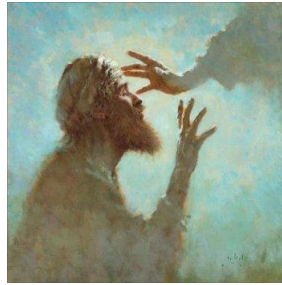
NOTE: This verse from Habakkuk is quoted in three New Testament books. In Romans ***"the just"*** are emphasized; in Galatians ***"shall live"*** is the focus and in Hebrews ***"by faith"*** is the theme.

2. Judas Iscariot is the perfect example of a *professing believer* who drew back and went to perdition. **v. 39**
 - a. His social and religious identification was a sham.
 - b. His withdrawal was the evidence of an unregenerate heart.

NOTE: The point Paul makes is that all the evidence is that his readers, like himself, were truly saved! Are YOU?

CONCL: Don't get discouraged: **"FOCUS ON THE FAR VIEW"**. Don't let "afflictions" or loss of possessions or persons defeat you or detour you from God's will and cause you to get involved in willful sin. Keep the faith!

"YOU DON'T NEED EYES TO SEE!?"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:1-3

THESIS: To set forth the Biblical description and foundation of faith.

INTRO: A. We not only cannot see electricity, but science cannot even explain completely how it works. But we use it. So with many things God tells us in His Word. We may not "see" with our eyes or understand how God has done something, but we can enjoy the benefits and blessings and believe it and observe its results. When it comes to the area of faith, **"YOU DON'T NEED EYES TO SEE!"** and seeing is not believing; believing is seeing!

B. Hebrews 10 closed with the statement **"Now the just shall live by faith" (v. 38)** and the last verse defined that faith as saving faith. **Hebrews 11** takes us beyond saving faith, initially, to faith in general and the individual illustrations of faith in the lives of believers of the Old Testament. The readers of Hebrews have heard powerful arguments for the superiority of the New Covenant over the old, but are now told that the common denominator in both is faith.

I. FAITH SEES THE UNSEEN: V. 1

A. The Fact of Faith:

1. The word **"faith"** here is without the article ("the") showing that it is not specifically saving faith or the body of doctrine of believers in view, but faith in general.
2. We exercise faith daily in the details of life, showing that it is not nebulous or non-existent, simply because it is unseen.

ILLUS: Faith is based on reality - it is not blind credulity. By faith we believe the sun will rise, the tides will ebb and flow, the moon will go through its phases, the seasons will follow, plants will grow and bloom, rain will come, et.al. Why? Because we have testimony and evidence.

B. The Act of Faith:

1. Faith has Substance: (cf. II Cor. 4:18)

- a. The word **"substance"** speaks of a foundation (lit: that which stands under or supports).
- b. Faith is to the believer what a foundation is to a house.
- c. Faith is the inner conviction whereby the believer knows that heaven, hell, sin forgiveness, etc. are just as real (substantive) as rocks and trees.

NOTE: Verse 1 is not so much a definition of faith as much as a description of its operation and what it produces.

- d. Being **"the substance of things hoped for"** means it is the foundation of all our hopes promised in God's Word.

NOTE: The word "**substance**" in Greek literally is something translated "title deed". Saving faith is our title deed to a mansion in glory.

2. Faith has Evidence:

- a. Faith provides the conviction for that which is beyond the physical senses.
- b. Christian faith is belief in God and His Word against the world and its philosophy - not belief in the improbable against chance.

ILLUS: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego chose to obey God, whom they had never seen, over Nebuchadnezzar who was immediately visible. They trusted God, who cannot lie, over their senses which often lie or their intellect which may be mistaken.

- c. The believer "**sees Him Who is invisible**" (v. 27) but the natural man has no means of spiritual perception.

NOTE: "**YOU DON'T NEED EYES TO SEE**" - you need faith. Believing is seeing, not the reverse - for the believer.

II. FAITH IS APPROVED OF GOD: V. 2

A. The Wise:

1. The author will soon introduce us to the wise men (and women) of faith who prove his statements to be true.
 - a. In each case God spoke to them through His Word.
 - b. They were stirred to obey.
 - c. God bore witness about them. ("**good report**")
2. The author will demonstrate and illustrate through their lives that:
 - a. Faith gives understanding to God's works.
 - b. Faith gives sight and insight to believers.
 - c. Faith gives strength to do what others cannot.

B. The Witness: "good report**"**

NOTE: Faith is not one way to please God, it is the only way (v. 6). If you want a good report from God - exercise faith. Trust Him!

III. FAITH ACCEPTS THE INCREDIBLE: V. 3

A. Fundamental Faith:

1. The "elders" of v. 2 accepted the biblical account of God's creative power and this is seen as the secret to their faith and their reward of a "**good report**".
2. Acceptance of **Genesis 1:1** is fundamental to any and all statements of God and His power.

NOTE: The word "**worlds**" speaks of "ages" or dispensations but seems to be a general symbol or picture of the universe and its orderly creation and administration, including the celestial world, the starry world (space), the terrestrial world, the watery world and the time world.

- a. "**By faith we understand**" reveals that knowledge and faith are compatible, not antagonistic.
- b. But faith is not based on human discoveries but upon disclosures of revelation.

B. Foundational Truth:

1. Creation is "ex nihilo" - "out of nothing".

2. This refutes the "eternal existence of matter", "the Big Bang theory", all evolutionary models, etc.

- a. It means that God existed before creation.
- b. It means that God exists apart from His creation.
- c. It means that God is self-existent and all powerful.
- d. It means that the universe is a product of God's design, not random change.
- e. It means that it was a "framed" work with great exactness, purpose and order.
- f. It means that His Word was the agency of His creation.

1) The Living Word: **John 1:1**.

2) The Written Word: **Genesis 1 "and God said..."** 8 times.

3) The essential Word: the power and manifestation of the invincible will of God - for God to will is for God to speak. (**Psalm 33:9**)

CONCL: *"Through faith we understand..."* - thus **"WE DON'T NEED EYES TO SEE"**. We don't need "fossils", museums, science books, etc. to substantiate God's creation. We have a Book full of evidence and a universe full of substance to support our faith and seal our title deed. Faith is the vehicle of spiritual perception.

"DEAD MEN TELL TALES!"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:4-7

THESIS: To demonstrate three aspects of faith: worship, walk and work, using Abel, Enoch and Noah.

INTRO: A. Hebrews 11 is called "The Faith Chapter", "The Saints Hall of Fame", "The Heroes of Faith", "The Westminster Abbey of Scripture" and "The Honor Roll of Old Testament Saints". It is all of that and more as it reveals example after example of the definition and description of faith given in **v. 1-3**.

B. In this chapter **"DEAD MEN TELL TALES"**. Their lives and testimonies continue to speak to us of faith and faith's works. We hear these **DEAD MEN TELL TALES** of their exploits for the Lord, as it is said of Abel: **"He being dead yet speaketh..." (v. 4)**.

I. ABEL TELLS OF FAITH WORSHIPPING: V. 4

A. Faith-Sacrifice Response: "a more excellent sacrifice..."

1. All faith begins with obedience to revelation: **Rom. 10:17**
2. That revelation regarding salvation always includes a sacrifice.
 - a. That sacrifice must be a blood sacrifice. cf. **9:22**
 - b. Abel simply obeyed God's revelation and **"brought of the firstlings of his flock..." (Gen. 4:4)**

ILLUS: Here the cross and the Lamb of God were pictured. "The first sacrifice was Abel's lamb - one lamb for one person. Then came the Passover Lamb - one lamb for each family. The the Day of Atonement - one lamb for one nation. Finally came Calvary - one Lamb for the whole world." -MacArthur (*I don't agree with everything MacArthur teaches or says, but I do agree with this. - P.F.*)

3. A sacrifice acknowledges sin and need for forgiveness.

- a. It denies human merit or works for God's acceptance.
- b. It demonstrated his trust that obedience secured his righteousness in God's sight. ("**obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts**", v. 4).
- c. By obedience and faith Abel became the first martyr!

B. Fruit-stand Religion: "than Cain..."

1. Cain also offered a sacrifice, but not the one blood sacrifice prescribed by God.
2. Cain offered his "good works" fruit and vegetable "unbloody sacrifice" and was rejected by God.

NOTE: Abel's sacrifice was accepted because he knew what God wanted and obeyed. Cain's was rejected because he knew what God wanted and disobeyed. Cain and Abel were both sinners - one acted in faith and obedience, the other in unbelief and disobedience.

- a. Cain believed in God and brought a sacrifice, but didn't believe God and disobeyed Him.
- b. Fruit-stand religion is trying to come to God by any method except the one He has prescribed.

P.S. Cain and Abel were the second and third men on earth and had all the essential characteristics of human nature men have today and do not even remotely resemble the figments of the evolutionist's fantasy!

- c. Cain was religious, but not righteous.

II. ENOCH TELLS OF FAITH WALKING: V. 5,6

A. The Commencement of His Faith-Walk: (cf. Gen. 5:21,11) v. 5

1. It began with Methuselah, at the age of 65!
2. It lasted for 300 years or 109,500 days!!
 - a. Walking speaks of fellowship.
 - b. Walking speaks of agreement: **Amos 3:3**
 - c. Walking speaks of companionship.

ILLUS: Companionship demands corresponding natures. An unsaved man cannot walk with God till he receives the new nature. Ex: Animals offer companionship, but not fellowship. You can TAKE a walk with a dog, but you can't WALK with a dog for fellowship.

B. The Consummation of His Faith-Walk: (Gen. 5:24 "was not")

1. He was "**translated**" (Lit. = carried across). A translation picks up something here and puts it down over there. (It is interesting that every time the word "translated" is used in a King James Bible, that which is translated is better than the original! Thus a translation from Hebrew or Greek into English for English speaking people is better than the original!!!)
2. He was picked up on earth and put down in glory!
3. He did not "**see death**" and becomes the only man who never died and never will die!

C. The Comment on His Faith-Walk: v. 6

1. Step one in faith is believing that God exists.
2. Step two in faith is believing that God rewards those who walk with Him.
 - a. Enoch never saw God, but he believed He was there and walked with Him and thus pleased God.
 - b. God loves those who walk in darkness (**Isaiah 50:10**) and trust Him to get them through (**Micah 7:8**).
 - c. Faith honors God and God honors faith.

III. NOAH TELLS OF FAITH WORKING:

NOTE: Notice the progression: worship, walk, work! Very instructive.

A. Noah Scared: *"moved with fear..."*

1. God revealed what was coming - a world-wide deluge.

- a. The first stage in faith is always revelation.
- b. The *"things not seen as yet"* included rain, a flood, an Ark and a total wipeout of humanity and the pre-flood earth. (**Gen. 6:12 - 7:4**)

NOTE: There is nothing wrong with preaching "hellfire and damnation" to get folks scared to act in faith toward God.

2. Noah responded to God's warning *"by faith"!*

NOTE: Someone said the greatest act of faith in the Bible was when Noah cut down that first gopher tree!

B. Noah Prepared: *"prepared an ark..."*

NOTE: The ark was over 1½ times the length of a football field. Provision was made for all air breathing species and any number of humans who wished to come aboard.

C. Noah Cared: *"to the saving of his house..."*

D. Noah Declared: *"condemned the world..."*

1. He warned and preached righteousness for 120 years!
2. The scoffers and unbelievers were condemned and destroyed!
3. Noah "became heir of the righteousness which is by faith"! (v. 7)

CONCL: The first thing a saved man does is worship God. Next he is taught to walk with God and then he can begin to work for God. In all three acts he is demonstrating his active faith. These three **"DEAD MEN TELL TALES"** of faith in action. Do you hear Abel, Enoch and Noah speaking to you?!

"OUR FEARLESS (?) FOREFATHER OF FAITH"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:8-10

THESIS: To show the pilgrimage, patience and promise of faith revealed in Abraham's life.

INTRO: A. So far in "THE HEROES HALL OF FAITH" only one verse is given to Abel (and his Worship of Faith), Enoch (and his Walk of Faith) and Noah (and his Work of Faith), but to Abraham, 12 verses are given to his Witness of Faith. He has been called "The Columbus of Faith" and some 14 chapters of the Old Testament and numerous verses throughout the Scriptures are devoted to his adventures which are summarized in 12 verses in this passage.

B. No man is held in such high esteem by so many people on our planet. Abraham is held in profound reverence by Jews, Christians and Muslims. The Bible is full of references to Abraham, "**OUR FEARLESS (?) FOREFATHER OF FAITH**".

TRANS: One day, sovereignly, God spoke to Abraham and told him to move from his home to an unspecified location. That began...

I. THE PILGRIMAGE OF FAITH: V. 8

A. Abraham's Call:

1. Here is a heathen, idol worshipper, 70 + years of age living in a pagan culture and suddenly God speaks to him!
2. Abraham was rich, rooted and religious. (**Joshua 24:2**)

ILLUS: In other words, God interrupted his life, changed his lifestyle and altered his direction, just like He did when He called YOU to salvation! In fact, there is a family likeness between Abraham and every believer for "***if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise***" (**Galatians 3:29**) and "***they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham...***" (**Gal. 3:7**)

B. Abraham's Obedience:

1. The first thing Abraham is commended for is his obedience.

ILLUS: It is interesting that the sins of the saints are rarely mentioned in the New Testament. Example: Noah got drunk, but it isn't mentioned. In Abraham's case, his obedience was prompt, but not complete. He was told to leave his kindred, but he took Lot and his parents, etc. (**Gen. 11:31**) He didn't leave Haran "The Halfway House" to Caanan till his father died!

2. The main point is that he obeyed and did so on faith in God's revelation. "***...obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.***" (**v. 8**)
 - a. His obedience was prompt.
 - b. His obedience was practical. (based on revelation)
 - c. His obedience was peculiar.

ILLUS: "Hi Abe... what's happening?" "I'm moving." "Where you going?" "I don't know!" "When you comin' home?" "Ain't!" "Where you goin' to live?" "In a tent." "What about your kids' education... if you ever have any!?" "I'll home school them - WHEN I have them." "Little old to be havin' kids..." "But I WILL!"

The unsaved ask; "Why did that girl break off her engagement?" "Why is that young man going to waste his life as a missionary?" The answer to all of the above is "God said so!" That transcends sense and reason. Faith and obedience always do.

II. THE PATIENCE OF FAITH: V. 9a

A. Lived in a "strange country":

1. Though he "***sojourned there***", the only piece of ground he ever owned in the Promised Land was the plot he bought to bury his beloved wife Sarah in.
2. It was promised but never possessed.

ILLUS: It is easy to be patient and demonstrate great faith over a short span. Example: If we knew Christ would come for sure next week or month, we could live for God, but to keep on keeping on for years, decades... takes REAL patience.

B. Lived in "tabernacles":

1. The city, house-dweller, became a nomadic tent-dweller.

2. Abraham didn't conduct himself as the possessor of Caanan but as a foreigner and stranger there.

- a. Tent-dwelling speaks of temporary residence. cf. **v. 13**
- b. Tent-dwelling speaks of trusting God for protection.

ILLUS: A tent offered no protection from the idolatrous heathen around Abraham - a fortified castle would have been better, but a tent in the will of God is safer than a fortress outside His will.

c. Tent-dwelling speaks of the disposition of his heart toward the spiritual and not the material, though rich.

3. He was a tent-dweller for 100+ years after his call. (He died at age 175! Talk about PATIENCE!)

III. THE PROMISE OF FAITH: V. 9b,10

A. Looked for a City:

1. There is a debate as to whether this was an earthly city during the Millennial reign or a heavenly city.
2. Whichever one it is, we know that the Lord is there.
 - a. The earthly city is called "**Jehovah-Shammah**" or "**The Lord is There**". (**Ezek. 48:35** - different measurements)
 - b. The heavenly city is "**the New Jerusalem**" and Abraham and Isaac are not connected with it in Scripture (though Jacob's sons' names are on its twelve gates; the inhabitants are called the "**Lamb's wife**").

B. Literal City: "*foundations...*"

1. Will no longer live in a tent or a desert place.
2. Will no longer wander as a nomad, but have a permanent dwelling place.

C. Like No Other City: "*builder and maker is God*"

1. He longed for the fulfillment of God's promise.
2. He knew God had designed and built his permanent dwelling.

ILLUS: Salvation brings separation from the world. "Worldliness is not so much what we do as what we WANT to do. It is not determined so much by our actions as by where our heart is." –MacArthur

Salvation brings a longing for our permanent dwelling place - our mansion in glory and "The Lord is There!"

CONCL: Abraham may not have been "our FEARLESS forefather of faith" but like us, he trusted God overall. He wasn't perfect, just believing and forgiven! In our weary pilgrimage we need the patience of faith as we look forward to the promise of our faith.

"PREMATURE EPITAPHS"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:11-13

THESIS: To show the miraculous results of believing faith.

INTRO: A. What is Bible faith? It is not belief in spite of evidence, that's superstition. It is not blind trust, that is faith in faith. Faith is trust in a revelation and subsequent obedience. Bible faith has God for its object. That sets it apart from the faith of the worldling in a job, the future ("everything will work out!"), friends, a political party, etc.

B. Bible faith has a revelation (God's Word), a relationship (walking with God), a response (doing God's will) and a reward (God's witness, **v. 6**). Do YOU have Bible faith?

TRANS: We have seen Abel's faith in his worship, Enoch's faith in his walk, Noah's faith in his work and Abraham's faith in his willingness (to move without clear direction, but with a clear revelation). Now we will see the weakness of Sarah's faith, the wonder of Abraham's faith and the witness of the pilgrim's faith...

I. THE WEAKNESS OF FAITH: V. 11 (Sarah)

A. Her Condition:

1. The first thing we learn of Sarah was that she was **"barren, she had no child"**. **Gen. 11:30**
2. She was past the age of child-bearing when God made His promise.

NOTE: Sarah was 65 and Abraham 75 when the promise was made. She thought it was a cruel joke and **"Sarah laughed"** (then she lied and said she didn't!).

B. Her Solution:

1. After 10 years of waiting with no results, she concocted a plan to "help God out" with Abraham and Hagar.
2. Faith solves problems, unbelief creates greater problems.
 - a. Thirteen years pass after Ishmael's birth and we hear nothing more of Sarah and Abraham; unbelief always results in silence from God.
 - b. God broke His silence when she was 89 and Abraham was 99! (**Gen. 17:15-17**)

ILLUS: The problem in the holy land today was created by Sarah and Abraham's lapse of faith and their "Plan B" escapade!

C. Her 'Resurrection':

1. When her faith was transferred from herself, Abraham and Hagar to the Faithful One, her barren womb came alive.

NOTE: Hudson Taylor learned that secret and said; "not striving to have faith... but a looking off to the Faithful One."

2. Her faith, admittedly late and weak, is honored here in this list of the Heroes of the faith.

ILLUS: None of her lapses of faith are listed because **Heb. 11** is a record of faith, not failures and unbelief. It lists the victories, not defeats. "God is not keeping a record of our failures so that He can rebuke us. Rather, He is keeping a record of the victories of our faith so He can reward us." -Wiersbe

III. THE WONDER OF FAITH: V. 12 (Abraham)

A. His 'Resurrection': (#2)

1. Abraham was **"as good as dead"** when the promise was fulfilled.
2. The promise of God is faithful, because the God of the promise is faithful.

3. The promise of God is only as powerful as the faith exercised in its behalf.

- a. Faith sees the invisible as reality. (**11:27**)
- b. Faith hears the inaudible as spoken.
- c. Faith touches the intangible as real. (**v. 10**)
- d. Faith accomplishes the impossible as simple.

B. His Reward:

1. The **"stars in the sky"** may refer to his spiritual seed. (**Gal. 3:16; 4:28-31**)
2. The **"sand...by the sea"** may refer to his physical seed.

NOTE: Abraham did not live to see this innumerable multitude, but he did live to see his son Isaac married to Rebekah and lived another 50+ years, married Keturah and had six more children! (**Gen. 24, 25**) His grandchildren and great grandchildren, etc. are indeed innumerable!

III. THE WITNESS OF FAITH: V. 13 (The Patriarchs)

A. They Died in Faith:

NOTE: **"They"** may be the previous saints (except Enoch) or those just ahead in **Chapter 11**.

1. This fact indicates that their epitaphs are premature; their lives and works are not ended.
2. The statement **"not having received the promises"** is not a lament, but a positive declaration, for their faith made the promises as good as the reality.
 - a. They saw them as fulfilled with eyes of faith **"having seen them afar off..."**.
 - b. They were **"persuaded of them"** - convinced of their certainty.
 - c. They had **"embraced them"** - took them as their possessions.

B. They Live Forever:

1. They considered paradise and paradise restored to earth - the Millennium - their true home.
2. They considered themselves **"strangers and pilgrims on the earth"**.

CONCL: In this passage there are two "resurrections" and the hope of resurrection and eternal life for many others. Truly the epitaphs for these heroes of the faith are premature!

Could your name be listed alongside theirs? Are you looking at heaven as a reality or is this earth your REAL home? Can you "see" heaven? Are you "persuaded" of eternal things? Have you "embraced" His promises?

"VOLUNTARY GODLINESS" or "THE FATHER IS PROUD OF HIS OBEDIENT CHILDREN"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:14-16

THESIS: To show that our Heavenly Father is not ashamed to call Himself our God, as we are obedient in faith.

INTRO: A. There is a marked contrast between the statements **"died without mercy" 10:28** for those who despise and are disobedient to God's revelation and to the statement in **v. 13 "died in faith"** for those who

responded to God's revelation. To die *"in faith"* means: **1)** to believe in the record of a life after death, **2)** to trust your soul into God's care and keeping, **3)** to believe in a heavenly country promised by God and **4)** to trust in a future resurrection of our bodies for this future state. All of these things New Testament and Old Testament saints have in common.

B. Faith is the common denominator of all of God's children. When we respond in faith **"THE FATHER IS PROUD OF HIS OBEDIENT CHILDREN"**. Not only do we share a common faith with our brethren, but we also share somewhat of a common hope, although the ultimate destiny of the Old Testament saint is earthly and that of the New Testament saint is heavenly. We both *"seek a country"* and will not be disappointed.

I. SEEKING A COUNTRY: V. 14

A. What is Said:

1. In **v. 13** the Old Testament patriarchs *"confessed that they were strangers on the earth"*.
2. This is a statement revealing the temporary earth-life of the believer.
3. *"They that say such things"* are NOT Abraham and Sarah, etc., but someone LIKE them.

NOTE: It seems to me that this is something of a parenthetical statement (**v. 14-16**), since **verse 17** picks up the theme of Abraham's faith once again.

B. What is Sought:

1. Abraham left an earthly country to seek an earthly country and an earthly city to seek an earthly city.
2. The city he looked for will be on this earth (**Ez. 40-48**) and he will receive the "promise" in the "promised land" that God promised him.
3. Those to whom Hebrews was written seek a heavenly country (**Phil. 3:20**) and a heavenly city (**Rev. 21-22**) which will never really be on this earth.

ILLUS: "The important thing is not what we live in, but what we look for", Dr. Greg Morrison, Scottish preacher. The Old Testament saints lived in tents, but always knew they would ultimately receive the promise. So too we need to be keeping our eyes on the heavenly, not the earthly. (**II Cor. 4:18**)

- a. We too are *"strangers"* on earth - often despised, misunderstood, hated and held in con-tempt. (cf. **v. 13**)
- b. We too are *"pilgrims"* down here with our hope and expectation in another place.

II. LEAVING A COUNTRY: V. 15

A. The Way Out:

1. As Abraham left Chaldea without a second thought, the believer today must make a decision to leave the world and its allurements and attractions behind.
2. They traded, in their hearts, the known for the unknown - by faith - based on God's promises.

NOTE: A.W. Pink, a strict Calvinist, admits "While salvation, from beginning to end, is to be wholly ascribed to the free and sovereign grace of God, it nevertheless remains that conversion itself is the voluntary act of man, his own conscious and free surrendering of himself to God in Christ." Page 730, Hebrews

3. The believer decides that the attractions of the old life pale into dust when compared to the realities of the new life in Christ and His promise of Heaven.

B. No Turning Back:

1. Abraham pictures the "VOLUNTARY GODLINESS" of every believer.

ILLUS: He would not personally go back, nor send his son back to get him a bride. He resisted the temptation to go back as an act of "VOLUNTARY GODLINESS". He had the opportunity, the money, the health, et. al. The

Caananites would have been glad to see him go and his friends and family in Chaldea would have welcomed him back. So too for us today! (So too for the first century Jewish Christian toward Judaism!)

2. Every believer has the "opportunity to have returned..." - the choice is his. (cf. **Num. 14:4**; "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt." When they received the "majority report" of the giants, etc. in Caanan.

III. DESIRING A COUNTRY:

A. The Children's Desire:

1. The evidences of our "desire" for Heaven are that we:
 - a. Are content with whatever of this world's goods we are permitted (**Phil. 4:11**),
 - b. **"Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;" (I Peter 2:11)**,
 - c. That we lay aside hindering weights and sins (**Heb. 12:1**).

2. The object of our desire is based on His promise **"Who cannot fail..."**

B. The Father's Delight:

1. Think of the incredible grace of a God Who is **"not ashamed to be called their (and our) God."**
2. We are but contemptible, fallen, sinful, unworthy objects of "the Father (Who) is proud of His obedient children."

ILLUS: Though unworthy (and that's what grace is all about!), God has prepared, for the objects of His grace and love, a special city.

THAT BEAUTIFUL CITY

...they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore, God...hath prepared for them a city. (Heb. 11:16)

Jesus has promised His followers a glorious dwelling place in Heaven's eternal mansions that are being prepared in the New Jerusalem. When we read in Revelation about that capital city with its rainbow-colored walls and its gates of pearl, we gasp in wonder and amazement. All is pure splendor! Although it is described in terms of the most precious things we know, we are told only about the most commonplace features such as its walls and streets. We cannot begin to imagine the transcendent beauty to be found inside that palace of light.

The Heavenly City will be 1,500 miles high, 1,500 miles long, and 1,500 miles wide. Its foundations, resplendent with costly gems, glow with a dazzling radiance (**Rev. 21:11**). We are not certain of all the hues represented in the 12 foundations, but the following description helps us capture some of their brilliance: (1) Jasper - basically a **transparent green** with perhaps some other colors mixed through it; (2) Sapphire - a **deep blue**; (3) Chalcedony - a **blue-gray** with stripes of various hues; (4) Emerald - a sparkling **green**; (5) Sardonyx - an agate with alternating **orange-red** and **white stripes**; (6) Sardius - a **ruby red**; (7) Chrysolite - a **golden yellow**; (8) Beryl - a **sea-green**; (9) Topaz - a **light greenish yellow**; (10) Chrysoprasus - a stone with a **pale purple** cast; (11) Jacinth - a gem ranging in color from **violet** to **reddish-orange**; (12) Amethyst - a flashing **violet**.

This glorious city is a literal place - the future home of the redeemed. What an exciting prospect is ours! Believe it Christian and keep looking up! -H.G.B.

CONCL: "VOLUNTARY GODLINESS" makes "THE FATHER PROUD OF HIS OBEDIENT CHILDREN". Don't make Him "ashamed" by being faithless, unbelieving and disobedient children.

"WHEN TEST MEETS TRUST"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:17-19

THESIS: To demonstrate the source and triumph of Abraham's faith.

INTRO: A. Faith must not be simply claimed, it must be tested. Suspending a heavy weight from a chain will reveal either its strength or its weakness. So with faith. Probably the greatest test of faith in God's Word, to a mere mortal, was when God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac, his own son of promise, on Mt. Moriah.

B. Abraham's faith must be put under the severest testing to demonstrate its strength so that he might become an example to all who would come after him. Abraham accepts the challenge and this poignant, powerful story is a real-life drama I call "**WHEN TEST MEETS TRUST**"...

I. TESTING: V. 17

A. A Very Great Trial:

1. He was commanded to do something which was beyond reason.
2. He was commanded to do something which seemed to contradict the promise he had been given.
3. He was commanded to do something which had been forbidden by God Himself.
 - a. The word for **"offered up"** is the same word used for slaying animals in sacrifice.
 - b. God had specifically forbidden the taking of human life. (cf. **Gen. 9:6**)

NOTE: God is the Lawmaker and is above His own laws. He is sovereign. He is the Life-Giver and Lord of life. He Who commanded Moses not to make a graven image, commanded Moses to make images of Cherubim in the Tabernacle and a brazen serpent in the wilderness. God is bound by no law and can choose to supersede His own laws when they serve His perfect will.

4. He truly **"offered up"** Isaac even though He did not literally kill him.
 - a. Where the heart, which God sees, truly DESIRES to fully please Him and makes a SINCERE EFFORT to do so, God accepts the will for the deed! (Cf. **II Cor. 8:12** and **Heb. 13:18**)
 - b. Abraham's **"trial"** was a severe and genuine test of his faith.

NOTE: Scripture clarifies Scripture. In **Gen. 22:1** it says; **"God did TEMPT Abraham; James 1:13** says; **"God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man."** No Greek or Hebrew is needed and there is no contradiction. Here the word is amplified with the translators putting the correct word: **"tried"!!!**

B. A Very Great Faith:

1. Abraham Responded **"by faith":**
 - a. It doesn't say "in submission to His holy will, Abraham offered up Isaac", nor "out of supreme love for God he offered up his son", but **"by faith..."**
 - b. His response was based on revelation: **"He that had received the promises..."**
2. The nature of the command demanded a very great faith.

ILLUS: Abraham was not commanded to offer up all his wealth, herds or flocks, his friends or hired servants, but his beloved and **"only begotten son"**. He was not told to banish him, but to kill him! He was not told to have

him killed, but to be his executioner. He was not to kill Ishmael, the rebel, or one of his other sons by Keturah, but an unusually dutiful and loving and obedient son, Isaac, the miracle child of his beloved wife Sarah.

It was when things were going well and Abraham's cup was full that this command sounded like a clap of thunder. So with Job after He had pronounced him a **"perfect man and an upright"** that He turned Satan loose on him. So with Paul when he had been caught up to the third heaven that the messenger of Satan, a thorn in the flesh, came to him. So with YOU.

3. The nature of the son demanded a very great faith:

- a. The typology is striking. Abraham offered up his **"only begotten son"** in sacrificial death, etc.
- b. But as usual, the anti-type exceeds the type. Abraham's son was only a man, God's Son the God-man; Abraham's son was offered by command, God gave His Son freely; Abraham's son didn't suffer, God's Son did!

II. (GOD'S PROMISE): V. 18

A. The Mystery:

1. God's promise hinged on Isaac's progeny.
2. God's promise depended on Isaac's life, not his death.

B. The Majesty:

1. God does not have to account to man for the method, timing or means used to fulfill His promise: **"Faithful is He Who promised, Who also will DO it!"**
2. God's methodology is not subjected to man's scrutiny, apart from His revelation.

III. TRUSTING: V. 19

A. Believing in Resurrection:

1. He knew of God's power of resurrection by the twin miracles in his and Sarah's old age.
2. He stated in **Gen. 22:5**; **"I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you."**

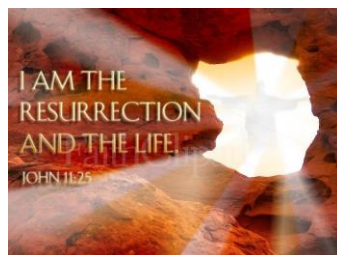
NOTE: The verb **"come again"** is in the plural in the Hebrew and thus could read "we will come again".

B. Receiving in Illustration:

1. The word **"figure"** is parabolëi or parable, thus his conception and birth was out of death and a picture of resurrection.
2. Because he did not actually die, Isaac became a type of the resurrection - he was offered, but not slain. God provided a lamb-substitute!

CONCL: Between the test and the trust was God's promise! Abraham believed God when he did not know WHERE he was going, WHEN he would receive the promise or WHY God commanded him to offer up his son. Why?! Because test meets trust in God's promise!

"WHEN FAITH MEETS DEATH"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:20-22

THESIS: To show the confidence of God's people even in death.

INTRO: A. Death is called our *"last enemy"*, but for the believer it should be our last victory! For if we live by faith, we should die by faith, triumphantly. "God is glorified when His people leave this world with their flags flying at full mast." The greatest test of victorious faith comes at the death-bed of the believer. Paul shouted; *"... to die is gain!"*

B. Before us are three more men and their death-bed legacies. We are privileged to listen in on their last words and look in on their last acts. We are about to witness what happens **"WHEN FAITH MEETS DEATH"**.

I. ISAAC: FAITH IN THE FUTURE V. 20

NOTE: Of the great Patriarchs, Isaac's life is the most ordinary. From the "miracle child" we expected more. About *a dozen chapters* each in the Old Testament cover the other Patriarchs' lives, *only two+* cover Isaac. From a spectacular beginning, we have a mediocre life. But he demonstrates at his death faith in his future and the future of his sons.

A. A Declining Father:

1. He started out with great faith, agreeing as a young man, to be offered as a sacrifice.
2. He trusted God to give him a right wife.
3. He and his wife Rebekah had prayed for a family.
 - a. God gave him two sons, Jacob and Esau and he knew that the blessing was to go to Jacob, but he tried to give it to Esau. (Relate the story of the deception.)
 - b. Isaac was blind physically, but even more so spiritually. He deliberately tried to disobey God.
 - c. God overruled his disobedience.

B. A Deceiving Mother:

1. Rebekah deceived her husband, turned Jacob into a hypocrite and a liar, and slighted her firstborn son.
2. Isaac and his son Esau tried to do the wrong thing in the wrong way.
3. Rebekah and her son Jacob tried to do the right thing in the wrong way.

C. A Determined God:

1. God is still sovereign and sets aside the firstborn and blesses the second born.
2. Isaac's brother was the first born Ishmael, but God set him aside also to bless Isaac.
3. The blessing was God's - not Isaac's!

NOTE: Again in **Hebrews 11** there is no hint of the saints' sins, only their faith. The picture given of mediocre Isaac is that of a man of faith, not failure! He was looking to the future, not the past. (Cf. **Heb. 11:13**)

II. JACOB: FAITH IN THE FATHER V. 21

A. The Blessed Becomes the Blessor:

1. Years of scheming and sin are passed over and Jacob too is presented as a man of faith.
2. Abraham's faith was passed on to Isaac, along with God's promises, and Isaac now passes them on to Joseph and his children.
3. But Jacob's faith was not in his earthly father nor his earthly grandfather, but in his heavenly Father (*"by faith Jacob, when he was a dying..."*).
4. Jacob passes on in faith what he never possessed.
 - a. The promises were the possessions of the patriarchs.
 - b. They didn't live to see them fulfilled, but counted them as real.

B. The Second Becomes the First:

1. Jacob crossed his hands and again the firstborn is set aside for the second born to receive the blessing.
2. Jacob crossed his hands and placed his right hand on Ephraim and his left hand on Manasseh.

ILLUS: Only the cross of Christ can set aside your first birth and establish your blessings in your second birth.

C. The Pilgrim Becomes the Possessor:

1. He no longer needed his staff as a pilgrim or as a cripple.
2. He would go into the valley of the shadow of death with his Lord and HIS rod and staff would be his comfort.
3. His possession wasn't immediately the promised land, but the glory land!

III. JOSEPH: FAITH IN THE FATHERLAND V. 22

A. Joseph Knew What He Believed: v. 22a

1. He believed that the Israelites would ultimately leave Egypt.
2. He knew God's people were foreigners in Egypt.
 - a. God blessed Joseph in Egypt.
 - b. God used Joseph in Egypt.

NOTE: He told Isaac NOT to go to Egypt. He told Jacob NOT to go to Egypt. He calls His people out of Egypt. He called His Son out of Egypt.

B. Joseph Knew Where He Belonged: v. 22b

1. When Moses left Egypt he took the bones of Joseph with him (**Ez. 13:19** – pallbearers for 40 years!).
2. Joseph's bones being carried up to Caanan are a picture of the rapture which will include the dead and the living in a glorious Exodus from our Egypt! (**Phil. 3:20,21**)

CONCL: Death is the acid test of our faith. Our citizenship is in heaven and we claim it by faith. These three heroes of the faith did not die in despair of unfulfilled dreams, but in perfect peace of unfulfilled promises, confident because they were God's promises. **"WHEN FAITH MEETS DEATH"** it is victory for the believer!

"SPIRITUAL GAMBLING" or "JUST SAY NO!"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:23-29

THESIS: To show God's protection, provision and power in response to faith.

INTRO: A. There may be as many as 6 million compulsive gamblers in America. Gamblers are losers. Winning occasionally drives them deeper into their addiction. Ultimately "winning" simply means not losing everything.

B. Many Christians practice **"SPIRITUAL GAMBLING"**. They take chances with what God has already revealed. They gamble away their lives in sinful pleasures as if it were possible to ignore God's will and God's Word and still come out a winner. They seem to operate on the odds that because they can't lose their soul, they need not be concerned with a life of spiritual defeat. The odds that God will keep His Word are not 5 to 3 or 1,000

to 1, but **100%**! The men and women of faith in **Hebrews 11** were NOT "spiritual gamblers". They just believed God and acted accordingly.

I. FAITH IN GOD'S PROTECTION: V. 23

A. Cooperative Faith:

1. True faith is always based on some revelation from God.
2. Thus we conclude that God gave Amram and Jochebed some revelation of His special future plans for Moses.
 - a. These parents had cooperative faith.
 - b. They not only belonged together, but believed together.

ILLUS: No doubt they recalled regularly the promises of God to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Amram and Jochebed loved each other, prayed together and trusted God together to protect their son. For 3 long months they hid their infant from the Egyptian authorities.

B. Courageous Faith:

1. They feared God more than **"the king's commandment"**.
2. It took courage to defy the king, to hide the baby and finally to place him in the crocodile-infested Nile.

ILLUS: Their faith in God's protection paid off. Pharaoh's daughter plucked him from the river and Pharaoh paid the bill to raise the child and even hired Moses' mother to nurture him. Moses was saved by water and Pharaoh's armies were destroyed by water. Few know the Pharaoh's name. Nearly everyone knows Moses' name.

II. FAITH IN GOD'S PROVISION: V. 24-26

NOTE: The tense of the verb **"refused"** points to a specific act of choice. Life is made up of decisions. The quality of our life is made more by decisions than by circumstances. Our decisions reflect our character. We must decide throughout life. Even indecision is a decision...not to decide.

A. Moses Said No to Egypt's Pleasures: v. 24-25

1. The pleasures of status, wealth and position. **v. 24**
2. The prestige of being known as **"the son of Pharaoh's daughter"**.

ILLUS: As the years progressed, no doubt no one knew Moses' true identity. At age 40 he began to see the suffering of his people, Israel. Maybe no one else was aware of who he was, but God would not let Moses forget! The world may not know who you are, but the indwelling Holy Spirit will never let you forget you belong to Him.

B. Moses Said No to Sin's Pleasures: v. 2

1. The decision was two-sided:
 - a. He chose "to have bad times with" (lit. Heb. sugkakoucheisthai) God's people than "good times" with sin.
 - b. He chose the solidarity of suffering.

NOTE: Often the choice is not between good and evil, but between suffering and evil! You know you will suffer because of your decision to **"JUST SAY NO!"**

2. The decision of saying NO to the pleasures of sin was not necessarily sensual lusts, but what the world would consider success and prestige.

NOTE: To trade service for success is sin!

C. Moses Said No to Egypt's Treasures: v. 26

1. He wanted neither the pleasures nor the treasures of Egypt.
2. He considered **"the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt!"**
3. Moses preferred **"the reward"** of God over the award or applause of men.

ILLUS: Vance Havner said: "Moses chose the imperishable, saw the invisible and did the impossible." His faith enabled him to make the right decision, overlook the obvious and reject the easy path.

4. Moses' **"reward"** was not Caanan (he never got there), but the Millennium and ultimately Heaven.

III. FAITH IN GOD'S POWER: V. 27-29

A. Moses' Faith Brought Him Out: v. 27

1. He didn't fear the king's anger, authority or his armies.
2. He got a glimpse of a greater power and a mightier Potentate! He looked beyond Pharaoh and saw God!

B. Moses' Faith Kept Him Safe: v. 28

1. The choice was believe God's Word or man's threats.
2. The choice is always one of authority.

NOTE: The difference between the saved and unsaved is not that one has faith and the other doesn't. It is in the object of that faith. Man's word vs. God's Word. Faith is only as good as the object.

C. Moses' Faith Took Him Through: v. 29

1. Not only were they hemmed in on every side, but even the "east wind" seemed to be against them.
2. The Jews were frightened and began to blame Moses. (**Ex. 14:10,11**)

NOTE: One of Hebrews' themes is "Let us go on...". Another is the intercessory work of Christ. Moses led the people and he interceded for them and his faith took him and them through the Red Sea (not Dead Sea or Reed Sea!) on to dry land!!

CONCL: Moses was not a **"SPIRITUAL GAMBLER"**. He just believed in the 100% odds of faith against sight. Why not **"JUST SAY NO!"** to the world, the flesh and the devil and watch God deliver YOU?

"WHEN OBSTACLES BECOME OPPORTUNITIES"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:30-31

THESIS: To show the faith of believers and unbelievers and the results.

INTRO: A. Between **verses 29 and 30** are 40 years of unbelief, but not one word is said here about them because they are 40 years without faith and **Hebrews 11 celebrates faith, not unbelief**. The focus is on faith and its victories, not on unbelief and its defeats.

B. In **verses 30 and 31** we have two extremely opposite people; Joshua, representing believing Israel and Rahab representing the unbelieving Gentiles (Canaanites!). Joshua is a Jewish general, Rahab a Gentile

prostitute! Joshua was the leader of God's covenant nation. Rahab was the lowest outcast of her people. Joshua was the conqueror. Rahab among those to be conquered. But faith brings them together. Both show the possibilities of faith. **"WHEN OBSTACLES BECOME OPPORTUNITIES"** Joshua and Israel win a military victory and Rahab wins a spiritual victory.

I. ISRAEL - VICTORY OVER THE ENEMY: V. 30

A. Leaving Egypt to Enter Caanan:

1. Bible geography is important!
 - a. Egypt pictures the unsaved world.
 - b. The Red Sea pictures deliverance.
 - c. Kadesh-Barnea pictures sin, rebellion and unbelief.
 - d. The Wilderness pictures God's judgment on unbelief.
 - e. The Jordan pictures death, burial and resurrection.
 - f. Caanan pictures the believer's inheritance: the Spirit-filled life.

NOTE: The Bible is a book about geography! It centers on a piece of LAND about the size of New Jersey, called the Holy LAND. God had the title deed and would give it to Israel at great cost – blood shed! God told Moses it was holy. God told Joshua it was holy. And it is still holy and will ultimately be given – in its entirety – to Israel as promised, in the Millennium.

2. Bible history is important:

ILLUS: Joshua, not Moses, led Israel into Caanan. Moses represented the Law and we cannot claim our spiritual inheritance by keeping the Law. Joshua means "Jehovah is salvation" and is the Old Testament equivalent of Jesus. When Israel crossed the Red Sea it meant death to the life of slavery in Egypt. When they crossed the Jordan it meant death to the wasted life of unbelief in the wilderness.

B. Entering Caanan to Overcome the Enemy:

1. The life of faith is a life of battles as well as blessings.
2. The first obstacle in the land was Jericho, an impregnable walled city.

ILLUS: The first generation of Jews to leave Egypt forgot that He brought them out of Egypt to bring them into Caanan. The spies saw only the obstacles. Joshua and Caleb saw the opportunities. God waited 40 years to bring Israel into Caanan and a whole generation of "unbelieving believers" had to die. *"The only sentence God can pass on unbelief is death."* -Wiersbe

3. God's command seemed foolish- marching instead of fighting.
 - a. Faith is not in a hurry and not worried when people ridicule.
 - b. The victory of Jericho was not the result of "great faith" so much as faith in a great God.

NOTE: The first generation of Israelites were overcome and buried in the wilderness. The second generation were overcomers. The difference was faith. *"Faith is not believing in spite of evidence; it is obeying in spite of circumstances or consequence."* -Wiersbe

C. Overcoming the Enemy to Claim the Inheritance:

1. Unbelief alone kept the first generation from Caanan.
2. Joshua and Israel obey in the first act of corporate belief since the Red Sea.
3. Jericho is the "first fruits" of Caanan and so they cannot touch it or take any spoil. It belongs to God!
4. Israel is not stealing anything from anyone. Caanan was given to them by God as their inheritance.
("The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein.")

ILLUS: In the Millennium, we will inherit everything the unbelievers build for us! The Caananites were wicked. e.g: They would place babies alive in jars and put them in the walls. (Kind of like abortionists today!) They were idolaters. Joshua wasn't killing *innocent victims*, he was cleaning out a sewer!

II. RAHAB - VICTORY OVER SIN: V. 31

A. The Necessity of Saving Faith:

1. Rahab was a condemned woman living in a condemned society.
2. Rahab was racially condemned as a Caananite and morally condemned as a prostitute.

NOTE: It didn't matter if the Jerichoites FELT condemned or not, they were!

B. The Nature of Saving Faith:

1. It involved her mind; she believed what she heard about God and Israel. (**Josh. 2:8-11**)
2. It involved her emotions; fear was in her heart. (**2:11**)
3. It involved her will; she acted on her belief.

ILLUS: Many know the truth or feel the stirring of the Spirit, but fail to obey the revelation or conviction.

C. The Evidences of Saving Faith:

1. She had assurance: **"I KNOW the Lord hath given you the land..." (Josh. 2:9)**
2. Her life was changed: works followed her faith.
3. She had a concern for others: **"save alive my mother...father...sisters...brethren..." (Josh. 2:13)**

D. The Rewards of Saving Faith:

1. She escaped the fiery judgment by a miracle!

NOTE: There is fire in the future of every unbeliever! (**I Thes. 1:10**)

2. She saved herself and her family by a scarlet thread!
3. She became a part of Israel:
 - a. She was not only rescued from the fire, but ended up at a wedding. She married Salman, Boaz' father.
 - b. She became a part of Jesus' genealogy.

CONCL: Israel conquered Jericho and her enemies by faith and proved that God will even do the impossible for His believing children.

Rahab had a spiritual victory as well as physical deliverance and proved that God can save those who are great sinners, unlikely sinners, or ignorant sinners if they simply believe! The only people God can't and won't save are unbelievers!

"OBSTACLES BECOME OPPORTUNITIES" for victory for Joshua, Israel and Rahab. Are they hindering you and robbing you of joy and inheritance or helping you live for God?

"THE SPICE OF LIFE"



TEXT: Hebrews 11:32-35a

THESIS: God uses different people and different problems to accomplish His purposes.

INTRO: A. If "variety is the spice of life" then the believer's life is highly seasoned. God may not be a "**respector of persons**" as to His grace and salvation - it is offered to all on the basis of faith, but He surely sends and/or permits a variety of circumstances and experiences among His people. One He blesses with wealth and health and another endures hardness and hardship. One experiences calmness while another has chaos.

B. A variety of people, problems and possibilities present themselves in our text, but their common denominator is faith.

TRANS: Time and space are running out for the writer of Hebrews so he condenses his list of heroes and their experiences and exploits.

I. A VARIETY OF PEOPLE: V. 32

A. Our Physical Birth Differentiates Us:

1. Nearly everything in our first birth separates us: nationality, heredity, inheritance, tastes, ambitions, et.al. ("All men are created equal." I think not!)
2. No two of us are the same.
 - a. We may be equal under God as sinners...definitely.
 - b. We may be equal under the law as citizens...supposedly.
 - c. We are anything but equal to each other any other way.

B. Our Spiritual Birth Unites Us:

1. Faith and God's grace are our common denominators.
2. Salvation is our common experience.
3. Those listed in **v. 32** are all different except that they all heard God's Word, believed it and acted on it.
 - a. The Judges: Gideon, Barak and Samson.
 - b. The King: David.
 - c. The Prophets: Samuel and "**the prophets...**"

ILLUS: The writer has taken representatives of each major period of Israel's history: patriarchal (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph), conquest (Moses, Joshua, Rahab), Judges, Kings and Prophets. (*It is striking that no high priests or Levites are listed!*)

4. His purpose is to show that God uses a variety of people.
 - a. In the list are a farmer, shepherd, soldier, a Nazarite, an illegitimate son (!), a prostitute, a liar and a playboy.
 - b. The spiritual and the carnal (Samson!) are listed.
 - c. The meek, weak, strong and courageous are all here.
 - d. Men and women, the aged and the young are present.

ILLUS: God is not limited by our circumstances. He IS limited by our unbelief. (cf. **Mark 6:5-6**) Faith doesn't depend on IQ, physique, age or sex.

II. A VARIETY OF PROBLEMS: V. 33

A. Faith Conquers Kingdoms: v. 33a

1. Gideon, the fearful farmer, defeated the Midianites.
2. Barak, the Judge, joined Deborah against the Canaanites.
3. Jephthah, the foolish judge, routed the Ammonites.
4. Samson single-handedly shamed the Philistines.

ILLUS: If God can work with these weak vessels in such a variety of problems, He can use you and me! If He can use a cowardly farm boy and a philandering playboy, He can use us!

Once again notice the amazing omission of the heroes' failures and the listing of their faith. The sins of the Old Testament saints are not listed in the New Testament. The New Testament points out that forgiveness comes through faith!

Three kingdoms every believer must conquer are the world (**I John 5:4**), the flesh (**I Cor. 9:27**) and the self within (**Prov. 16:32**).

B. Faith Worked Righteousness: v. 33b

C. Faith Obtained Promises: v. 33c

1. The promises of God must be secured by faith.
2. God's Word is full of promises to be claimed.

D. Faith Shut the Lions' Mouths: v. 33d (Daniel)

E. Faith Quenched the Power of Fire: v. 34a (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego)

F. Faith Escaped the Sword: v. 34a (David)

G. Faith Turns Weakness into Strength: v. 34c (Gideon, Barak)

1. Note that it is *"in fight"*, not *"before the battle"*!
2. God gives the strength when faith is exercised, not before!

H. Faith Resurrects the Dead: v. 34d (Elijah and Elisha)

1. We may consider ourselves or our ministries "as good as dead", but faith can resurrect them.
2. The power of Christ's resurrection is available to us today.

III. A VARIETY OF POSSIBILITIES:

A. Unbelief Locks Up Our Potential:

B. Faith Unlocks Our Potential:

1. David, the teen shepherd, became the warrior and giant-killer through faith.
2. Gideon, the frightened farmer, became a victorious general.
3. Jephthah, the son of a harlot, brought deliverance to his nation.
4. Samson, the sensual playboy, did great exploits against God's enemies.

NOTE: God hasn't changed. Their God is our God. We have changed and their faith is not our faith.

CONCL: God uses a variety of people with a variety of problems to unlock a variety of possibilities in the believer's life. *"What He's done for others, He'll do for you."* Variety, in God's dealings with us and through us, is **"THE SPICE OF LIFE!"**

**"WINNERS OFTEN APPEAR TO BE LOSERS"
or "BEWARE 'FORMULA FAITH' and 'CARBON COPY CHRISTIANITY' "**



TEXT: Hebrews 11:35b-40

THESIS: To show the price many paid for their faith in Christ, Who paid the highest price of all.

INTRO: A. Doctors warn that it is dangerous to take medication prescribed for others. The same warning should be applied to believers. "God did it for me and He will do it for you!" or "If God healed me, He will heal you!" That is "formula faith" or "carbon copy Christianity". It is dangerous – and often untrue – biblically and historically.

B. God's principles are the same for every believer, but His plans and purposes may be different. God always honors faith, but He doesn't conform to some man-made pattern or program.

C. God has listed several who ESCAPED persecution and death (Gideon, David, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, etc.), now He will list those who ENDURED persecution. Both groups are honored for their faith. *"It takes more faith to endure than to escape."* -Wiersbe

I. FAITH COSTS: V. 35b-38b

A. The Price is Often High:

1. It cost Abel his life. **v. 4**
2. It cost Abraham his home and family. **v. 8ff**
3. It cost Moses the treasures and pleasures of Egypt. **v. 23ff**

ILLUS: But most of these heroes of faith lived "charmed lives" (cf. David, Moses, Abraham, Gideon, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, etc.). God did miraculous things for them (cf. **v. 33-35a**)

Note the word *"others"* in **v. 35b**. It signifies "others of a different kind". These saints are NOT delivered. These are **"winners who appear to be losers"**.

B. The Price is Even Extreme: v. 35b-38b

1. Note the change in vocabulary: ***mockings, scourgings, bonds and imprisonments, stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain, wandered about in sheepskins, destitute, afflicted, tormented...!***
2. God could have as easily and miraculously delivered these poor saints as He did the others.
 - a. Both groups had their faith tested.
 - b. Both groups passed their tests of faith.
 - c. Both groups glorified God.

NOTE: Miraculous deliverance in the lion's den or fiery furnace surely brought glory to God. But God also got the glory when those who were tortured for their faith refused to recant. They chose to die for their faith rather than to deny their faith – and did not receive divine intervention, protection or miracles.

Every kind of test for faith is listed: physical torture, mental anguish, government persecution, ostracism from society, temptation to sin, deprivation of basic necessities of existence.

ILLUS: The word *"scourgings"* is the word from which we derive the word "tympany" for drums. Their bodies would be stretched and beaten like a drum. Others were *"tempted"* by offering them fleshly indulgence or monetary consideration to recant. It is said that Isaiah was *"sawn asunder"* with a wooden saw blade – UGH!

Some were stuffed into the skins of freshly slain sheepskins and then thrown to wild dogs to be eaten alive. Others were sewn in animal skins along with poisonous snakes. Mothers were forced to watch their infants tortured or killed.

II. FAITH PAYS: V. 38a-39a

TRANS: The question is "was it worth it?" "Was the price too high?"

A. God's Evaluation: v. 38a

1. They were removed from this wicked world because they were too good for it.

ILLUS: Often the unsaved will chide believers with "you think you are better than us". We are! By God's estimate. Not in our own merit or worth of course, but because we trust His Son. We no longer "fit" into this world system.

God's evaluation system is the reverse of the worlds: He says a rich church is a poor church and a poor church is a rich church. (**Rev. 3:7 and 9**) He says blind folks see and folks with two good eyes can't (**John 9:39**). He says if you save your life you lose it and if you lose it you save it (**Matt. 10:39**)!

2. God says these faith-filled believers became fugitives because of their faith.

NOTE: Today's pampered church may become tomorrow's persecuted church. THEN we will see who really belongs in God's "Who's Who"!

B. God's Grade: v. 39a (cf. v. 2 "good report")

1. On God's report card these saints receive an A+!
2. They are the honor students and graduated Magna Cum Laude.

III. FAITH UNITES: V. 39a,40

A. God's Promise: v. 39a

1. They didn't receive "**the promise**" of a permanent earthly homeland, Palestine.
2. They couldn't receive "**the promise**" of the Millennium because Christ's work was yet future and the church age had not yet run its course.

B. God's Provision: v. 40

1. The "**they**" are the Old Testament saints and the "**us**" are the New Testament saints.
2. The verse should make us hang our heads in shame: that God should provide something "**better for us**" than these giants of the faith!
3. God makes them wait for their inheritance till we get ours!
 - a. Theirs is the land in the Millennium.
 - b. Ours includes the administration of His government in the Millennium.

NOTE: The word "**perfect**" here is the same as Christ's "**it is finished!**" on Calvary. If you think that the price these saints (or you) have paid is too high, think of the price He paid to make them and us complete, saved and safe. Surely if anyone paid too high a price, He did!

CONCL: "**Winners often appear to be losers**". The Old Testament saints, early church saints, inquisition saints and us, from the world's point of view, are "losers". But because of Calvary and the price He paid, we are "winners". Remember, He too appeared to be a loser, but is really Lord of Lords and King of Kings, Savior, Redeemer, and All in All!

"RUNNING THE RACE WITH THE WINNERS"



TEXT: Hebrews 12:1-3

THESIS: To set forth the motivation and encouragements for Christians to run the race of the Christian life with patience.

INTRO: A. The Apostle Paul was apparently a "sports fan" or at least very knowledgeable about sports. (NOT the Christian sports fan of today who make a god out of their favorite sport of sports hero!) In his epistles he uses several metaphors dealing with sports: boxing, wrestling, running. His favorite seems to be running and he employs the image of a runner in a race to the believer living for the Lord. Here too.

B. After listing the heroes of the faith of the Old Testament, the writer exhorts the New Testament believers to be as disciplined and full of faith as they were. **Chapter 12** links with **Chapter 11** with the connective "*wherefore*" or "in the light of all this" and "like these saints of old..." or "keeping in mind their steadfastness..." here is what you must do to **"RUN THE RACE WITH THE WINNERS"**.

I. LOOK AT THE WITNESSES:

A. The Reasons We Run: v. 1a

1. The writer is giving us a motivation for running the race.
2. He reminds us of those who have successfully finished the course.

ILLUS: Often a coach will use similar techniques to motivate his athletes. Others have done it - so can you. Watch those with experience and expertise and do what they do.

3. He points to the example of the "*great cloud of witnesses*".
4. He knows that these witnesses neutralize the alibis of those who say "it is too hard!"
5. He also knows athletes do better before spectators than "solo".

ILLUS: Two powerful motivational devices are given: 1) Someone is watching - do your best! 2) Others have done it - so can you.

B. The Race to be Won: v. 1c

1. The Bible is primarily a revelation about God, but that revelation comes through ordinary people.
 - a. Facing family opposition? Consider Abel and Joseph.
 - b. Facing drastic changes? Consider Abraham.
 - c. Made costly decisions? Consider Moses.
 - d. Others hurt you? Consider Joseph.
 - e. Considering retaliation? Consider David.
2. The Christian life is "*the race...set before us...*"
 - a. We have a starting line. **II Cor. 5:17**
 - b. ...a course laid out. "THE race..."
 - c. ...obstacles on the course. (other believers ?!)
 - d. ...an audience. "witnesses"
 - e. ...running with others.
 - f. ...rules to follow.
 - g. ...crowns to win. **II Tim. 2:5**

- h. ...must stay in condition to run. **I Cor. 9:25**
- i. ...must keep our eyes on the goal. **v. 2**

3. This race is a marathon, not a sprint. ("patience")

NOTE: The Greek word is "agôna" and implies pain, exhaustion and opposition. Many of the readers had started well, but were slowing down, being distracted or dropping out or turning back (apostates) due to the demands of the Christian life. The length of our race corresponds to the time of conversion to death or the rapture.

II. LOOK WITHIN: V. 1b

A. Encumbering Weights:

- 1. The word here means "tumor" or "swelling" - an unwanted encumbrance.
- 2. It may be anything which retards progress, dulls our conscience, diminishes our spiritual appetite or chokes our prayer life.

ILLUS: Many mistake opposition, ridicule, pain, sickness, or trials as "weights" when they are the disciplines to help rid us of our weights! Many Christians think they are having trouble because of the burden on their back, when it is really the weight on their front!

- 3. Your **"weight"** may be something seemingly good.
 - a. Any distraction: we cannot run someone else's race.

ILLUS: Roger Bannister was the first to run the 4 minute mile. Three months later, John Landy beat Bannister's record. The two came together for a historic race. On the last lap Landy was ahead. As he neared the finish he was haunted by the question: "Where is Bannister?" He looked back and broke stride. In Time magazine he said "If I hadn't looked back, I would have won."

- b. The problem is not what it is, but what it does.
- c. We are not the judges, but the runners.

B. Entangling Sin:

- 1. This seems to be a specific sin which dogs us.
- 2. Victory over this sin must precede victory in the race.

III. LOOK AT THE WINNER: V. 2,3

A. We Look...

- 1. ...to Him for Salvation: **Cf. Isaiah 45:22 "Look unto me, and be ye saved..."**
 - a. He is the **"Author"** - script Writer and Initiator.
 - b. He is our Perfect Example - we need to look at the witnesses and within, but He alone is perfection personified.
- 2. ...to Him for Sanctification:
 - a. Salvation began with a look at the Author.
 - b. Salvation ends with a look at the Finisher. (**I John 3:2**)

NOTE: Sin started with a look. **"...the woman SAW that the tree was good for food..."** We are saved with a look at the Savior in a single ACT of faith, but we are being sanctified by an ATTITUDE of faith.

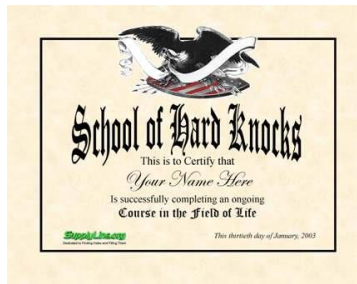
B. He Looked

- 1. Beyond the Cross to the joy of:

- a. Completing the Father's plan.
 - b. Presenting His Bride to the Father **"without spot..."**
2. Beyond the circumstances of Calvary to the completion in glory.
- a. He endured the **"contradiction of sinners against Himself..."**
 - b. The Creator was tortured and murdered by His creatures!
 - c. The Creator was tortured by the elements He created!
 - d. He endured things contrary to His Divine Nature, power and station so He could save us and give us a Perfect Example of race-running.

CONCL: The outcome of the race is certain - all believers will cross the finish line, but not all will be "winners". To be a winner we must follow the example of the Old Testament witnesses and the New Testament Winner, the Lord Jesus Christ! To do so, we must jettison all unnecessary weights and conquer our besetting sin. Are YOU a winner?

"WHY ME?!" or "ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS"



TEXT: Hebrews 12:4-8

THESIS: To show the purposes, perils and proofs of God's chastening.

INTRO: A. We are prone to ask "WHY ME?!" when anything in our lives occurs which we perceive to be negative. (In the light of Hebrews 11 maybe we should ask "WHY NOT ME?") In fact, we consider chastisement negative correction or punishment. It may include that, but it is not confined to that and even when it is, it is designed to be a "positive negative" or a learning, maturing experience.

B. The word **"chastening"**, in various forms, is used 4 times in these five verses. The word **"sons"** or **"son"** is used 5 times. This gives us an insight into the teaching of the passage. It is God's school to educate and mature His children. None of His children are exempt nor are permitted to "play hooky" from this school! Not even His only begotten Son (**v. 3**). In fact God reminds us that we will not be required to graduate "Magna Cum Laude" as He did. (**v. 4**)

NOTE: The writer reasons that God's only begotten Son **"endured the cross"**, but his readers had not yet **"resisted unto blood"** nor had they found themselves **"striving against sin"** to the degree He had. (The verb for "striving" is "antagonizō" and with the new nature all believers are antagonized by sin and antagonistic to sin.)

TRANS: The picture shifts from the runner in a race to a son in the school of discipline training for maturity. We are **"ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS"**.

I. PURPOSES IN CHASTENING: V. 5-7

NOTE: These Jews had forgotten their Old Testament textbook (**Prov. 3:11-13**). The "chastening" process has at least four purposes:

A. Correction:

1. The word implies the training of an adult son...not an infant...that might be child abuse!
2. It embraces the concept of correction with words of reproof and admonition.

3. It also includes the use of hardship and affliction as disciplinary action.

B. Punishment: v. 6 "scourgeth..."

1. Because we are "**sons**" we are especially blessed and enlightened and so have less justification for sin.
2. Thus when a saint sins, he needs punishment.
 - a. This punishment is corrective, not judgmental.
 - b. It stems from love, not wrath.

ILLUS: David was punished, to be sure, but because he was a man after God's own heart and the "apple of His eye". Other kings considered David's sins the prerogative of royalty, but David was punished because he was a son! "When our disobedience or apathy are great, His punishment will be great!"

As parents, we punish OUR children to correct their behavior, not to disown them.

C. Education: v. 6-7

1. It teaches us about God's interest and personal attention to the details of our life.
2. It teaches us of God's power, authority and sufficiency.
3. It teaches us of the character of God.

ILLUS: Job's conclusion after all his suffering was "***I have heard of thee by the hearing of mine ear, but NOW mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.***" (Job 42:5,6)

4. It teaches us of God's love for His children.

NOTE: The word "**dealeth**" (v. 7) literally means "to bring toward". The chastening process is designed to promote love, understanding and FELLOWSHIP! The absence of this chastening demonstrates illegitimacy.

C. Prevention: cf. II Cor. 12:7

NOTE: Paul's "**thorn**" was to KEEP him from becoming proud! If we would more readily accept His preventive discipline, He would not need to administer His corrective discipline so often.

II. PERILS IN CHASTENING: V. 5b,c

A. Despising: v. 5b

1. Hardening ourselves to the maturation process.
2. Complaining about God's treatment.
3. Questioning God's methodology.

NOTE: When a child questions his parents' discipline and asks "why?", he is not seeking information, but *challenging them to justify what they are doing*. "Father knows best" should be our motto!"

B. Fainting: v. 5c

ILLUS: Cf. **II Cor. 11:22-28** Paul wasn't being punished, but disciplined, schooled and matured. He needed to learn sympathy for those in affliction, to stay humble, to keep his affections above, to test God's promises and to experience the sufficiency of His grace! He didn't faint, quit, give up or give out!

III. PROOFS IN CHASTENING: V. 6 and V. 8

A. Proves God's Love: cf. Lam 3:31,32 (v. 6)

1. This cannot be proven, it must be accepted by faith.
2. Faith's logic is illustrated in v. 7 in a human family.

B. Proves Our Sonship:

1. All men are subject to God's punishment, only His children are recipients of loving discipline.
2. Discipline is a matter of parental obligation.

ILLUS: We may see a child being a problem in public, but unless we are that child's parents, we have no right to discipline him. We should pity, not envy, the prosperous, healthy, wealthy, attractive sinner who sins without punishment - he knows not God, and worse, God is not his loving Father!

CONCL: Are you asking "WHY ME?!" Are you **"ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS?"** Cheer up! Your Father loves you so much He must train you, discipline you, help you mature and even punish you when needed. Our Father is too loving to inflict needless pain and too kind to permit pointless suffering. Or, as Dr. Robert T. Ketcham said: *"God is too loving to be unkind and to wise to make a mistake."* His purpose may be preventive, corrective, punitive or educational, but never meaningless or harsh! Are you a "son" or a "bastard"?

"FATHER KNOWS BEST!" or "NO PAIN - NO GAIN"



TEXT: Hebrews 12:9-13

THESIS: To elaborate on the doctrine of chastisement and make applications to believers today.

INTRO: A. It is not always true that **"FATHER KNOWS BEST"** in a human family. A good father tries to be consistent, fair and correct in his discipline of children, but it is not always true. But we are members of a heavenly family with a Heavenly Father Who also disciplines His children. His correction and chastening is balanced, proper, loving and right. With Him, **"Father Knows Best"** always.

B. After setting forth the arguments and objects of God's chastening of His children, the writer adds some principles with comparisons and an application of those principles: "Furthermore"

I. "FURTHERMORE" (DOCTRINE) V. 9-11

A. Earthly Correction vs. Heavenly Chastening: v. 9

1. Our human fathers produced reverence (fear and respect) through disciplinary action.
 - a. The purpose of discipline is submission, control and obedience.
 - b. The need is stated in Proverbs: ***"foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of reproof will drive it far from him."***

NOTE: We are born rebellious. ***"Man is born like a wild ass's colt."*** **Job 11:12** We learn quickly to say "no" and must be taught to say "yes" and be obedient and submissive. *"Everything in the modern home is controlled with a switch, but the children."*

2. Our Heavenly Father seeks our subjection through chastening.
 - a. The ***"furthermore..."*** is not added to belabor the point, but to stress and stretch the point.
 - b. The ***"sons"*** of God need discipline throughout their life.
 - 1) Often older Christians grumble and complain more.
 - 2) They become set in their ways and harder to mold.

ILLUS: It seems that the Lord uses His rod less on babes than on older Christians. Young Christians rarely disgrace the cause of Christ. Think of YOUNG Samson, David, Solomon... the older saint feels he has built up enough defenses or accumulated enough points or merits with God to be immune to chastening if he sins. David, Lot, Solomon, Isaac, Hezekiah; all disgraced themselves in later years. Beware pride!

B. Temporary Benefits vs. Eternal Welfare: v. 10

1. Earthly fathers are not omniscient and thankfully not omnipotent.
2. Earthly fathers make errors in discipline due to their humanity, old nature, poor judgment, lack of information, anger or wrong goals or perspective.

ILLUS: Listen to these words of wisdom from a gray-headed, preacher/father: *be careful that all your training, teaching, discipline and correction be done with a view toward your child's holiness. Cooperate with your heavenly Father's program!*

3. Our heavenly Father has one object in mind, which is profitable for us **"that we might be partakers of His holiness"! "FATHER KNOWS BEST!"**
4. Divine Discipline:
 - a. Weans us from the world - separation from.
 - b. Focuses our eyes upon Him - separation unto.

C. Present Grief vs. Permanent Fruitfulness: v. 11

1. **"Now"** the chastening is painful.
 - a. It is not meant to be pleasant but purposeful.
 - b. It is unpleasant to administer and to endure.

ILLUS: Medicine is usually bitter, surgery painful, therapy unpleasant and treatment uncomfortable, but all are designed to be beneficial, and we accept it as such - so with chastening.

2. **"afterwards"** the fruit may be harvested:
 - a. When subjection is reached, there is peace.
 - b. Chastisement is the means, fruitfulness is the result.
 - c. When rebellion is put down, peace replaces war.
 - d. Those who are **"exercised"** via chastening can develop and grow strong - **"NO PAIN - NO GAIN!"**

II. "WHEREFORE..." (APPLICATION) V. 12,13

NOTE: The "therefores" and "wherefores" are usually transitions from teaching to exhortation, from doctrine to application, from knowing to doing.

A. Stand Up! v. 12

1. Chastening is designed to make us stronger, not weaker.
2. When we know the purpose, it is **"joyous not grievous"** and instead of discouragement, it produces victory and maturity.

B.. Walk Straight! v. 13a

1. The word **"paths"** = marks made by a wheel - tracks for others to follow!
2. The weak and lame must not stumble because of our response to chastening.

C. Be Healed! v. 13b

ILLUS: A pediatrician noted, "When it comes to serious illness, the child who has been taught to obey stands 4 X's the chance of recovery that the spoiled and undisciplined child does."

1. Discipline brings healing when we respond properly.
2. This healing is for us and others for whom we are examples.

CONCL: "FATHER KNOWS BEST!" At least our Heavenly Father does. All His discipline is consistent, fair and correct. What is your response? Griping, complaining, fainting, resisting...?! Why not learn, cooperate and thank Him for His love?

"THE ANSWER TO 'WHY ME?' "



TEXT: Hebrews 12:14-17

THESIS: To show the goals God has in chastening His children and some of the pitfalls of an improper response.

INTRO: A. The chastening of God's children is not shrouded in mystery: ***"For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth..."*** That is a partial answer to **"Why me?"**. But God is gracious and gives more details as to His loving discipline and what our response should be. In these four verses, He elaborates and illustrates His goals for us in His school of hard knocks and some hazards to avoid, to give us **"THE ANSWER TO 'WHY ME?' "**

B. In **v. 12** He uses the word ***"wherefore..."*** to apply the doctrine of chastening. He tells us to stand up and take our chastisement, straighten up and walk as an example to others and to be healed (matured) as a result of God's discipline. He now continues His exhortation and application with: two more goals of chastening, three hazards and one illustration.

I. TWO GOALS OF CHASTENING: V. 14

A. Pursue Peace: (Manward)

1. The word ***"follow"*** is strong and has the force of pursue diligently, to eagerly chase.

NOTE: The image of the runner in a race of **v. 1** is continued.

2. One of God's goals in chastening His children is to teach us patience toward others, which in turn produces peace.
 - a. Peace is a two-way street.
 - b. If one party is hostile, peace is impossible.

ILLUS: Paul said; ***"If it be possible, ...live peaceably with all men."*** If others rebel, that is their problem, it should never be our excuse.

The pursuit of peace can never be at the expense of doctrine or principle – even when it is family or close friends! Peace can never be purchased by sacrificing holiness.

B. Pursue Holiness: (Godward)

1. We receive Christ's imputed holiness at salvation.
2. This pursuit of holiness has to do with sanctification, which is progressive. (We can't ***"follow after"*** imputed holiness)

- a. Seeking peace with others must be subordinated to the approbation of God.

ILLUS: The Westminster confession put it succinctly: "Man's chief end is to glorify God..." **Matthew 5:16** says: ***"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven."***

- b. The word ***"which"*** is singular showing that the antecedent is ***"holiness"*** not ***"peace"***.

NOTE: It is your holiness (godly living) which glorifies God and reveals Him to others (the passage doesn't read "without which YOU shall not see the Lord", but "NO MAN...").

II. THREE HAZARDS OF CHASTENING: V. 15

A. Failure:

1. The words ***"looking diligently"*** are from "episkepeô" or "overseer" (**Acts 20:28**) - watching over each other.
2. We are to do our best not to fail nor to permit others to fail (cf. **v. 13**) ***"of the grace of God"***.

NOTE: God's grace never fails, but we can fail to take advantage of His grace. "Some have maintained an admirable character to all appearance, all their lives, and yet have failed of the grace of God because of some secret sin. They persuaded even themselves that they were believers, and yet they were not truly so; they had no inward holiness, they allowed one sin to get the mastery, they indulged in an unsanctified passion, and so, though they were laid in the grave like sheep, they died with a false hope and missed eternal life.

This is a most dreadful state to be in and perhaps some of us are in it. Let the prayer be breathed, ***'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'***

"Are ye earnest in secret prayer? Do ye love the reading of the Bible? Have ye fear of God before your eyes? Do you really commune with God? Do you truly love Christ? Ask yourself these questions often, for though we preach the free Gospel of Jesus Christ, I hope as plainly as any, we feel it to be just as needful to set you on self-examination and to excite in you a holy anxiety. It ought to be often a question with you 'Have I the grace of God or do I fall short of it? Am I a piece of rock crystal which is very like the diamond, but yet is not diamond?' " (C.H. Spurgeon)

God's grace is "sufficient", even during chastening - ask Paul!

B. Bitterness:

1. We must guard against failure and also against bitterness - one brings on the other.
2. Bitterness is the most usual response to chastening among chastened Christians who lack spiritual discernment.
3. The ***"ROOT..."*** speaks of that which is unseen - the indwelling sin in the heart.
4. The ***"springing up"*** is the open manifestation of that hidden sin.

C. Defilement:

1. Bitterness and failure result in pollution in the life and in the church.
2. Note the change from ***"any"*** to ***"many"***; your failure and bitterness has an adverse moral effect on others.

III. ONE ILLUSTRATION OF CHASTENING: V. 16,17

A. Esau's Sin: v. 16

NOTE: Esau was omitted from the faith chapter, but is mentioned here as a ***"fornicator or profane person"***. ***"Esau have I hated!"***

1. His fornication may refer to his taking a pair of Hittite women as wives. Cf. **Gen. 26:34-35**
2. Those who ignore God's lessons in chastening fail, grow bitter and defile themselves and others.
3. His profanity consisted in his totally materialistic, selfish, humanistic and secular view of life.

- a. The word comes from the Latin "profanum" or "before the fane (or Temple)" and means "outside the temple or holy place".

ILLUS: Outside every Temple or "fane" was an open area without enclosure. In contrast was the Temple itself within the sacred enclosure. Esau had no such sacred enclosure and was thus a purely secular man. His act of selling his birthright was equivalent to Judas' selling of his Savior. Their motives were wholly selfish and godless in spite of great privilege and light.

- b. The Bible paints things black or white: holy or profane.

B. Esau's Loss: v. 17

1. A decision to disobey God, for materialistic reasons, may be irreversible!
2. Spiritual things were insignificant to Esau until it was too late.
3. The futility of Esau's tears and repentance underscore his inability to undo the circumstances or reclaim his lost inheritance.

NOTE: It IS his lost earthly inheritance in view, not heaven! But that was important to a Jew and serves as a warning to us.

CONCL: Thus, this passage on chastisement closes with severe warnings for the believer who despises the chastening of God, becomes discouraged, a spiritual failure and bitter. His hope for healing dissipates and ultimately disappears!

The answer to the question "**WHY ME...!?**" is God's love! Learn it well. Learn it now... BEFORE the chastening comes, so you will profit and NOT faint!

"MOUNTAINS, MYSTERIES and A MEDIATOR"



TEXT: Hebrews 12:18-24

THESIS: To reveal the doctrines of law vs. grace via Sinai and Zion.

INTRO: A. Living for Christ is costly. The unsaved will persecute us, our own loved ones forsake us, even our heavenly Father chastens us. Some, to whom Paul was writing, were becoming aware of the cost of identification and were contemplating going back to Judaism (apostasy).

ILLUS: Many Christians today prefer a brand of Christianity which costs little or nothing. They want an easy religion, a comforting religious experience which salves the conscience and soothes the soul.

B. The writer urges them not to fear the persecution for trusting Christ, but the impending judgment for rejecting Him. Their fear must not be in coming to Zion, but of turning back to Sinai. It is a contrast between being judged under the law or grace, by one's own works or by Christ's work, by the provisions of Sinai or those of Zion.

TRANS: His arguments revolve around "**MOUNTAINS, MYSTERIES and A MEDIATOR**".

I. THE AWESOMENESS OF SINAI: V. 18-21

A. The Place:

1. Sinai represented the terrible demands of the Law.
2. Sinai was surrounded by a barren and fruitless wilderness, without food or water.

NOTE: Sinai was neither in Egypt nor Caanan, but in a howling wilderness. The mountain itself had nothing but bushes and brambles. From a distance it had the appearance of some vegetation and fruitfulness, but in reality was only fit for the fire. So is the life under the Law and every sinner trusting in his works.

B. The Terrors:

ILLUS: To Abraham, God appeared as a man to give him the promise of the Seed Who would be the God-man. To Moses, God appeared as a flame in a bush not consumed (the Bible symbol of Israel – NOT the “star of David”), to reveal that His people though passing through fiery trials could never be consumed. To Joshua, He appeared as a man of war with a drawn sword assuring him of victory over the enemies. At Sinai, He appears surrounded by awesome and terrifying sights and sounds to underscore the severity of His Law and the inevitable destruction of all who failed to lay hold of His promise for deliverance from its righteous demands.

1. Sinai is physical (vs. spiritual), but unapproachable. (v. 18 with v. 20)
 - a. God is a real Being, but unapproachable without sacrifice and obedience.
 - b. God, in His holiness and justice, must be feared by man in his sin needing mercy.
2. The Law was surrounded with warnings, restrictions and solemn judgments.
 - a. Sinai and the Law offer seven terrifying sights and sounds.
 - b. These awesome signs were to heighten Israel's fear of God and to create an awareness of guilt and sinfulness.

ILLUS: Even Moses, Israel's mediator, who had repeatedly spoken with God said; ***"I exceedingly fear and quake"***. As he received the Law, the very people for whom this awesome display of majesty and power was given, engaged in sin while Moses was receiving the commandments. (I believe the ***"voice of words"*** may have been God's oral giving of the commandments, before He wrote them on tablets of stone. (cf. v. 19)

- c. To increase their reverence, boundaries were set (v. 20) and the penalty for trespassing was instant death to those viewed as disobedient rebels.

NOTE: They were to be slain at a distance. No hand was to touch the offenders to emphasize the heinousness of the offense and the alienation of the offender. If an irrational animal was so severely treated, what might the result be to the transgressor who trespassed the moral laws of God?

TRANS: Note the words in v. 18, ***"ye are not come..."***, showing these believers/professors of at least potential deliverance and the words in v. 22, ***"but ye are come..."***, describing something better (v. 24) for them.

II. THE APPROACHABLENESS OF ZION: V. 22-24

A. The Place: ***"the city of the Living God...heavenly Jerusalem"***

1. Zion represented the period of God's special grace during the Gospel age and its ultimate blessings and benefits.
2. This Zion is not ***"touchable"***, but it is approachable.

ILLUS: To come into God's presence at Sinai was to die; at Zion to live!

B. The Blessings:

1. The seven terrors of Sinai are balanced with the seven blessings of Zion:

- a. "...angels" - "numerous, as are the forces of Satan assailing us, an innumerable company of angels are defending us."

NOTE: When saved, we become a part of a worshipping society of innumerable beings.

- b. **"general assembly"** - the term is NOT "ecclesia" and may refer to the elders surrounding the throne.
- c. **"church..."** Christ is the **"Firstborn"** and though in Israel there was only one per family with this honor, in Christ all the heirs are on the same footing.
- d. **"God..."** - not as a condemning Judge, but as One Who examines, discriminates and justifies.
- e. **"just men..."** Old Testament saints **"made perfect"** (if so - resurrection for them is a past event!)
- f. **"Jesus the Mediator"** - here is the Mediator Who clears up the mysteries of the mountains.
- g. **"the blood..."** if all others are literal, why not the blood?!

ILLUS: Abel's blood was that of the first martyr! Jesus' blood was that of the Great Mediator. Abel's blood called for vengeance - Christ's for blessings on all who trust in it. (cf. **11:4**) If Abel's blood **"yet speaketh"**, Christ's **"better"** blood says so much more.

CONCL: The "Mysteries" of the Mountains are cleared up by our Mediator and His blood! Under the shadow of which Mountain do YOU live - Sinai or Zion?!

"SPEAKING, SHAKING and SERVING"



TEXT: Hebrews 12:25-29

THESIS: To present the contrast between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant and the responsibilities related to both.

INTRO: A. After contrasting Mt. Sinai and the Old Covenant (**v. 18-24**) with Mt. Zion and the New Covenant (**vv. 22-24**), the writer of Hebrews says in effect: "Don't ignore Him Who speaks!" God had spoken from Sinai and is speaking from Zion. (**v. 25**) When God spoke from Sinai the earth (and Moses and the Israelites) shook! Now God is speaking from Heaven through His Son (**1:1,2**) and men should shake in His presence and begin to serve Him. **"SPEAKING, SHAKING and SERVING"** is the order we see in this passage.

B. If men were accountable for hearing and heeding God's voice from Sinai, how much more accountable are they now that He warns from Zion (Heaven)?! The point of the passage is that no man can ignore God's Word and escape judgment.

I. HEAR HIS VOICE: V. 25

A. "Refuse Not":

1. The verb **"refuse"** here is the same word used of those who "made excuses" and rejected the invitation to attend the Great Supper in **Luke 14:18-19**.
 - a. Refusal of the gracious invitation brought great personal loss: **"none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."**
 - b. Those who refused Him (via His words!) on Sinai suffered loss and received punishment and judgment.

B. "Escaped Not":

1. The contrast is between Old Testament saints under the Law of Sinai and New Testament saints under grace from Zion.
2. The logic is that if the Old Testament hearers **"escaped not"**, then New Testament hearers cannot expect to escape either.
 - a. The guilt is greater today after a completed revelation. (cf. **2:2,3**)
 - b. Higher privileges incur greater responsibilities: **"unto whom much is given, much shall be required."**

ILLUS: It is under Jesus' ministry that hell and its horrors are most graphically depicted – NOT through Moses and the prophets. Christ not only fully revealed God's love, but most graphically declared His wrath. Grace doesn't negate the requirements of holiness, it increases them.

3. The question arises concerning the subjects of His wrath.
 - a. True sheep **"hear (His) voice"!**
 - b. True sheep evidence their listening by following!

NOTE: It is only to these true sheep that the promise of eternal life is given. To the others who **"believe not"** and therefore refuse His voice (Word), there is **"a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation..."** (cf. **10:27**)

II. CONSIDER HIS POWER: V. 26-28a

A. The Instability of the Old Covenant: v. 26-27a

1. He uses the shaking, accompanying the giving of the Law, as an illustration.
2. The earth and all it contains is but temporal and passing.
 - a. So too, the Mosaic Law was proscribed by limitations and would pass away when the New Covenant in Christ's blood was instituted. (cf. **v. 24**)
 - b. The earthquake at Sinai was an impressive reminder of the instability of the earth and the majesty and stability of God. (cf. **1:10-12**)

3. Even present realities will be shaken and removed: v. 26b,27 **"as of things that are made"**.

- a. Both the present heaven and the earth will **"pass away"**.
- b. During the Tribulation (the end of God's dealing with Israel under the Mosaic-Covenant) the heavens and earth shall be shaken. **Rev. 6:12-14**
- c. Finally the heavens and the earth shall be dissolved and that which is permanent will replace them.
II Peter 3

ILLUS: God today is shaking things up! Check the news. He wants to tear down the facade and reveal the unshakable realities which are eternal - the real world!

B. The Stability of the New Covenant: v. 27b,28a

1. The Unshakable: v. 27b
 - a. God's Being and character. **Ch. 1**
 - b. God's Incarnate Son. **Ch. 1,2**
 - c. God's redemptive plan. **Ch. 3-7**
 - d. God's spiritual blessings. **Ch. 7-10**
 - e. God's saints **"by faith"**. **Ch. 11**
2. The Unmovable: v. 28a

III. SERVE HIS PERSON: V. 28b,29

A. Acceptable Service: v. 28b

1. In the light of His speaking and shaking, service to Him is in order.
2. In the light of a proper perspective between the unstable material world vs. the unmovable and unshakable spiritual realities, worship is expected.
 - a. To be acceptable, our worship must be reverent.
 - b. We must worship with godly fear.

B. Unchanging Deity: v. 29

1. The God of Sinai is the God of Zion.
2. The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament.
3. The God of the Law is the God of the Gospel. (cf. **13:8**)

CONCL: If you have come to Calvary, your view of God is that of a loving, chastening heavenly Father. If not, He is a consuming fire! Hear His voice, consider His power and serve His Person!

"NOW IN CONCLUSION..."



TEXT: Hebrews 13:1-3

THESIS: To set forth the transition from doctrine to duty at the close of the book of Hebrews.

INTRO: A. When reading a book, most of us can't wait till we get to the last chapter to see how things turn out. Of course, with only a couple of exceptions, the books in the Bible are not stories (**Ruth, Esther**, etc.). In the New Testament especially, since the books are not stories, but letters, the last chapter is a summary, exhortations and salutations to friends, etc. and therefore often considered boring and uninteresting. Not so with Hebrews. The bulk of the book deals with doctrine, **Chapter 13** with duty. Our *position* is dealt with in the first 12 chapters, our *practice* in **Chapter 13**.

B. Basically **Chapter 13** says: In the light of all of this, here is how you should live...or **"NOW IN CONCLUSION..."** or, in the words of Oliver Greene; "I've said all that, to say this..."

I. LOVE THE BRETHREN: V. 1

A. Contrast:

1. The last verse of **Chapter 12** is striking: **"our God is a consuming fire"**. Now in **Chapter 13**; "Let brotherly love continue."
 - a. Illus. # 1 = Cain and Abel. Cain did not love his brother and found God to be a consuming fire. (**"My punishment is greater than I can bear" Gen. 4:13**)
 - b. Illus. # 2 = Abraham and Lot. They broke fellowship and Lot found God to be a consuming fire.
2. This exhortation becomes a solemn warning.

B. Command:

1. **"Brotherly love"** is a familiar Greek word: "philadelphia".
 - a. Phileō = tender affection.
 - b. Adelphōs = brother or literally: "from the same womb".
2. As Christians, we automatically have brotherly love, it cannot be generated - it must be cultivated.
 - a. We don't need more love, we need to use what we have. (cf. **I Thes. 4:9,10**)
 - b. We need to **"continue"** to practice our position, to live out, in duty, our doctrine.

NOTE: The word **"continue"** means to work at it and suggests opposition. Some Christians are difficult to love. Pink: "...brotherly love is a very tender plant and quickly affected by the cold air of unkindness, easily nipped by the frost of harsh words. If it is to thrive, it must needs be carefully protected and diligently cultivated."

The exhortation recognizes that the same hateful flesh which abides in you, abides in your brethren and so there will be much to test and try our love for one another.

3. Brotherly Love is:
 - a. A mark of our regeneration.
 - b. A measure of our spirituality.
 - c. A means of pleasing our Savior. (cf. **Psalm 133:1**)

II. HELP THE STRANGER: V. 2

A. Hospitality: v. 2

1. The **"strangers"** are most likely like those in **III John 5-8** - not just anyone off the street.
2. The concept of **"entertaining"** is not providing something interesting for them, but of showing hospitality to them and treating them kindly.

NOTE: At this time, there was persecution against professing Christians, especially Jews, and so some would need shelter, food and other necessities.

That which was commanded under the Old Covenant is repeated under the New Covenant. (cf. **Lev. 19:34**) **"The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."**

B. Honor: v. 2b

1. One example is Abraham who hosted three strangers who were later revealed to be two angels and the Savior!
2. Jesus' statement in **Matt. 25:35-40** amplifies our obligation.
 - a. The principle is that it is better to assume that our guests are angels and act accordingly than risk treating worthy people unworthily.
 - b. There is a danger of being "taken in" when you take someone in, but that is a cost not to be considered in the light of the honor of **"entertaining angels unawares"**.

III. REMEMBER THE AFFLICTED:

A. By Our Compassion:

1. We need to consider others afflictions as our own.
2. The word usually translated "compassion" is "sumpatheō" (sympathy) and is translated "to be touched with" in **Heb. 4:15**, of Christ.
3. Another word is "eleeō", meaning to show kindness or render assistance.

ILLUS: There are records of some early Christians selling themselves into slavery to get money to free a fellow believer.

B. By Our Presence:

1. Sometimes all we can do is to "be there" when others are in trouble. (*"bound with them"*)
2. The words *"as being yourselves also in the body"* are interesting.
 - a. This may mean in the body of believers.
 - b. It more likely means in a body susceptible to the same adversity.

C. By Our Prayers: cf. Col. 4:18 "remember my bonds"

1. We can provide powerful support through prayers when we cannot "be there" or offer other direct assistance.
2. It is encouraging to know that others are praying for you, by name and according to your need.

CONCL: "AND IN CONCLUSION..." Paul gives some powerful, potent, poignant and practical instructions for these believing Jews to remind them that just knowing doctrine, while important, is useless without the practice.

Does your duty match your doctrine? Your practice? Your position?

"MARRIAGE, MONEY and MINISTRY"



TEXT: Hebrews 13:4-9

THESIS: To place marriage, money and ministry into biblical perspective.

INTRO: A. After 12 chapters of doctrine, Paul closes Hebrews with one chapter of practical instruction. In **vv. 1-3** he dealt with loving the brethren, providing hospitality to strangers and having sympathy and compassion for the persecuted and afflicted.

B. Now in **vv. 4-9**, he continues to exhort his readers with duties to match their doctrine regarding **"MARRIAGE, MONEY and THE MINISTRY"**. He also deals with the disastrous results when these three areas are neglected, ignored or desecrated.

I. SEXUAL PURITY IN MARRIAGE: V. 4

A. Matrimony: v. 4a

1. Marriage was the only Divine institution given to man while in a state of innocence.
2. When God created the material universe and everything on planet earth, He pronounced it *"good"* or *"very good"*, but when He saw man alone, He said it was *"not good!"*

ILLUS: For religionists to imply that someone is more spiritual because celibate contradicts God and His Word, *"forbidding to marry"* is an end-time *"doctrine of devils"*. One qualification for a *"bishop"* is that he marry,

but a Roman Catholic priest or bishop is forbidden to do so - after being taught that Matrimony is **"holy"** and a "sacrament". He is one short!!! God says; **"Marriage is honorable."**

3. The marriage bed is **"clean"** or undefiled - any other bed is "dirty" or defiled!

NOTE: Any and all sexual activity outside of marriage is unclean! Pre-marital, extramarital, homo-sexual, heterosexual, autoerotic sex is a perversion of God's plan. Divorce, remarriage, infidelity, pornography, bestiality, incest, bondage, et. al. are condemned by God and pronounced an abomination!

- a. **"sex"** is used in the Scriptures to differentiate gender - not as an act.
- b. **"love"** is something pure in God's Word - not a physical union outside of marriage.

NOTE: The world degrades words by changing their meanings. Sex doesn't mean male or female any more. "Let's have sex" literally means "Let's have a male or female". "Sexuality" is a manufactured term which covers every filthy act. They say "gay" for sex pervert, "alternate sexual preference" for sodomy, "sexually transmitted diseases" for the wages of SIN!

“TELL IT LIKE IT IS!”

A few years ago the above statement was made by the youth culture of our society. The only problem with the statement is that most people do not seem to really want to hear it “like it is”! Our language reflects the real trend to obscure rather than reveal the truth. Below are some terms we regularly use which used to mean one thing but now seem to mean the opposite or at least are designed to soften the impact. There is a softening process which enables people to see things not as they are, but in an entirely new light. This seems especially true when it comes to terms used in God’s Word (a King James Bible) to describe sinful activity. But it is not limited to scripture as you will see below, it is found in the social, political and educational realms as well...

when you hear:



“having an affair”.....	adultery
“significant other”.....	fornicators
“in a relationship”.....	fornication
“unfaithful”.....	fornicator/adulterer
“in a manner of speaking”.....	lying
exaggeration.....	lying
overeating.....	gluttony
flatterer.....	liar
an alcoholic.....	a drunkard
substance abuser.....	a dope head/druggie/pothead/junkie/smackhead
sexually transmitted diseases...	consequences of sexual activity outside of marriage
Auto Immune Deficiency (AIDS)...	Gay Related Immune Deficiency (GRID – the original term)
Gays.....	Sodomites – sex perverts
Homosexuals.....	Sodomites – sex perverts
Lesbians.....	Sodomites – sex perverts
transsexuals.....	Sodomites – sex perverts
child abuse.....	sex perversion – pedophilia
abortion.....	murder
abortionists.....	baby killers (<i>“hands that innocent blood”</i>)
<i>shed KJB)</i>	
pro-choice.....	pro-murder
strong desire.....	lust, coveteousness
profanity.....	cursing/blasphemy
rebellious children.....	brats

news anchorperson.....mostly liberals (documented)
men's entertainment magazines.....pornography
adult bookstores & internet sites.....pornographic peddlers
gentlemen's clubs.....strip joints
flirting.....lasciviousness
taxes.....more often than not, government robbery
government assistance.....stealing (taking from some to give to others)
entitlements.....(same as above)
politician.....legal liars (usually)
moderate Democrats.....left of center
moderate Republicans.....right of center
liberal.....socialist (not always)
progressive.....liberal
conservative.....constitutionalist/patriot (most of the time)
independent.....?????
libertarian.....constitutionalist/patriot (weak on foreign policy)
constitutionalist.....true patriot
conscientious objectors.....cowards - including Jehovah's Witnesses
tea partyers.....mixed political group (mostly conservative Republicans)
multiculturalists.....mixed up people
Occupy Wall Streeters, etc.....hippies, dopeheads, liberals, fornicators, bums
United Nations.....NYC Tower of Babel
UN Peace Keepers.....war mongers (50+ wars since 1945)
Palestine.....Israel (formerly owned by Canaanites – not Arabs!)
Palestinian State.....fairy tale (the Canaanites are all dead!)
Peace Process for Israel.....terrorism by Muslims
"Road Map to Peace".....dead end for Israel
Arabs....."wild men" (King James Bible – Genesis 16:12)
Muslims.....religious extremists, butchers, terrorists
moderate Muslims.....only those who don't read or believe the Quran
Islam.....antichrist religion
Quran (Koran).....Islam's unholy book of murder, thievery and pedophilia
Hadith.....Islam's book of fairy tales ("Satan sleeps in your nose!")
Muhammad.....pedophile, bigamist, liar, thief, murderer, false prophet
insurgents.....Obama's term for terrorists
atheist.....fool (God says so! Ps. 18)
agnostic.....idiots (literally "know nothings")
racist.....a person who thinks they are better than someone else
regardless of skin color: black, white, red, yellow, brown or gray
Mormons.....blasphemers (deny Trinity, teach they will become gods)
Jehovah's Witnesses.....false witnesses
Christian Scientists.....neither Christians nor scientific
Scientologists.....psychos
7th Day Adventists.....legalizers
neo-evangelical.....fence straddler
evangelical.....Christians who don't want to be identified as Bible believers
fundamentalist.....anyone believing in 5 to 10 "fundamental doctrines"
(e.g., Baptists, Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, et. al.)
Bible scholar.....someone who professes Biblical scholarship (beware!)
Bible believer.....someone who believes their Bible is inspired, inerrant,
infallible, and preserved and that it contains every word of God (Mt.4:4; Lk.
4:4)
original manuscripts.....unavailable for examination, never appeared in one
place at one time anywhere on earth
Septuagint.....a Greek translation of the O.T. Hebrew Bible circa 200 AD
New International Version.....New Inverted Version now in gender neutral form!!!
with an avowed and self-professed lesbian on board!! along with charismatics,
liberals, Bible deniers, etc.

**New American Standard Version or ASV.....New Awful Silly Version
 (translated by the Lockman Foundation – whoever they are?????????
 (never identified themselves)**

**New King James Version.....New King Jimmy Version – King James has been dead
 for centuries – did he get resurrected???**

Good News for Modern Man.....bad news for everybody

Living Bible.....dead paraphrase

**New World Translation.....translated from same manuscripts (W & H) as the other
 "versions" above and adopted by the Jehovah's Witnesses as their
 (almost) final authority**

English Standard Version.....English Sloppy Version – Ho hum! Another "version."

**KING JAMES BIBLE*.....NOT a "version" it is the King of the Beasts!!! It is the
 "every word" Bible promised by our Savior in Mt. 4:4 and Luke 4:4
 (don't be lazy – look them up!)**

**Alexandrian Text or Manuscripts.....Roman Catholic Egyptian (!) Manuscripts
 (MSS) used to translate all the "versions" of the Bible in English and used to
 correct the King James Bible**

Westcott & Hort Text.....Sinaiticus and Vaticanus MSS (same as above)

**Masoretic Text or MSS.....the Jewish Masoretic priests preserved and copied
 the Bible in the Old Testament – the "oracles of God" Romans**

6:3

and
King
kind!

there
extant

Dead Sea Scrolls.....DEAD scrolls – unreliable - used by the Essenes (a cult)

**Textus Receptus....."Received Text" used by KJ Bible translators
 is the the Traditional Text (MSS) passed down from N.T. times to today in the
 James Bible – one of a**

**Original Greek Text.....dream on! long gone!!! (Which "Greek Text"? –
 are several**

**"a better translation should be..."....."Hey, Ma – look how smart I am!" Smarter
 than those King James translators! Yeah, right!!!!**

**"I believe the King James Bible is preserved, not inspired.".....an oxymoron!!! Did God
 preserve errors – non inspired words????!!!**

**Do you know where I can find an inspired Bible? In the "originals"?
 Where are they? In heaven?
 What good does that do us earthlings?
*It cannot be inerrant if it is not also inspired for then it would be a
 product of man.***

***We have tried our best to "TELL IT LIKE IT IS!" in this brief treatise. We did not set out to
 deliberately offend anyone, so before you accuse me, please think clearly and "check it out!" as they
 say. I am sure that you can come up with many more euphemisms than those listed above. Isn't it
 interesting that those who tell us to "TELL IT LIKE IT IS!" don't want to do so themselves?***

***The King James Bible is the only English Bible translated from the Traditional Texts of Scripture
 (Masoretic and Textus Receptus MSS)! It is the only one which includes a command to "study" the
 Scriptures in 2 Tim. 2:15; the only one which warns against "science falsely so-called" in 1 Tim. 6:20;
 the only one honoring the Trinity in 1 Jn. 5:17; the only one referring to Christ as God in 1 Tim. 3:16;
 the only one that urges belief in Christ before believer's baptism in Acts 8:37; the only one that has
 Christ's blood equated with the blood of God in Acts 20:28; the only one that includes the Roman
 Catholic holiday of "Easter" (the Passover had already passed over!) in Acts 12:4.**

**In Acts 19:37 "churches" is rendered "temples" in the "versions." In Rev. 22:14 "do His
 commandments" is rendered "washed their robes".(?) The versions make "Jesus" into "Joshua" in
 Heb. 4:8. They remove "not" from Is. 9:13 even though all Hebrew MSS have it there. Hold onto**

your seat – *the Son of God*” in the fiery furnace with the three Hebrew teens was really “a son of the gods” (!) in the new perversions. In Matthew most suggest that the ending on the Lord’s prayer be torn out to make it coincide with Catholic doctrine. Greek scholars don’t like to be called “superstitious” as in Acts 17;22 so they change it to “very religious. In 2 Cor. 2:17 no one “corrupts” the Word of God – they just “peddle it! And it Col. 1:14 most of the “versions” tear out “through His blood!!

I could go on for page after page of some 30,000 changes, omissions, and additions in the “versions” – but you have already identified me as a fanatic, so why bother. (I am in good company – Elijah, John the Baptist [not Presbyterian! ☺], Peter, Paul, Daniel, et. al. were all fanatics for the faith!)
Have a good day!

Dr. Paul C. Fedena

***NO, I do NOT believe in “double inspiration” and neither did the King James Translators. Neither the original writers nor the KJ translators believed THEY were inspired. Only the words of Scripture are inspired, not the men! The words “scripture” and “scriptures” used some 40+ times in a King James Bible is NEVER used of the “originals” men worship today.**

B. Monogamy: v. 4b

1. God says physical acts outside of marriage are committed by "whoremongers" and "adulterers".
2. They are not "affairs", "liaisons", "trysts", "flings", "flirtations", "romances", "cheating", etc. - just SIN!

NOTE: The woman who gives or sells her body is a "whore" and the man who does so is a "whoremonger" and if married, they are "adulterers"! The one who breaks the marriage union "defiles" it and will be judged - not by a court of law, but by God. He has, He is and He will! (Judge)

3. Biblically, marriage and its privileges are "**undefiled**" and three-fold:
 - a. Procreation
 - b. Companionship
 - c. Protection of moral purity.

II. SATISFACTION IN LIFE: V. 5,6

A. Covetousness: v. 5a

1. Covetousness is simply the menace of materialism.
2. Covetousness makes money and possessions a god.

NOTE: The word "**conversation**" goes beyond speech to "manner of life" or today "lifestyle". Spurgeon: "I've never had one person confess the sin of covetousness."

B. Contentment: v. 5b,6

1. The sin of discontent is blasphemy in disguise; it says God isn't treating me fairly.
2. An awareness of His presence and purpose for your life will cure discontent.

NOTE: "Contentment is not found in having everything (you want), but in being satisfied with everything you have."

3. We are to be content with our possessions and our position. **v. 6 Why? v. 6b,7**

III. STEADFASTNESS IN DOCTRINE: V. 7-9

A. The Faithful Preachers: v. 7

1. **"remembering"** them includes speaking well of them, honoring them, obeying their teaching and administration ("rule") and calling to mind their exhortations.
2. Their faith is to be followed, not their person.
3. They must ultimately answer to God, not men.

B. The Unfailing Savior: v. 8

ILLUS: This is the charismatic healer's favorite verse. They say because He healed in His earthly ministry and gave that power to His apostles, He is doing the same thing, in the same way today.

He was a baby **"yesterday"** - He isn't now! He got tax money from a fish's mouth then...His hair was black then...He had blood in His veins then...He raised corpses then...He walked on water then...He cursed a fig tree then...He produced 1000's of loaves of bread and created fish to feed multitudes then...He made a rooster crow on schedule then...He was whipped then..., but not **"today"** or **"forever"!!**

1. He is the Same Faithful God He Always Was!
2. He is the Same Compassionate Savior He Always Was!

NOTE: If anyone should show up with similar powers today - avoid him - he is the antichrist and you missed the Rapture! Watch out for Oral Roberts and his divorced and remarried son, Jimmy Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, Joel Osteen, Rick Warren, New Age Gurus, Mediums and Channellers...!!!

C. The False Teachers: v. 9

1. Different (divers) and weird (strange) doctrines which do not conform to that of God's Son or faithful preachers.
2. Beware or you will get "carried away"!
3. Beware those who mix Law (**"meats"**) and grace, faith and works.

NOTE: This is a contrast again between the Old Covenant and the New. Christ is again seen as superior.

4. Beware those who get "occupied" with doctrines other than "with grace".

ILLUS: Billy James Hargis and Dr. Carl McIntire wasted their ministries on anti-communism. If you observe the winds and the clouds (even though good in themselves), you will neither sow nor reap! (**Eccl. 11:4**)

CONCL: Controlling bodily appetites, contentment without coveting and carefulness with truth communicated, will allow the believer to live closer to the Lord, please Him and serve Him more efficiently.

How's your home? (Marriage) Fidelity.

How's your heart? (Money) Covetousness.

How's your hope? (Ministry) Doctrine.

"WE ARE SUPERIOR SAINTS" or "AN ALTAR, A CITY and A SACRIFICE"



TEXT: Hebrews 13:10-16

THESIS: To show that New Testament saints are superior in God's sight to Old Testament Judaists.

INTRO: A. Things are not always what they seem. Those who appear happy are often heartbroken. Those who appear healthy are often sick. Those who appear wealthy are often poor. Those who appear spiritual are often carnal. Those who appear happily married are often living in turmoil. And those who appear inferior are really superior. In fact, New Testament Christians are really "***SUPERIOR SAINTS***" over Old Testament Jews. (In Judaism)

B. "Altars" were always a vital part of biblical religious life. Cain and Abel had one. Noah built one. Abraham and Jacob built theirs. Moses built one. There was an altar in the Tabernacle and each succeeding Temple in Judaism. Jews who got saved were looked down upon because they had no altar, no Temple, no sacrifice, no "holy city". Paul's argument here is "We do have these things. We have an altar, a city and a sacrifice. We are 'SUPERIOR SAINTS'."

I. WE HAVE AN ALTAR: V. 10-13

A. What Israel Had:

1. They had a tabernacle. **v. 10**

NOTE: The Tabernacle, rather than the Temple, is referred to here because it was God's original place of worship and service and though not as beautiful, was the perfect picture of Christ, heaven and the believer in all their details. It was designed by God Himself!

2. They had a Priesthood. **v. 10b, 11**
3. They had Sacrifices. **v. 11b**
 - a. The one sacrifice which must be "***burned without the camp***" was the Sin Offering.
 - b. Only the blood (!) was used. The carcass, dung and skin were all removed to a place without Israel's camp and burned there.

NOTE: The symbolism was striking. The perimeter of the camp was clearly defined. Only lepers, the unclean, sodomites and Israel's enemies were outside the camp - and that's where the sin offering was taken to be removed from Israel.

B. What Christians Have:

1. They have an altar!

NOTE: For a converted Jew to leave Judaism with its hallowed altar for sacrifices would be viewed by his unbelieving brethren as a renegade, an apostate and a heretic. Paul's defense is: "We too have an altar which is superior to theirs, from which they cannot eat or partake!" **v. 10**

- a. The Christian leaves the shadow for the substance.
 - b. The believer abandons the type for the anti-type.
 - 1) Christ is our nourishment, the Bread of Life.
 - 2) Christ is not only our sacrifice, but our Sustenance.
2. They have a High Priest: **v. 12a** "***wherefore Jesus also...***"
 3. They have a Sacrifice: **v. 12** "***with His own blood...***"
 - a. He too was a sin offering - the ultimate, only and final One.
 - b. He too was taken outside the gate.

NOTE: Jesus was banned from the "***holy city***" and considered an abomination. He suffered "***without the gate***", was a reproach, spat upon, and crucified.

- c. Those who identify with Him will likewise suffer His reproach. **v. 15**

ILLUS: Make no mistake - those who identify with Him and confess Him openly will suffer persecution and be considered inferior to "mainline Christians", but things are not always as they appear. In God's eyes **"WE ARE SUPERIOR SAINTS"**.

II. WE HAVE A CITY: V. 14

A. The Accusation:

1. Those who left Judaism would have no identification with *"the holy city"* of Jerusalem.
2. The Temple, its priesthood, its sacrifices and its services would all be denied to the Christian convert.

B. The Actuality:

1. Though earthly Jerusalem holds an attraction for the Jew, the believer *"seeks one to come"*.
2. The New Testament saint is superior in His hope for the New Jerusalem.

III. WE HAVE A SACRIFICE: V. 15, 16

A. The Sacrifice of Praise: v. 15

1. Sacrifice was an integral part of Jewish worship and the Christian was viewed as deprived of this vital ministry and thus seen to be inferior.
2. Since Christ is the final sacrifice, our position is actually superior and so we offer the *"sacrifice of praise"* - *"giving thanks to His Name"*.
 - a. As our altar is not physical and our city is yet future, so our sacrifice is inward, not external or ceremonial.
 - b. *"Spiritual"* is not in contrast to "material" because material acts or gifts may be accepted as spiritual sacrifices.

NOTE: "Our praise is regarded as fruit which reveals the character of its source, as the fruit of the tree reveals the nature of the tree." - Guthrie

B. The Sacrifice of Works: v. 16

1. *"do good"* = giving money, food, physical help, prayer, providing transportation.
2. *"to communicate"* = share what you have.

NOTE: The verse calls these ministries "sacrifices". Have YOU sacrificed lately? Have you pleased God lately?!

CONCL: We have **"AN ALTAR, A CITY and A SACRIFICE"** so we are not at all inferior to the Old Testament saints. In fact **"WE ARE SUPERIOR SAINTS"** because of our Savior.

"OBEY, PRAY and WALK IN HIS WAY"



TEXT: Hebrews 13:17-21

THESIS: To show that godly Christians obey spiritual leadership, pray for one another and stay in the will of God.

INTRO: A. We are nearing the end of the Epistle of Hebrews. It closes like most of Paul's books, with admonitions to church members, exhortations and a salutation. (V. 18 in using the word "**conscience**" ex-poses the unnamed author as Paul. It is like his "signature" or "trademark". He uses the word 20 times between Romans and Titus and if you add the 5 times in Hebrews that is more than 8 times as the nearest writer, Peter, who only uses it 3 times.)

B. His closing exhortations deal with **OBEYING** authority, **PRAYING** for leaders (himself specifically) and **STAYING** within God's will. Obeying, praying and staying! How do you measure up?!

I. OBEY! V. 17

A. Pastoral Authority: cf. v. 7 and v. 24

1. Pastors are not to be dictators or tyrants because they do not "**rule**" for themselves, but for the Lord. (**I Peter 5:3**)
2. When the man of God is in the will of God, teaching the Word of God, the people of God should joyfully submit and obey.
 - a. The man God sends to a church is His gift and His representative. (**John 13:20**)
 - b. Submission and obedience to God's man, within God's will, is equivalent of submission and obedience to Christ.

B. Pastoral Accountability:

1. The godly pastor is to "**watch for your souls**".

NOTE: It is easier to "win souls" than to "watch for souls". Watching for souls includes warning from enemies within and without. It means "spending and being spent" for the church. It means caring and carrying burdens, weeping and working. It means giving your life for the sheep.

2. The man of God "**must give an account**" and he knows it!
 - a. Disobedient and unruly church members grieve the Pastor's heart.
 - b. The word "**grief**" means a deep, inner, unexpressed groaning usually known only to the Pastor and the Lord.
 - c. Those who grieve the Pastor will find that to be "**unprofitable**" for himself at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

ILLUS: When the preacher stands and "**gives an account**" about those who grieved him - they in turn will be grieved! cf. **Rom. 14:10-12** Every real man of God desires to report the joy of pastoring a submissive, cooperative, obedient membership.

II. PRAY! V. 18-19

A. Supplication: v. 18a, 19

1. Paul solicits their prayers - he knows that leaders face temptations other believers don't.
2. Satan knows if he can neutralize the shepherd - the sheep will scatter.

NOTE: The greatest temptation for any Pastor is to compromise convictions, water down the Word, weaken unpleasant doctrine.

3. Paul may have been in prison or otherwise hindered from returning to these believers, but he believed in prayer and begged every church to pray for him! **v. 19**

NOTE: Paul saw prayer for leadership as one of the highest duties of the believer-priest.

B. Simplicity: v. 18b

1. A good conscience.

- a. He had thus earned their prayers and deserved them.
- b. He had ministered to them, not perfectly, but faithfully.

ILLUS: Any good Pastor should have a **"good conscience"** towards his people and towards his ministry and should thus be able to unashamedly solicit the prayers of his people.

2. "Live honestly".

- a. Paul marries his request for obedience to preachers and his request for prayer for leaders to those who **"live honestly"**.
- b. Honesty isn't the "best policy" for a Christian, it is the **ONLY** policy!

ILLUS: Believers who are dishonest in their personal lives or in their ministry are undeserving of our prayers!

TRANS: Paul has issued a call to obey and a call to pray - now he issues a call to stay!

III. STAY! V. 20, 21

A. God's Power: v. 20

1. Here is the only place in the epistle where Christ's resurrection is specified.
2. The typology of the Tabernacle spoke of Christ's person and work on Calvary, but not His resurrection.

NOTE: The point here is that God's power to raise Christ is the power available to these Hebrew Christians (and us!) to keep us serving and to help us "stay" within His will.

- a. Christ is the **"Good Shepherd"** Who died.
- b. Christ is the **"Great Shepherd"** Who rose again.
- c. Christ is the **"Chief Shepherd"** Who will return.

NOTE: Once again His blood is seen as the powerful agent to save and to keep the believer. His blood is eternally powerful and seals the "everlasting covenant" of salvation.

B. God's Purpose: v. 21 (Cf. Phil. 2:13)

1. To perfect us; **"to make you perfect"**.
2. To help us **"to do His will"**.
3. To make us pleasing to Himself.

NOTE: **V. 21** is a summary of God's purpose for every believer! Everything is summed up in this simple but searching phrase.

CONCL: Here then is a call to OBEY, a call to PRAY and a call to STAY (or walk in His way)! Good Christians obey, pray and walk in His way. They love and submit to spiritual leadership who love and care for them. They pray for one another and they mature through Christ's resurrection power, by **"every good work to do His will"** and are thus **"well pleasing in His sight"**!

"P.S."



TEXT: Hebrews 13:22-25

THESIS: To close the epistle of Hebrews with exhortations and encouragement.

INTRO: A. Often a **"P.S."** on the end of a letter is of significance. Sometimes a writer will even disguise his real purpose for writing in the main body of the letter and give the real reason in the P.S. For example, you get a letter asking about your health, the family, the dog, the weather, etc. and then in the P.S. the writer asks if you have forgotten that \$20.00 you still owe him!

B. While such is not the case in Hebrews, this **P.S.** is important. It too is a part of the inspired, preserved Word of God. It adds a word of encouragement, provides additional information and exhorts the Hebrew Christians.

I. EXHORTATION: V. 22

A. An Affectionate Petition: *"I beseech you, brethren..."*

1. He identifies with the readers as **"brethren"** - one in Christ.
2. He begs them to consider kindly what he has written kindly.
 - a. He knows their background, prejudices and probable response.
 - b. He had been where they had been - steeped in Judaism.

NOTE: Paul's conversion had been spectacular, sensational and supernatural. Then he had the privilege of 3 years of intensive graduate school re-education in Arabia to straighten out his thinking and theology. His readers were young converts that didn't have his advantages. There was no blinding light from heaven and no audible voice of God for them.

B. An Affirmative Plea: *"suffer the word of exhortation..."*

1. The word exhortation throbs with encouragement, warning and appeal.
2. That had been the Apostle's approach in this epistle.
 - a. He pleads with them to consider his arguments concerning the superiority of the Savior over the shadows of Judaism.
 - b. He prods them to weigh his arguments and appeals.
 - c. He presented scriptural evidence for his conclusions and matched type with anti-type, picture with reality, prophecy with fulfillment.

C. An Apparent Paradox: *"a letter...in few words..."*

NOTE: I reject the ridiculous concept that Paul only wrote and was referring to this 13th chapter as a "letter" whereas the previous 12 chapters were a "treatise" written by someone else.

1. He is not referring to its length in words alone, but its length in words in comparison to the weighty themes and doctrines of which he wrote.
2. This is truly a short epistle when viewed in the light of its sublime subjects.

ILLUS: He could have expounded at great length on the New Covenant, Christ's superiority over the Mosaic Law, sacrificial system, the High Priestly system, the Tabernacle, the blood, faith, works, etc., etc.

II. LIBERATION: V. 23

A. Timothy's Liberty:

1. Apparently Timothy was imprisoned, as Paul, for the faith.
2. Paul had exhorted Timothy not to waver in his faithfulness and to endure persecution in **II Timothy**.
 - a. Apparently soon afterwards, this warning proved prophetic and Timothy was jailed.
 - b. It seems here that he passed the test and was liberated.

3. The context may suggest something more:

- a. Timothy may supply an illustration and an encouragement for the Hebrew saints to take heed to his plea in **v. 22**.
- b. Real liberty is to be found in submission to authority (**v. 17**) and obedience to the Word (**v. 22**).

ILLUS: The natural man thinks freedom means simply doing whatever pleases him, but that is bondage. Do whatever you please and you will ruin your health, your financial stability, your reputation, your testimony, your home and family and your life. (**II Peter 2:19**) The drug addict, alcoholic, fornicator, adulterer, pervert, etc. forges his own chains by his "liberty".

B. Paul's Freedom:

NOTE: Paul's mention here of his partner in the ministry and son in the Lord is further evidence of his authorship of the Hebrews. The only Christian mentioned by name in the epistle is Timothy.

1. Paul is obviously not in prison at this point and purposes to unite with Timothy and visit the Hebrew Christians.
2. Paul shows here his deep concern for his readers' spiritual welfare.

III. SALUTATION: V. 24

A. A Salute to the Spiritual Leaders: v. 24a

1. Paul is saying again "obey your shepherds - they love their sheep".
2. Paul considers obedience to spiritual authority a measure of spiritual maturity, of true spirituality.

B. A Salute to All the Saints: v. 24b

1. God is concerned with individuals and though unnamed, he knows "*all the saints*".
2. This places in perspective the concept that though spiritual leadership is God-ordained, "*the faith*" is the common property of "*all the saints*".

C. A Salute from Separate Brethren: v. 24c

1. Paul was probably in Rome or with Roman believers as he penned this epistle.
2. This closing salutation is closely similar to the closing of Paul's other epistles.
3. God's people, though separated, are one Body.

CONCL: V. 25 "GRACE BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN."

Everything down here comes to a close. Grace makes the difference. If this was the final chapter or the close of the book of your life - how would it be with YOU?! Would your "P.S." be "I am in heaven by God's grace" or "I am in hell because I refused God's grace?!"

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Comprehensive Outline for Hebrews

What follows is a suggested outline for the book of Hebrews – at a glance. It can be a great help to study this overall outline if you plan to teach or preach through Hebrews. It will give you a general idea of the concepts taught in Hebrews and guide you through the book.

Chapter 1

I. THE CLIMAX OF ALL REVELATION: V. 2a

- A. The prophets spoke the Word of God, Christ IS the Word of God:
- B. The prophets were vehicles to record God's Word, Christ is the Embodiment of the Word:
 - 1. He did not become the Word of God because God spoke in Him,
 - 3. He always was the absolute expression of love
 - 4. Deity - the Living word of God.

II. THE HEIR OF ALL THINGS: V. 2b

- A. The first Adam lost dominion over God's creation:
- B. The Second Adam will regain that dominion:

III. THE CREATOR OF ALL WORLDS: V. 2c

- A. He created more than JUST planet earth:
- B. He created all the "worlds":

IV. THE RADIATOR OF ALL GLORY: V. 3a

- A. The Son is like the sun:
- B. The Son is like God:

V. THE EXPRESSION OF ALL THAT GOD IS: V. 3b

- A. He is an Exact Copy of God:
- B. He is the Same Person as God:

VI. THE GOVERNOR OF ALL CREATION: V. 3c

- A. He Upholds His Creation:
- B. He Sustains His Creation:

VII. THE REDEEMER OF ALL BELIEVERS: V. 3d

- A. He did it "By Himself" (There was no other qualified)
- B. He did it "For Himself" (For His own glorification)
- C. He did it "For Others"

V111. HE HAS A BETTER NAME (SONSHIP): V. 4-5

- A. A Name and Its Symbolism:
- B. His Name and His Sonship:

IX. HE HAS A BETTER POSITION (WORSHIP): V. 6

- A. He is the First begotten: v. 6a
- B. He is to be Worshipped: v. 6b

X. HE HAS A BETTER ADMINISTRATION (KINGSHIP): V. 7-9

- A. His subjects: "His angels..." v. 7
- B. His Throne: "Thy throne"
- C. His Reign: "for ever and ever" (omitted in NASV and NWT)

- D. His Scepter: "of righteousness"
- E. His Kingdom: "thy Kingdom"

XI. THE SON'S PERFECTION: V. 9

- A. His Agreement with the Father:
- B. His Anointing by the Father:

XII. THE SON'S PERMANENCE:

- A. Creation: v. 10
- B. Deterioration: v. 11-12a
- C. Stabilization: v. 11b,12b

XIII. THE SON'S POSITION: V. 13-14

- A. Enthronement Repeated: v. 13 (cf. v. 8)
- B. Authority Reiterated: v. 14

Chapter 2

I. A GREAT SAVIOR: V. 1a

- A. The Superiority of the Messiah: "Therefore..."
- B. The Solemnity of the Message: "earnest heed..."

II. A GREAT WARNING: V. 1b

- A. Positive:
- B. Negative:

III. A GREAT SALVATION: V. 2-3a

- A. Preceded by the Law: v. 2
- B. Proclaimed by the Lord: v. 3a

IV. A GREAT WITNESS: V. 2-4

- A. The Witness of Angels: v. 2
- B. The Witness of Christ: v. 3b
- C. The Witness of the Apostles: v. 3c (cf. Acts)
- C. The Witness
- D. s of Signs, Wonders and Miracles: v. 4a
- E. The Witness of Gifts of the Holy Ghost: v. 4b

V. ANGELS WILL NEVER REIGN: V. 5

VI. MAN ONCE REIGNED: V. 6-7

- A. Scriptural Support: v. 6a "one..."
- B. Positional Comparison: v. 6b "What is man...?"
- C. Original Sovereignty: v. 7-8a

VII. MAN WILL REIGN AGAIN: v. 8b

- A. God's Plan: "all things put under him"
- B. God's Man: (cf. v. 9 "But...Jesus...")

V11I. THE DETAILS OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION: v. 9a

- A. His Humanity: "we see Jesus..."
- B. His Humility: "lower than the angels..."
- C. His Horror: "for the suffering of death..."
- D. His Honor: "crowned with glory and honor"

IX. THE EXTENT OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION: v. 9b

- A. The Context:
- B. The Conclusion:

X. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION: v. 10

- A. The Creator/Governor: "for whom...by whom..."
- B. The Captain/Leader:

X1. THE EFFECTS OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION: v. 10b-13

- A. Perfect Through Suffering: v. 10b
- B. Brethren Through Sanctification: v. 11-12
- C. Children Through Salvation: v. 13

X1I. Conqueror: v. 14

- A. His Humanity: "flesh and blood..."
- B. His Victory: "destroy...the devil"

X1II. DELIVERER: v. 15

- A. Fear-Remover:
- B. Bondage-Breaker:

XIV. RECONCILER: v. 16,17

- A. Abraham's Seed:
- B. High-Priest:

XV. SUCCOURER: v. 18

- A. Suffered Temptation:
- B. Succours the Tempted:

Chapter 3

I. CONSIDER JESUS' SUPERIOR OFFICES: v. 1-2

- A. He is the Apostle:
- B. He is The High Priest:

II. CONSIDER JESUS' SUPERIOR WORK: v. 3-4

- A. The Great Builder: v. 3
- B. The Great Creator: v. 4

III. CONSIDER JESUS' SUPERIOR PERSON: v. 5-6

- A. Moses, a Servant:
- B. Christ, a Son:

IV. FOCUS ON FAILURE: (Past) v. 7-11

- A. Faithfulness and Failure:
- B. Works and Ways:

V. WARNING AGAINST WAVERING: (PRESENT) v. 12-14

- A. The Sin of Unbelief: v. 12,13
- B. The Sentence of Unbelief: v. 14

VI. UPBRAIDING UNBELIEF: (PAST and FUTURE) v. 15-19

- A. Hardened Hearts: v. 15-17
- B. Inexcuseable Iniquity: v. 18-19

Chapter 4

I. FEAR:

- A. The Warning:
- B. The Application:
- C. The Interpretation:
 - 1. Israel missed their rest because of unbelief:
 - 2. Israel forfeited their rest because of unbelief:

II. REST:

- A. Definition:
- B. Application:
- C. Interpretation:
 - 1. The point of this warning is perseverance:
 - 2. The preaching was unprofitable to them:

11I. SALVATION-REST: v. 3a

- A. Requirements:
- B. Results:

1V. SABBATH-REST: v. 3b,4

- A. Significance:
- B. Symbolism:

V. MILLENNIAL-REST: V. 5-6

- A. Christ's Message:
- B. Israel's Millennium:

V1. CAANAN-REST: V. 7,8

- A. Specific Time: v. 7 "today"
- B. Specific Limits: v. 8

V11. PRESENT-REST: V. 9-11

- A. The Promise: v. 9
- B. The Position: v. 10
- C. The Picture: v. 11

V11I. DIVINE IN ITS ORIGIN: "The Word of God..."

- A. Given by Divine Authority:
- B. Imparted with Divine Supervision:

IX. LIVING IN ITS NATURE: "alive..."

- A. It is Alive: cf. John 6:63 with Proverb 6:22-23
- B. It is Life-Giving:

X. POWERFUL IN ITS OPERATION: "powerful..."

- A. Energetic:
- B. Transforming:

X1. SHARP IN ITS PENETRATION: "sharper..."

X11. PIERCING IN ITS SEPARATION: "dividing asunder..."

- A. The Soul and the Spirit: (spiritual)
- B. The Joints and Marrow: (carnal)

X11I. DISCERNING IN ITS JUDGMENT: "discerner..."

- A. It Criticizes: Greek kritikos
- B. It Discriminates:

XIV. REVEALING IN ITS EXPOSURE: V. 13

- A. It Exposes:
- B. It Reveals:

XV. WHAT WE HAVE: (A GREAT HIGH PRIEST) V. 14

- A. He is Great: "a GREAT High Priest"
- B. He is God: "Jesus, the Son of God"

XVI. WHAT WE DON'T HAVE: (AN INSENSITIVE HIGH PRIEST) V. 15

- A. He is sympathetic: "touched with the feeling of our infirmities"
 - 1. He has an unequalled capacity for sympathizing with us.
 - 2. We are part of His body, so He feels what we feel.
- B. He is Sinless: "yet without sin..."

XV11. WHAT WE CAN HAVE: (A HIGH PRIEST WHO GIVES GRACE) V. 16

- A. Immediate Access: "Let us come boldly..."
- B. Immeasurable Grace: "grace to help..."

Chapter 5

I. THE HIGH-PRIEST'S QUALIFICATIONS: V. 1

- A. His Humanity: v. 1a "taken from among men..."
 - 1. An angel or other superhuman being would not qualify.
 - 2. Thus, Christ could qualify because He became human.
- B. His Ordination: v. 1b "ordained for men..."
- C. His Representation: v. 1c "in things pertaining to God..."

II. THE HIGH PRIEST'S MINISTRY: V. 1d, 2, 3

- A.** To offer Gifts and Sacrifices for Others: v. 1d

- B. To Have Compassion on Others: v. 2
- C. To Offer Sacrifices for Himself: v. 3

III. THE HIGH PRIEST'S CALLING: V. 4

- A. Man-called Priests: v. 4a "no man..."
- B. God-called Priests: v. 4b "honor... called of God"

IV. BETTER BECAUSE OF HIS CALL: V. 5-6, 10

- A. A Higher Position: v. 5
- B. A Higher Priesthood: v. 6-10

V. BETTER BECAUSE OF HIS CRYING: V. 7

- A. Prayers and Tears:
- B. Death and Fear:

VI. BETTER BECAUSE OF HIS COMPLIANCE: V. 8-9

Chapter 6

I. A CALL TO PROGRESS: "leaving the principles..." V. 1-2

- A. Leaving the Principles:
- B. Identifying the Principles:
 - 1. Two Inward Experiences:
 - 2. Two Outward Ceremonies:
 - 3. Two Future Events:

II. A CALL TO PERFECTION:

- A. Onward: "let us go on..."
- B. Upward: "perfection..."

11I. IDENTIFICATION OF THE RECIPIENTS: V. 4, 5

- A. They were "Once Enlightened": v. 4a
- B. They had "Tasted of the Heavenly Gift": v. 4b
- C. They were "Partakers of the Holy Ghost": v. 4c
- D. They "Tasted the good Word of God": v. 5a
- E. They "Tasted...the Powers of the World to Come":

IV. IMPOSSIBILITY OF REPENTANCE: V. 4, 6

- A. Turncoats: "It is impossible... if they fall away..." v. 4
- B. Traitors: v. 6

V. ILLUSTRATION OF REAPING: V. 7-8

- A. Fruitfulness: v. 7
- B. Fruitlessness: v. 8

V1. INCLINATION OF READERS: V. 9

- A. Better Things:
- B. Accompanying Things:

V1I. THEIR WORKS: V. 10a

- A. God's Record:
- B. God's Remembrance: cf. Mal. 3:16

V1II. THEIR LABOR OF LOVE: V. 10b

- A. A Working Faith: (cf. Eph. 2:8-10)
- B. A Loving Ministry:

IX. THE WRITER'S DESIRE:

- A. Their Maturity: v. 11
- B. Their Diligence: v. 12a
- C. Their Fellowship: v. 12b

X. GOD'S PROMISE: V. 13-15

- A. The Promise Stated: v. 13-14
- B. The Promise Fulfilled: v. 15

XI. GOD'S OATH: V. 16-18

- A. Confirmation: v. 16-17
- B. Consolation: v. 18a

XII. GOD'S SON: V. 18b-20

- A. Our Refuge: v. 18b
- B. Our Anchor: v. 19
- C. Our Forerunner: v. 20

Chapter 7

I. A UNIVERSAL PRIEST: V. 1a "priest of the Most High God..."

- A. Not A Jew:
- B. Not A Gentile:

II. A ROYAL PRIEST: V. 1-2

- A. A King:
- B. A Kingdom:

III. A RIGHTEOUS AND PEACEFUL PRIEST: V. 2

- A. The Order:
- B. The Implications:

IV. A SUPERIOR PRIEST: V. 1b,2a,4

- A. The Greater Blesses the Lesser: v. 1a (cf. v. 7)
- B. The Lesser Tithes to the Greater: v. 2a,4

V. AN ETERNAL PRIESTHOOD: V. 3

- A. Without Genealogy: (agenealogêtos)
- B. Without Termination: "abideth a priest continually"

VI. ABRAHAM THE GREAT: V. 4,6

- A. The Patriarch: v. 4 "Even the patriarch Abraham..."
- B. The Promisee: v. 6 "Him that had the promises..."

VII. MELCHIZEDEK THE GREATER: V. 4-7; 9-10

- A. Received Tithes of Abraham: v. 4
- B. Gave the Blessing to Abraham: v. 6,7
- C. Received Tithes of the Levites: v. 5,9-10

VIII. CHRIST THE GREATEST: V. 8

- A. Levites Die:
- B. Christ Lives:

IX. THE QUESTION: V. 11

- A. The Goal: Perfection
- B. The Problem: Imperfection

X. THE QUALIFICATION: V. 12

- A. Change in the Priesthood
- B. Change in the Law

XI. THE QUANDARY: V. 13-17

- A. Genealogy: v. 13-15 "...another tribe...Judah..."
- B. Genotype: v. 15-17

XII. CANCELLATION OF THE OLD COMMANDMENT: (LAW) V. 18

- A. Because it was Weak:
- B. Because it was Unprofitable:

XIII. ELEVATION OF A BETTER HOPE: V. 19

- A. The key word: "Better"
- B. The Key Thought: "Draw nigh"

XIV. DECLARATION OF A GREAT OATH: V. 20-21

- A. Priests Without an Oath: v. 21a
- B. A Priest With an Oath: v. 20-21b

XV. CONFIRMATION OF A BETTER TESTAMENT: V. 22

- A. Jesus, the Guarantor: "surety"
- B. Jesus, The Testator: "Better testament"

XVI. MANY DYING PRIESTS: V. 23

- A. Many Priests:
- B. Dying Priests:

XVII. ONE LIVING PRIEST: V. 24-25

- A. Christ's Uninterrupted Priesthood: v. 24a "continueth ever"
- B. Christ's Unchangeable Priesthood: v. 24b "unchangeable..."
- C. Christ's Unequaled Priesthood: v. 25
 1. His Power: "He is able..."
 2. His Potency: "to save to the uttermost..."
 3. His People: "that come unto God by Him..."
 4. His Prayers: "He ever liveth to make intercession..."

XVIII. CHRIST'S PERFECT CHARACTER: V. 26

- A. Holy:
- B. Harmless:
- C. undefiled:
- D. Separate From Sinners:

XIX. CHRIST'S PERFECT POSITION: V. 26b

- A. His Exaltation:
- B. His Elevation:

XX. CHRIST'S PERFECT SACRIFICE: V. 27

- A. Daily Sacrifices: (Ex. 29:38)
- B. Single Sacrifice:

XXI. CHRIST'S PERFECT CONSECRATION: V. 28

- A. The Contrasts:
- B. The Consecration:

Chapter 8

I. SUMMARY: V. 1

- A. The Bottom Line: v. 1a
- B. The Top Position: v. 1b

II. SANCTUARY: V. 2

- A. The Holy Place:

B. The Holy One:

III. SACRIFICES: V. 3-4

- A. His Qualifications: v. 3
- B. His Disqualification: v. 4

IV. SHADOW: V. 5

- A. A Picture:
- B. The Pattern:

V. THE BETTER MINISTRY: V. 6a

- A. Exercised in a Higher Sphere:
- B. Extends to Greater Numbers:
- C. Endures for Time and Eternity:

VI. THE BETTER COVENANT: V. 7-9

- A. The Old Covenant: v. 7,8a,9
- B. The New Covenant: v. 8-9

VII. THE BETTER PROMISES: V. 6c,10-12

- A. Internal not External: v. 10
- B. Universal not Local: v. 11
- C. Forgotten not just Forgiven: v. 12
- D. Eternal not Temporary: v. 13

Chapter 9

I. THE WORLDLY SANCTUARY: V. 1-5

- A. The Tabernacle: v. 1
- B. The Typology: v. 2-5
 - 1. The "first" Tabernacle: The Holy Place:
 - 2. After the "second veil": The Holy of Holies:

II. THE WORSHIP SERVICES: V. 6,7

- A. The Priests: v. 6
- B. The High Priest: v. 7

III. THE WONDERFUL SYMBOLISM: V. 8-10

- A. No Access to Complete Access: v. 8
- B. Imperfect Cleansing to Perfect Cleansing: v. 9
- C. Regulations to Reformation: v. 10

IV. A BETTER PRIEST: V. 11a

- A. Christ the Sacrificer:
- B. Christ the Sacrifice:

V. A BETTER SANCTUARY: V. 11b

- A. It is Greater:
- B. It is More Perfect:

VI. A BETTER SACRIFICE: V. 12

- A. The Key:
- B. The Blood:

VII. A BETTER RESULT: V. 13-14

- A. The Purifying of the Flesh: v. 13
- B. The Purging of the Conscience: v. 14

VIII. A TESTAMENT DEMANDS DEATH: V. 15-17

- A. The Means: "this cause..." v. 15a
- B. The Mediator: "He (Christ)..." v. 15b
- C. The Method: "the new testament..." v. 15c,16
- D. The Mystery: "by means of death..." v. 15d,16
- E. The Memorial: "eternal inheritance..." v. 15c,17

IX. FORGIVENESS DEMANDS BLOOD: V. 18-22

- A. Sacrificial Blood: v. 18-21
- B. Shed Blood: v. 22

X. JESUS IS NOW APPEARING: V. 23-24 (IN HEAVEN AS HIGH PRIEST)

- A. For Purification: v. 23
- B. For Representation: v. 24

XI. JESUS HAS APPEARED: V. 25-28a (ON THE CROSS AS OUR SACRIFICE)

- A. One Offering, One Time: v. 25
- B. One Priest - One Sacrifice: v. 26-28a

XII. JESUS WILL APPEAR: V. 28 (ON THE EARTH AS OUR KING)

- A. The Picture:
- B. The Perfection:

Chapter 10

I. SHADOWS, NOT SUBSTANCE: V. 1

- A. Pointed to "Good Things to Come":
- B. Pointed to the "Very Image":
 1. The reality of the "very image" (éikona) was Christ. Cf. Col. 2:14-17
 2. The "very image" was sent to replace the shadows.
- C. Pointed to "Perfection":

II. REPETITION, NOT REMISSION: V. 2

- A. Cessation of Sacrifices: v. 2a
- B. Cleansing of Conscience: v. 2b

III. REMEMBRANCE, NOT REMOVAL: V. 3,4

IV. INCARNATION:

- A. The Contrast: v. 5-6
- B. The Conclusion: v. 5,7

VI. CRUCIFIXION:

- A. The Repetition: v. 8-9a
- B. The Results: v. 9b

VII. SANCTIFICATION: V. 10

- A. The Benefit: "sanctified"
- B. The Body:

VIII. SUCCESSIVE PRIESTS VS. A SINGLE PRIEST: V. 11-12

- A. "Every priest..." v. 11
- B. "This man..." v. 12

IX. STANDING PRIESTS VS. A SITTING PRIEST: V. 11,12

- A. "Standeth..." v. 11
- B. "Sat down..." v. 12

X. PERPETUAL SACRIFICES VS. A PERFECT SACRIFICE: V. 11,12

- A. "The same sacrifices..." v. 11
- B. "One sacrifice..." v. 12

XI. LIMITED SACRIFICES VS. A LIMITLESS SACRIFICE: V. 11,12

- A. "Can never take away sins..." v. 11
- B. "One sacrifice for sins for ever, ..." v. 12

XII. VAINGLORIOUS SACRIFICES VS. A VICTORIOUS SACRIFICE: V. 12-14

- A. "The same sacrifices" v. 11
- B. "One offering..." v. 14

XIII. THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS: V. 15

- A. His Person: "He... said..."
- B. His Partnership:

XIV. THE FATHER'S WORD: V. 16,17

- A. The New Covenant: (Jeremiah 31:31-34) v. 16
- B. The New Conditions: (cf. 8:10 with 10:16 with Jeremiah 31:33) v. 16-17

XV. THE SON'S WORK: V. 18

- A. Remission:
- B. No Repetition:

XVI. BOLDNESS and BLOOD: V. 19

- A. Our Boldness:
- B. His Blood:

XVII. CONSECRATION and COMMUNION: V. 20

- A. His Consecration:
- B. Our Communion:

XVIII. FELLOWSHIP and FAITHFULNESS: V. 21-25

- A. "Let us draw near..." (make use of the entrance)
- B. "Let us hold fast..." (Don't quit after entering)

C. "Let us consider..."

XIX. A DESCRIPTION OF THE SIN: V. 26

- A. Willful Sin:
- B. Without Sacrifice:

XX. A DECLARATION OF THE PUNISHMENT: V. 27-29

- A. Indignation: v. 27
- B. Illustration: cf. Deut. 17:1-7 v. 28
- C. Insult: v. 29

XXI. A DISCLOSURE OF THE JUDGE: V. 30,31

- A. The Lord Our Judge: v. 30
- B. The Living God: v. 31

XXII. CONVERSION and COURAGE: V. 32-33

- A. Remember Your Conversion: v. 32a
- B. Recall Your Courage: v. 32b,33

XXIII. COMPASSION and CONVICTION: V. 34

- A. Respond with Compassion: v. 34a
- B. Rejoice with Conviction: v. 34b

XXIV. CONFIDENCE and CONCLUSION: V. 35-39

- A. Revitalize Your Confidence: v. 35-37
- B. Remember the Conclusions: v. 38,39

Chapter 11

I. FAITH SEES THE UNSEEN: V. 1

- A. The Fact of Faith:
- B. The Act of Faith:
 - 1. Faith has Substance: (cf. II Cor. 4:18)
 - 2. Faith has Evidence:

II. FAITH IS APPROVED OF GOD: V. 2

- A. The Wise:
- B. The Witness: "good report"

III. FAITH ACCEPTS THE INCREDIBLE: V. 3

- A. Fundamental Faith:
- B. Foundational Truth:

IV. ABEL TELLS OF FAITH WORSHIPPING: V. 4

- A. Faith-Sacrifice Response: "a more excellent sacrifice..."
- B. Fruit-stand Religion: "than Cain..."

VI. ENOCH TELLS OF FAITH WALKING: V. 5,6

- A. The Commencement of His Faith-Walk: (cf. Gen. 5:21,11) v. 5
- B. The Consummation of His Faith-Walk: (Gen. 5:24 "was not")
- C. The Comment on His Faith-Walk: v. 6

VII. NOAH TELLS OF FAITH WORKING:

- A. Noah Scared: "moved with fear..."
- B. Noah Prepared: "prepared an ark..."
- C. Noah Cared: "to the saving of his house...".
- D. Noah Declared: "condemned the world...".

VIII. THE PILGRIMAGE OF FAITH: V. 8

- A. Abraham's Call:
- B. Abraham's Obedience:

IX. THE PATIENCE OF FAITH: V. 9a

- A. Lived in a "Strange Country":
- B. Lived in "Tabernacles":

X. THE PROMISE OF FAITH: V. 9b,10

- A. Looked for a City:
- B. Literal City: "foundations..."
- C. Like No Other City: "builder and maker is God"

XI. THE WEAKNESS OF FAITH: V. 11 (Sarah)

- A. Her Condition:
- B. Her Solution:
- C. Her 'Resurrection':

XII. THE WONDER OF FAITH: V. 12 (Abraham)

- A. His 'Resurrection': (#2)
- B. His Reward:

XIII. THE WITNESS OF FAITH: V. 13 (The Patriarchs)

- A. They Died in Faith:
- B. They Live Forever:

X1V. SEEKING A COUNTRY: V. 14

- A. What is Said:
- B. What is Sought:

XV. LEAVING A COUNTRY: V. 15

- A. The Way Out:
- B. No Turning Back:

XVI. DESIRING A COUNTRY:

- A. The Children's Desire:
 - 1. The evidences of our "desire" for Heaven are that we:
 - 2. The object of our desire is based on His promise "Who cannot fail..."
- B. The Father's Delight:

XV1I. TESTING: V. 17

- A. A Very Great Trial:
- B. A Very Great Faith:
 - 1. Abraham Responded "by faith":
 - 2. The nature of the command demanded a very great faith.
 - 3. The nature of the son demanded a very great faith:

XV1II. (GOD'S PROMISE): V. 18

- A. The Mystery:
- B. The Majesty:

X1X. TRUSTING: V. 19

- A. Believing in Resurrection:
- B. Receiving in Illustration:

XX. ISAAC: FAITH IN THE FUTURE V. 20

- A. A Declining Father:
- B. A Deceiving Mother:
- C. A Determined God:

XXI. JACOB: FAITH IN THE FATHER V. 21

- A. The Blessed Becomes the Blessor:
- B. The Second Becomes the First:
- C. The Pilgrim Becomes the Possessor:

XXII. JOSEPH: FAITH IN THE FATHERLAND V. 22

- A. Joseph Knew What He Believed: v. 22a
- B. Joseph Knew Where He Belonged: v. 22b

XX11I. FAITH IN GOD'S PROTECTION: V. 23

- A. Cooperative Faith:
- B. Courageous Faith:

XX1V. FAITH IN GOD'S PROVISION: V. 24-26

- A. Moses Said No to Egypt's Pleasures: v. 24-25
- B. Moses Said No to Sin's Pleasures: v. 2
- C. Moses Said No to Egypt's Treasures: v. 26

XXV. FAITH IN GOD'S POWER: V. 27-29

- A. Moses' Faith Brought Him Out: v. 27
- B. Moses' Faith Kept Him Safe: v. 28
- C. Moses' Faith Took Him Through: v. 29

XXVI. ISRAEL - VICTORY OVER THE ENEMY: V. 30

- A. Leaving Egypt to Enter Canaan:
 - 1. Bible geography is important!
 - 2. Bible history is important:
- B. Entering Canaan to Overcome the Enemy:
 - 1. The life of faith is a life of battles as well as blessings.
 - 2. The first obstacle in the land was Jericho, an impregnable walled city.
 - 3. God's command seemed foolish- marching instead of fighting.

C. Overcoming the Enemy to Claim the Inheritance:

XXVII. RAHAB - VICTORY OVER SIN: V. 31

- A. The Necessity of Saving Faith:
- B. The Nature of Saving Faith:
- C. The Evidences of Saving Faith:
- D. The Rewards of Saving Faith:

XXVIII. A VARIETY OF PEOPLE: V. 32

- A. Our Physical Birth Differentiates Us:
- B. Our Spiritual Birth Unites Us:

XXIX. A VARIETY OF PROBLEMS: V. 33

- A. Faith Conquers Kingdoms: v. 33a
- B. Faith Worked Righteousness: v. 33b
- C. Faith Obtained Promises: v. 33c
- D. Faith Shut the Lions' Mouths: v. 33d (Daniel)
- E. Faith Quenched the Power of Fire: v. 34a (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego)
- F. Faith Escaped the Sword: v. 34a (David)
- G. Faith Turns Weakness into Strength: v. 34c (Gideon, Barak)
- H. Faith Resurrects the Dead: v. 34d (Elijah and Elisha)

XXX. A VARIETY OF POSSIBILITIES:

- A. Unbelief Locks Up Our Potential:
- B. Faith Unlocks Our Potential:

XXXI. FAITH COSTS: V. 35b-38b

- A. The Price is Often High:
- B. The Price is Even Extreme: v. 35b-38b

XXXII. FAITH PAYS: V. 38a-39a

- A. God's Evaluation: v. 38a
- B. God's Grade: v. 39a (cf. v. 2 "good report")

XXXIII. FAITH UNITES: V. 39a,40

- A. God's Promise: v. 39a
- B. God's Provision: v. 40

Chapter 12

I. LOOK AT THE WITNESSES:

- A. The Reasons We Run: v. 1a
- B. The Race to be Won: v. 1c

II. LOOK WITHIN: V. 1b

- A. Encumbering Weights:
- B. Entangling Sin:

III. LOOK AT THE WINNER: V. 2,3

- A. We Look...
 - 1. ...to Him for Salvation: Cf. Isaiah 45:22 "Look unto me, and be ye saved..."
 - 2. ...to Him for Sanctification:
- B. He Looked
 - 1. Beyond the Cross to the Joy of:
 - 2. Beyond the circumstances of Calvary to the Completion in glory.

IV. PURPOSES IN CHASTENING: V. 5-7

- A. Correction:
- B. Punishment: v. 6 "scourgeth..."
- C. Education: v. 6-7
- D. Prevention: cf. II Cor. 12:7

V. PERILS IN CHASTENING: V. 5b,c

- A. Despising: v. 5b
- B. Fainting: v. 5c

VI. PROOFS IN CHASTENING: V. 6 and V. 8

- A. Proves God's Love: cf. Lam 3:31,32 (v. 6)
- B. Proves Our Sonship:

VII. FURTHERMORE" (DOCTRINE) V. 9-11

- A. Earthly Correction vs. Heavenly Chastening: v. 9
- B. Temporary Benefits vs. Eternal Welfare: v. 10
- C. Present Grief vs. Permanent Fruitfulness: v. 11

VIII. "WHEREFORE..." (APPLICATION) V. 12,13

- A. Stand Up! v. 12
- B. Walk Straight! v. 13a
- C. Be Healed! v. 13b

IX. TWO GOALS OF CHASTENING: V. 14

- A. Pursue Peace: (Manward)
- B. Pursue Holiness: (Godward)

X. THREE HAZARDS OF CHASTENING: V. 15

- A. Failure:
- B. Bitterness:
- C. Defilement:

XI. ONE ILLUSTRATION OF CHASTENING: V. 16-17

- A. Esau's Sin: v. 16
- B. Esau's Loss: v. 17

XII. THE AWESOMENESS OF SINAI: V. 18-21

- A. The Place:
- B. The Terrors:
 1. Sinai is physical (vs. spiritual), but unapproachable. (v. 18 with v. 20)
 2. The Law was surrounded with warnings, restrictions and solemn judgments.

XIII. THE APPROACHABLENESS OF SION: V. 22-24

XIV. HEAR HIS VOICE: V. 25

- A. "Refuse Not":
- B. "Escaped Not":

XV. CONSIDER HIS POWER: V. 26-28a

- A. The Instability of the Old Covenant: v. 26-27a
 1. He uses the shaking, accompanying the giving of the Law, as an illustration.
 2. The earth and all it contains is but temporal and passing.
 3. Even present realities will be shaken and removed: v. 26b,27 "as of things that are made".
- B. The Stability of the New Covenant: v. 27b,28a
 1. The Unshakable: v. 27b
 2. The Unmovable: v. 28a

XVI. SERVE HIS PERSON: V. 28b,29

- A. Acceptable Service: v. 28b
- B. Unchanging Deity: v. 29

Chapter 13

I. LOVE THE BRETHREN: V. 1

- A. Contrast:
- B. Command:

II. HELP THE STRANGER: V. 2

- A. Hospitality: v. 2
- B. Honor: v. 2b

III. REMEMBER THE AFFLICTED:

- A. By Our Compassion:
- B. By Our Presence:
- C. By Our Prayers: cf. Col. 4:18 "remember my bonds"

IV. SEXUAL PURITY IN MARRIAGE: V. 4

- A. Matrimony: v. 4a
- B. Monogamy: v. 4b

V. SATISFACTION IN LIFE: V. 5,6

- A. Covetousness: v. 5a
- B. Contentment: v. 5b,6

VI. STEADFASTNESS IN DOCTRINE: V. 7-9

- A. The Faithful Preachers: v. 7
- B. The Unfailing Savior: v. 8
- C. The False Teachers: v. 9

V. WE HAVE AN ALTAR: V. 10-13

- A. What Israel Had:
- B. What Christians Have:

VI. WE HAVE A CITY: V. 14

- A. The Accusation:
- B. The Actuality:

VII. WE HAVE A SACRIFICE: V. 15, 16

- A. The Sacrifice of Praise: v. 15
- B. The Sacrifice of Works: v. 16

VIII. OBEY! V. 17

- A. Pastoral Authority: cf. v. 7 and v. 24
- B. Pastoral Accountability:

IX. PRAY! V. 18-19

- A. Supplication: v. 18a, 19
- B. Simplicity: v. 18b

X. STAY! V. 20, 21

- A. God's Power: v. 20
- B. God's Purpose: v. 21 (Cf. Phil. 2:13)

XI. EXHORTATION: V. 22

- A. An Affectionate Petition: "I beseech you, brethren..."
- B. An Affirmative Plea: "suffer the word of exhortation..."
- C. An Apparent Paradox: "a letter...in few words..."

XII. LIBERATION: V. 23

- A. Timothy's Liberty:
- B. Paul's Freedom:

XIII. SALUTATION: V. 24

- A. A Salute to the Spiritual Leaders: v. 24a
- B. A Salute to All the Saints: v. 24b
- C. A Salute from Separate Brethren: v. 24c