

Bowman's notes—

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THE EPISTLE TO THE

Hebrews

God's Pursuit Of the TRANSITIONAL JEW From LAW into GRACE

A series including James, 1st and 2nd Peter, and Hebrews

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A DISPENSATIONAL COMMENTARY

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HEBREWS

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HEBREWS

Introduction

The letter to the Hebrews is a study in contrasts. First, it marks the differences between how God spoke in the past and how He speaks to, and deals with, man in this age of grace, from Pentecost until the return of Christ for His bride, the Church. In Romans 3, the apostle Paul speaks of Christ, “whom God has set forth to be a propitiation (*hilastērion*—the *place* where God is satisfied) through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past” (Darby). Under the Law, this was the frame of reference for the Jewish Day of Atonement, when the blood of sacrifice was applied to the Mercy Seat for the putting away of *past sins*. Here, the Holy Spirit, through the author of this epistle to the Hebrews, presents a systematic argument for the superiority of the New Testament over the First Testament. This is true, the writer says, because the Founder of the New Testament (the Son of God) is superior to the founders of the First Testament (the prophets who spoke to the fathers). The purpose is not to discredit or diminish the First Testament as God’s Word to His people, but to encourage those Hebrews who were (1) coming face to face with the Gospel and (2) also with the realization that the revelation of God had changed and advanced into new realms of truth. They were torn between what they had learned through years of living with trials and blessings, following the Law and the promises, and what they were now hearing of grace and freedom. Therefore, the message has specific application to one born under the Law or one who was born into a lineage whose immediate forefathers lived under obligation to the Law. Neither of these things *can ever be true* (1) of a Gentile, or (2) of one born since Pentecost and that first transitional generation. What the Cross clearly established was the work of the Kinsman Redeemer for all believing Israel that covered their sins past as it also resolved the issue of sin forever. Then, the resurrection brought victory for mankind into sharp focus as the Man, Jesus, who was “made to be sin” was “made to be the righteous One” for all who would accept Him as Savior. That brought *present* redemption and *present righteousness* to man, through union with Him as God’s heirs, and son-ship to mankind as membership in God’s family became a reality. But we must not overlook a still more emphatic truth--The ascension of Jesus brought *present righteousness to Heaven* as the ascended Only Begotten Son of God, the Man, Jesus, accepted the throne of the Father in unapproachable light. Darby stated it thus, “Romans 3:25, gives it historically, for the sins of all who were saved in the Old Testament times are put away by this sacrifice; but we may apply it immediately, and see that not only our past sins are put away, but we stand in righteousness for the present.”

“The inspired writer, used by the Holy Spirit to record this epistle, was the Apostle Paul” (Louis T. Talbot, *Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, p.2).

DIVISION 1. CHAPTER 1:1-2:4

*Christ the First-born, is unique and supreme as the Apostle of our confession,
is now enthroned, supreme above the angels
and is the One through whom the Law was given and Who laid the
foundation of peace between man and God.^Ø*

Introduction to Division 1

From the opening verse, 1:1 through 2:4, we see the Son presented by the Holy Spirit, through the author, whom I believe is the Apostle Paul, as superior to all others, whether in heaven or on earth. This presentation begins with God the Father's revelation of Himself in the past through the prophets, and then establishes that Christ is the *full* manifestation (revelation) of God among men. In order to show that this is reasonable to

the minds of men, the Son is demonstrated to be superior to all, in nature, in power, and in being.

First, Christ is shown to be one with the Father.

They share a single essence or character, which is fully displayed in all of its elements and to all creation, by the Son, but always according to the will of the Father. There is no aspect to be known of God that is not revealed in the Son.

This man, Jesus of Nazareth, was the human/physical embodiment of every single thing that God would ever choose to show of

Himself. The Son was God, in every sense, subjected to the limitations of man in the flesh, and as to His walk in the light of God He possessed all power on earth, though by His own choice, and in obedience to His Father, He did not use that power but depended in every aspect of his human life on the Holy Spirit with whom He was in union. He was the perfect sacrifice for man's sin by virtue (1) of His moral perfection and (2) His appointment by the Father. Because of this, He was the unique person of the universe.

“By ascending before God on high, He establishes a present-righteousness—all sins forgiven and we made the righteousness of God in Christ. Romans 3:25, gives it historically, for the sins of all who were saved in the Old Testament times are put away by the sacrifice; but we may apply it immediately, and see that we stand in righteousness for the present.”--John N. Darby,

Ø Headings from F. W. Grant, The Numerical Bible, Louizeaux Bros.

Section 1. Chapter 1:1-4

God the Father identified with the Son in whom He has now fully spoken.

“God has spoken!” What marvelous words the Spirit uses to open this Epistle to the Hebrews. In this section we see the unity of the Son with the Father, because the Father identified with the Son; and we see that the Son is everything that God the Father expressed to this world and all creation. That latter fact (that the Son is the full expression of the Father) is the foundation on which progressive revelation rests. As man moves through time and collates his collective experience with God, there is, and has been, a steady unfolding, a growing revelation of both God’s character and of His intents for mankind. Each succeeding generation has discovered more information regarding the plan of God for man and ultimately for the glorification before all creation, of His only begotten Son. That process has continued until today. This new information is not so much revelation, but new understanding of just how much of God the ascended Lord Jesus revealed as He passed from glory into flesh, and then returned to glory, but yet as glorified Man.

The Son is superior to the prophets. 1:1-3

(Heb 1:1) In the Greek text, **“at sundry times and in divers manners”** comes first in the sentence for emphasis. It is important that God spoke, but it is central to the proposition of the writer that we understand the contrasts between what and how God spoke in the past and what and how God is speaking to us today. Don’t fail to make the triple application of this contrast to (1) the recipients of this letter to the Hebrews as the end of the transition generation of Jews; (2) the Gentiles, who were dealing with the first generation Christian Church’s struggle with the Law; and (3) our contemporary dealings with legalism borrowed from Old Testament principles and adopted as an interim ethic for immature believers. **“Sundry times”** is literally **“in many parts or portions.”** What the letter to the Hebrews clearly conveys is the thought that what was spoken through the prophets to Moses, to Isaiah, to David, etc, is substantively different from what God speaks to those in the New Testament period after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. There is a definite article **“the”** before **“God,”** calling attention to the person of God as the One who was acknowledged and worshiped by the fathers of the Jews and now by New Testament believers.¹ There is no article before **“Son”** emphasizing the common source, God, for the message of both the First and the New Testaments.

The author of the letter is going to repeatedly make a case for this central message--the revelation of God spoken by the Son of God through the Apostles is different from, and supercedes, the revelation of God given through the prophets, because the requirements of that revelation have been satisfied.

It is very helpful to recall that in the four Gospels, each of them presents Christ in a different view. In Matthew He is presented as the King of Israel, identified with David; in Mark, He is

¹ Wuest, Kenneth, Hebrews in the Greek NT, p32

presented as the Servant of God, found in complete obedience to the will of the Father; in Luke's Gospel He is presented as the Son of Man, fully identified with the First Adam; and in John, He is presented as the "Only Begotten Son of the Father," identified as God the Creator of all! In these four records, God the Father has spoken to us *in His Son*. Paul's letter to the Hebrews is a continuation of that same method--God has spoken to us in the Person of His Son, "God manifest in flesh."

The word for "**worlds**" (KJV) and "**ages**" here is *aionas*. Wuest says this, "The idea in the word *aionas* is not merely that of the vastness and magnificence of the physical universe, but the thought of the times and ages through which the purpose and plan of God are gradually unfolding."² It is very important that we note the progressive nature of the unfolding plan of God for His creation. Fail to do so and you mix the reasons for which the revelations of the past were given with the reasons for which the Church was revealed. Here, the first application is to the transitional generation of Believers, those born under the Law, who were now faced with the principles of liberty and grace. The second application is to the Church, those born and born again on this side of Pentecost, never under obligation to the Law, but who use the Law to gain a richer, fuller, understanding of God and His plan for resolution of the issue of sin and the consequent redemption of sinners, as well as the completion of His promises to a people destined for an eternal earthly inheritance.

In many portions and in many different fashions, the God we know, having spoken by means of the prophets to the fathers, at the end of these days has spoken to us in (the person of His) Son, whom He has established heir of all things, by whom also He made the ages; Heb. 1:1,2

(1:3) "**Brightness**" has been described as radiance, out-raying, or effulgence. Today, we might understand it better as *radiation*, not just the transmission of heat or energy, but the emission of elements, a spewing forth of the essential nature of something, an ionic bombardment. The Son is all of the essence of God that this world can even discern. He is the encapsulation of the glory of God now released within this cosmos. "**Glory**" refers to the fullness of God's attributes, the totality of His essence, His character, His being. All of God's very nature that can be released in man's world is radiated from the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever stature the Old Testament prophets possessed among the Fathers, stands in stark and pitiful contrast to this superlative description of God in Christ.

² Kenneth W. Wuest, *Hebrews in the Greek New Testament*, W.B. Eerdmans Publishing .

“**Express image**” *character*, has to do with all the individual parts of the features of God. Where “**glory**” speaks of the nature of God in whole, *charakter* speaks of the individual parts in concert. The Son is not only the representation of the whole of God, but of every individual aspect of His divine person (nature), all of His attributes embodied. When, therefore, Christ came and presented Himself the singular, perfect sacrifice, all law passed away, having been totally fulfilled, and He, the alternative, stood in its stead. The Law was like a great searchlight, looking for that perfect manifestation of God within the world of men, and when it discovered Jesus the Christ, its search was ended and the Son emerged. John stated it this way; “No one has ever seen God, but God the One and only, who is at the Father’s side, has completely revealed Him” (John 1:18).

Our goal for living is *His character*, not the Law . . . Any believer who extracts elements from the Law of Israel and attempts to use them to measure his/her life before God, impoverishes himself/herself in terms of the higher calling of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John acknowledges that Christ is the present and total revelation of all that God is! It is Christ victorious who stands before us and faces the Father. Our goal for living is *His character*, not the Law. It is not that standard of acceptability measured in bulls, goats, loaves, tithes, lands, or time. Our only standard is His life; but wait—it’s not His life as lived in flesh before the cross—it’s His life as lived now, from His ascended position in glory, through His body still on earth, the Church alive and abiding in Him! Any believer, who extracts elements from the Law of Israel, and attempts to use them to measure his/her life before God, impoverishes himself/herself in terms of the higher calling of the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:21-“For me to live is Christ;” Galatians 2:20-“I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;” 1 Thessalonians 5:10-“...whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him;” each verse presents the believer’s only norm, the living Lord Jesus. No believing Jew under the Law would ever have thought to say, “For me to live is Jehovah’s acceptable sacrifice.” Nor would he say, “Whether we are awake or asleep, we may live joined to the sacrificial lamb.” Becoming one with the sacrificial animal being offered was not a real concept. Commutation of sin to the sacrifice, both personal and corporate, was their reality! But, for the Christian it is altogether different. Our blessed position is *in the Son*! Not just redeemed *by* Him, but redeemed *in Him*.

The Ark of the Covenant and its contents presented a constant picture, a type, of God *covering* the sin of man by the blood of the sacrifice, which the Levitical priests sprinkled on the Mercy Seat. The book of Leviticus is filled with references to the sons of Aaron “making atonement” for the Israelites by blood offerings. These blood offerings, sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant, *covered* the sins of Israel and gained God’s forgiveness for the penitent offerer. In contrast, here Paul states that our sins have been “**cleansed (purged)**”³ once for all, not simply ‘covered’ as in their past. Where the priest of Israel ‘covered’ the sins of the people every year; the Son, having “**cleansed**” sin once, “**sat down**” at the right hand of the Father. Wuest reminds us that, “**having made**” is a middle voice participle, which represents the subject

³ The Greek root is the word from which we get *catharsis*.

(the Son) either acting upon himself or in his own interest. Christ, on His own initiative, acted upon Himself, offering His own body as the Sacrifice for sin (10:12) and acting in His own interest pursued the will of the Father. But, at the same time, **“By Himself”** (NASB) is not the best translation, because it conveys a sense of following solely His own will and not that of the Father.

“Purification of sins” should be understood in its fullest implications. We are not purified from sins only, but the sin itself has been put away by the sacrifice of the Son. In the present, the power of sin has been walled-off; a separation from the believer has been affected. In the future, after death, the very presence of sin has been separated from the believer. Therefore, *purging* or *purifying* describes the very fact of sin having been located apart from the believer and the basis for guilt and penalty nullified. This is extremely important as we view the believer before the Bema Seat of Christ, where he is not called into question because of any present sins not atoned for, but is rewarded solely for the work of Christ in his life—all else has been located entirely apart from him for eternity by the work of **“purification!”** We cannot be held accountable for sins not yet dealt with totally, since the work of purification has been *accomplished* and owned through union with the ascended Lord Jesus sitting at the **“right hand of the Majesty on high.”**

When we consider the purification of sins the obvious thing is that only the one sinned against can forgive the sin. Since we have sinned against God, it is only He that can forgive the sin. Less obvious is that before He can *forgive*, He must *purge*, else the sin itself is a barrier because He is totally holy and cannot in any way enter a relationship that is tainted by sin. The moral necessity of His holiness demands that He must thoroughly cleanse any poor sinners who are to appear before Him. For the believer on this side of Pentecost that means entering into the present righteousness that accompanies our position in Him through union. It is not a future event, but an accomplished fact. Because He cannot bear sin, He must take it away by His own act.

Who being the radiation (brightness) of His very nature (glory), and the express image of his person, and maintaining (upholding) all things by the word of his power, when he, having made purification of sins (purged our sins), sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Heb. 1:3

The Son is superior to the angels. 1:4-2:18

(Heb 1:4) The issue here is not original creation, for the Son is eternal. It is an issue of human dignity and divine office. The Son, who was made for a little while lower⁴ than the angels, was elevated in His ascension to a position at the right hand⁵ of Majesty and with power over all

⁴ Heb. 2:9

⁵ Acts 7:56 Stephen saw heaven “open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Paul, in Ro. 8:34, declares that it is Jesus Christ, who was raised to life and is now at the right hand of God where he is interceding for us.

creation. There is not any thought of personal sovereignty conveyed here. Nor is it a focus on His moral excellence as the perfect man, but rather of position by inheritance, power by means of the Holy Spirit's filling and the Father's anointing, and temporal authority by appointment over all creation--It's a family matter. At no time did God the Father ever offer sonship to an angel. That position has been and will be occupied by the "only begotten Son," the Lord Jesus Christ, (John 3:16). Look at our part in this scenario, as related to the Galatian believers by the Apostle Paul: "So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world. But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Galatians 4:3-6).

Having become far superior to the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? Heb 1:4,5

(Heb.1:6) "**First begotten**" *prototokos* (see Colossians 1:15) from which we get 'prototype' today, describes the relationship of the Son to all creation, both on Earth and in Heaven. The angels of God worship the Son in His glorified humanity, the Last Adam now ascended. By way of contrast, "only-begotten" *monogenes* (see John 3:16) describes the relationship of the Son to the Father, the shared divine nature and essence of the Trinity.

And when He shall have brought again the first begotten into the inhabited world,⁶ He says,⁷ and let all the angels of God worship him. Heb.1:6

⁶ Inhabited world is *oikoumene* and was used in that day of the entire Roman Empire. It is particularly pertinent to the sequence of events at the end of the present age, when the period known as the Great Tribulation will once again see the Revived Roman Empire, then headed by the Antichrist, defeated by the returning Messiah, the victorious Christ.

⁷ Deut. 32:43, Psm. 97:7

(Heb 1:7) In Psalms 104:4 the Psalmist describes the power and authority of God with this statement: “He (God) makes the winds (spirits, *pneumata*) His messengers (angels,), and His ministers a flame of fire.”

Kenneth Wuest has 1:7 as; “And with reference to the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels winds, and His servants a flame of fire.”

The Greek Text has 1:7 as; “And with regard to the angels He says; The One making the angels of Him spirits, and the ministers of him of fire a flame.”

Put 1:6 and 1:7 together this way: “**When He**, God the Father, **shall have brought again** back to the cosmos, which He, the Son, had created, His **first-begotten** now **reentering the** now **inhabited world**, **He**, the Father, **says, and let all the angels of God worship Him**, the Son. **And, referring to the angels, the Father says that He** Himself **makes the spirits the Son’s messengers and His servants of fire a flame.**” Your thoughts should be immediately drawn to Pentecost and the revelation of the Holy Spirit appearing as tongues of flames empowering the first entrants into the Church of Jesus Christ, His Body, with gifts of service to spread the Gospel of the risen Savior. There is a great contrast being presented here by the author of this letter. It is between the nature of the Son and the nature of angels. The Son is superior, in fact, in appointment, in standing with the Father, in attributes, in every conceivable way, to angels. They are, in fact, His servants, the messengers of the Father who brought the Son comfort and filled His needs while He was enduring the humiliation of His suffering and sacrifice *as a man*.

And of the angels he says, who makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. Heb 1:7

(1:8) “**But**” introduces the other half of the contrast. In marked contrast to the appointment of angels as ministers and servants of the “Only-Begotten” of God, “**unto the Son He says, Thy throne, O God, is unto the age of the age, and the rod of righteousness is the rod of your kingdom.**” The Son of God, made flesh and come into the world of men as a man, is now ascended to the Father (as a Man), where the Father addresses Him as God forever. It is the Son whose mark of rule is the rod of uprightness (*euthutetos*), acquired by Him as perfect *humanity*. That work of the Son is the foundation on which His rule over His kingdom will endure. No one, not one single soul in Israel’s past, could make that claim; not Moses, not father Abraham, not David, not Jeremiah, Isaiah, Jacob, Aaron, none but Jesus of Nazareth! Note that there is a definite article before “**rod**” which means that it is not “*a rod*” but “**the rod**” of righteousness. There is only one standard, *one rod*, by which to measure perfect righteousness-in-action (*euthutetos*), the character and life of the Son of God incarnate, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But unto the Son he says, Thy throne, O God, is unto the age of the age: the rod of

Righteousness (uprightness) is the scepter of thy kingdom. Hebrews 1:8

(1:9-12) In verse 9, “**righteousness**” *dikaiousune* refers to a perfect attribute of each person of the Trinity, which, in this case, establishes a norm or standard for righteousness. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit possess the attribute of righteousness as intrinsic to their very divine nature. Anything that falls short of that perfection is therefore, unrighteous. That perfect purity has been a defining object of the love of the Son of God forever in the past. There was never a time when the Son did not love righteousness and despise unrighteousness (iniquity). Because of that, the Father, in expressing His will, expressed it as the Word, anointed God the Son as the Only Begotten Son, who came in flesh as Jesus the Christ, the Last Adam, and set Him above all others as Lord of Lords. Further, it was given to the Son in eternity past, to establish the Earth and Heavens as the work of His own hands. This position of the Son is an eternal one—there was never a time when the Son was not the total expression of all that the Father is and wills and does. By this testimony, we know that it was the Son of God in His creative capacity that ordered the work of Genesis Chapter One. John addressed that in the first chapter of his Gospel account--“All things were made by Him and without Him was nothing made that was made.” In Psalm 102:25, “Of old Thou didst found the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. Even they will perish, but Thou dost endure; and all of them will wear out as a garment; like clothing Thou wilt change them, and they will be changed, but Thou are the same, and Thy years will not come to an end.” Two Psalms further, in Psalm 104, we see, “O Lord my God, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with splendor and majesty, covering Thyself with light as with a cloak.” These passages express the intimate relationship that the Son of God, our Lord, has always had with creation—it is all part of His humiliation in obedience to the will of the Father. At a future point, which we know to be at the Great White Throne judgment, these will all pass away, both heaven and earth, and a “new heaven” and a “new earth” will descend from God, because the new is fit for the glorified Last Adam. Even as creation ages and fails, the eternal nature of the Son of God shall not fail or diminish. He is Sovereign, Perfectly Just, Absolutely Righteous, and Eternally Immutable.

You have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows. And, You, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of your hands: They shall perish; but you remain; and they all shall wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture shall you fold them up, and they shall be changed: but You are the same, and Your years shall not fail. Heb 1:9-12

(1:13, 14) “**But**” introduces contrast again. No one of the angelic order was commanded to sit at the right hand of God, the position of honor and authority. In contrast to the Son’s rule and position of honor, the angels are all “**ministering** (serving) **spirits**. Further, they are sent to minister, first to the Son, and now to and for them who are the “**heirs of salvations**,” believers of this age. That same band of heavenly hosts who attended the Lord Jesus in His incarnation is now busy attending the Body of Christ. They are the “great cloud of witnesses” (12:1) who

monitor man and the grace of God toward man.

But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Heb 1:13, 14

Section 3. Chapter 2:1-4 Publication of the Gospel with three witnesses

Introduction to Section 3:

In the close of this first Division of the letter to the Hebrews, the conclusion is drawn sharply into focus on the “Good News” of the Gospel of salvation. It begins with a warning to **“give more earnest heed”** and not to overlook those things, which attested to the overarching authority of the Son of God, Jesus the man among men. **“Therefore”** refers to all that has been declared in Chapter 1 regarding God’s having spoken to believers through the Lord

Jesus. William R. Newell says that “this refers evidently to the Four Gospels and the Acts.” God did not deliver the message of His presence among men without also giving confirming evidence that man could understand; therefore, that His expectation, even His demand, of a response is just. Throughout the Gospels signs and wonderful events attended the presence and ministries of Jesus wherever He went. This continued with the Apostles as the Gospel spread from Jerusalem following Pentecost. The national history of Israel is a continuing past narrative of God’s faithfulness to deliver precisely what He promised them. Their forefathers and prophets all spoke to the authentication of this carpenter’s son from Nazareth as the blessed Messiah, that One who was to come and deliver them from the enslavement of sin. Alas, too many chose to blame Rome for their oppression, occupying themselves with the physical and ignoring the spiritual, and that fact defined their expectations of what the Messiah would do on their behalf. The Church today is not exempt from these same misconceptions about what Jesus is doing, or should be expected to do, on behalf of those who claim to stand on the ground of peace with God. This is the tragedy of Pentecostalism. What excuses are we attempting to offer for our failures to trust and patiently wait for His solutions to life’s dilemmas? If we treat our Lord as the genie of the lamp, there to resolve our conflicts, heal our hurts, or meet our desires, then are we not placing ourselves in that company within Israel who simply wanted a political deliverer to bring them ease in their daily existence? There is a price to be paid for our self-delusion as there certainly was with theirs.

We must not allow the Church of Jesus Christ to occupy itself primarily with the promises of God to Israel, the Old Testament Message, but lay hold through diligent study to that core of Pauline instructions to the Church, lest they drift right past us!

Man ignores the Gospel at his own eternal peril.

(2:1) Because of these superiorities of the Son over all others, **“earnest heed”** must be paid to **“the things which we have heard”** of the life, death, and claims of Jesus as the promised Messiah, but who now lives as the resurrected, ascended, Son of Man. (This is not a diminished title from “the Only Begotten Son of God,” but recognizes that it is a Man that now sits on that heavenly throne and who will to be set over the world to come. (Darby)) These Hebrew Believers must grasp this truth; otherwise, they may allow truth to **“drift past”** them, which would then be lost to them. They are moving with the tide of God’s progressive revelation. They

were thoroughly familiar with the truth revealed through the Law, the fathers, and the prophets and they had the Word of God delivered in their midst by Christ Himself and those who had heard Him in person. This exhortation is for them to examine the differences between the Old Testament record of promises and the Gospel account of fulfillment. Then, they should move on to the hallmark of the New Testament, freedom provided by orientation to grace. Remember, they did not have, as do we, the entire record of New Testament revelation. The first Testament was delivered to men and witnessed by the angels and the prophets. The Holy Spirit through the Apostles delivered the New Testament *after* the ascension of Jesus. This message is of supreme importance to us today, because it is our point of beginning. We start with the revelation through the Epistles and take our understanding of grace back to the Old Testament. As spiritual leaders, pastors, elders, and teachers, we must not allow the Church of Jesus Christ to occupy itself, in either personal or corporate life, primarily with the promises of God to Israel, the Old Testament Message, but lay hold, through diligent study, to that core of the Pauline instructions to the Church, lest they drift past us!

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them drift past. Heb. 2:1

(2:2-4) **“If”** is a first class fulfilled condition better translated, “since”--**Since the word spoken by angels was sure**, and **just punishment** was meted out, they had their entire history to prove those things to be true. Then the logical question is; **“how is it possible that we shall escape”** our own punishment **“if we neglect so great salvation?”** This is thoroughly Jewish in its orientation. That is the question Paul has put to those who would look at the claims of Christ and then continue to practice the temple obligations and obedience to the Law associated with the First Testament. The claim that every requirement of the Law was satisfied by Christ must be answered! Decisions must be reached as to the miracles performed in support of the claims. To go back to the Law and drift past the words spoken by Christ is to reject them. He said that He was the Son of God! He said that one could ask of Him and receive water that would slake thirst forever! He said to the blind, go wash and you shall see! He said, bring the loaves and fish to me, and five thousand were fed! He said if I go, I will come again! What was true of those to whom this letter was written is still true of us today! In fact, since we have so much more a complete revelation, it is imperative that we make a clear choice to stand on grace alone and not on pre-cross practices. This is a major fork in the road of Christian walk and practice. Christians today who like to engage themselves in worship centered on observation of Old Testament feast days, dietary observances, and pageantry are drawing very close indeed to contamination of the Gospel by infatuation with keeping the law. Even more significantly, they have taken a pathway that leads ever more distant from the principles of grace that must govern the life of the Believer.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy

Ghost, according to his own will? Heb. 2:2-4

DIVISION 2. CHAPTERS 2:5-4:13
*Christ, in contrast to Moses and Joshua,
in His suffering and death for His brethren,
defeating Satan and delivering those subject to bondage.*

Introduction to Division 2

The presentation in Division 2 is that of contrasts. There is a core difference between the dealings of Moses or Joshua with Satan, Sin, and the people of God; compared to the dealings of the Lord Jesus Christ with Satan, Sin, and the people of God. It is this--Whenever God empowered and instructed Moses and Joshua to take a position of strength in the face of sinful opposition, it was always to confine or restrict the access of that archenemy of the Father, Satan, in his pursuit of God's people. The fact is that Satan's power, exercised through man's sinful nature of rebellion, was never broken, but controlled. Therefore, the people remained at risk of bondage, depending on their obedience to God's commands embodied in the Law. In contrast; when Christ came as a man, and died on the Cross to satisfy every demand of Sin, He thus met the requirements of the Law that defined sin once-for-all, and the issue of Sin itself was forever and finally dealt with. There could be no other action taken nor statement made in regards to sin having been defeated and put away. Man, in Christ, was judicially set apart from any reach of the Law and its condemnation, because we were joined to Christ in His death. Our position before God is in Him; therefore, when He paid the full price by His death on the Cross, so too were we rendered dead unto Sin. Contrast that to the Jew who is looking forward to Messiah. His life was lived in anticipation that freedom from bondage would be secured to him when the King finally ruled.

Section 1. Chapter 2:5-9
Christ is already crowned with glory and is to be over the world to come.

Introduction to Section 1

The stone of stumbling for many Jews was that when Messiah came, He did not claim victory as they envisioned it, binding their oppressors and overthrowing their governments. He came forgiving, healing, teaching, and accepting. They failed to see that through His resurrection He emerged glorified and magnified. His message was to take the word of His victory to all the world, teaching obedience to His commands and allegiance to His Father. Glory was His crown, and rule, His destiny. The core message of His followers was that of reconciliation.

(2:5, 6) The author of the letter reminds his readers that the Father did not put the world of the future under the rule of angels. Once (in Adam) dominion was given to man, but he lost it through disobedience. But, it is a Man who is to be set over the world to come (Darby). He took a Man, once made **“a little lower than the angels”** (speaking specifically of the Lord Jesus in His incarnation), and made Him supreme ruler over all creation forever.

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

(2:7, 8) Of the Son of man, it is said that He was made **“a little lower than the angels,”** not in character or attributes, but in terms of the prerogatives of deity, which He eternally had at His command. Then, having been assigned a lower status for the duration of His incarnation as a man, at His ascension, the Father conferred status on Him and **“crowned Him with glory (shining) and honor,”** and also at that time, **“all was put in subjection to Him”** as the ascended Man. It is mind-boggling to consider, but when the Son of God emptied Himself of His prerogatives as deity and took on the form of a man, He did so *forever*. It is a glorified Man in Heaven today, as the source of the life of His Church. It was the resurrected Man, the Last Adam, to whom all things were made subject.

You made Him a little lower than the angels; You crowned Him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of your hands: You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we do not yet see all things put under Him. Heb. 2:7, 8

(Heb 2:9) **“But”** introduces a contrast. In contrast to seeing Jesus, God incarnate in flesh, in His reigning place of honor, we **“see Jesus, who once was made a little lower than the angels for the purpose of His suffering death, now risen and crowned with glory and honor, in order that He by means of the grace of God should once and for all taste death for every man..”**

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

Section 2. Chapter 2:10-18

His humiliation and suffering as Kinsman Redeemer

(Heb 2:10) It was (1) completely consistent with the divine nature, (2) right in light of His decrees regarding sin, and (3) fitting to man's thoroughly lost condition; that the Father would make the author of salvation perfect and complete through suffering *as a man*. It was as a man that He, the only begotten Son of the heavenly Father, brought many sons to the Father and into a right relationship with God and thus into glory. In Isaiah 53, that tremendous passage dealing with the suffering of the Christ yet to come, this very process was foretold--(v10,11) "But the Lord (the Father) was pleased to purge Him (the Son), putting Him to grief; when his soul would render Him as a guilt offering, He (the Father) will see His seed, He (the Father) will prolong His (the Son's) days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His (the Son's) soul, He (the Father) will see it and be satisfied." The use of "soul" here is very important because the soul is that element of *man* that defines his humanity.

In His pre-incarnate state Christ was a spirit being, just as is the Father. In taking on flesh and becoming *man*, the eternal Son of God became Jesus of Nazareth, fully human and possessing a soul. It is in this sense that He is the unique person of the entire creation--fully spirit and fully human. Lest we entertain the thought that it was no big deal for the Son of God to suffer punishment at the hands of man, that He probably possessed the ability to anesthetize Himself in some manner from the pain; then please revisit the description of Isaiah, for it was the *humanity* (in His soul) of Jesus which took the blows, tasted the vinegar, felt the blade in His side and the joints separating from the weight pulling down on them. Likewise, it *is a man* who has ascended to the side of the Father and now sits in glory, waiting to usher in those sons of the Father for which He was the author of salvation. We are set aside (sanctified) unto God by means of the work of the Son, to whom we are eternally joined through faith. Darby has this delicious observation—"In the words, "It befitted Him," I find the character of God; while in the expression, "many sons," I find the objects of His love." Stuart Townend captured this perfectly in this verse of his beautiful hymn—

"How great the searing pain of loss,
the Father turns His face away,
as wounds which mar the chosen one,
bring many sons to glory."

For it befitted Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,
Hebrews 2:10, 11

When David considered the Word of God and his response to it, he penned these words in Psalm 22--They present 21 verses of preamble to the very next verse (12) of Hebrews chapter two. They are so rich with application to our present state that I am including all of the passage at this point.

*"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?
Far from my deliverance are the words of my roaring.
O my God, I cry by day, but Thou dost not answer;
and by night, but I have no rest.
Yet Thou art holy,
O Thou who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.*

The opening words are those very utterances of the Lord Jesus on the Cross, crucified, and being made to be sin for all mankind. David saw down the corridors of time to that moment when the Christ would come on his behalf, his kinsman redeemer, and pay the price for the redemption of God's chosen ones. So he then turns to the faith of his fathers and God's response to them--

*In Thee our fathers trusted;
They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.
To Thee they cried out, and were delivered;
In Thee they trusted
You made me trust when still upon my mother's breasts.
Upon Thee I was cast directly from birth,
You have been my God from my mother's womb.*

Though committed to God's will from the womb, the young Jesus' life is filled with purpose, all too soon including suffering. Though there was never a time when a God-infused trust was not present in the human soul Jesus, He would cry to the Father, "Why, hast thou forsaken me?" In that instance, it was not the absence of trust, but the crushing burden of sin, which forced the cry from the depth of His being *as a man*. Believer, understand this; when you allow yourself to be placed into situations, or forced into decisions, which are nothing but choices between things the Word of God has *already* identified as sinful, then that pain of conscience and of frustration and of confusion, is but a small part of the pain the Lord Jesus bore on your behalf. Know this, your failure to live up to the standard of His life does not diminish Him one iota, but magnifies His glory and moral perfection. But, now He says--

*Be not far from me, for distress is near;
for there are none to help.
Many bulls have surrounded me.
They open wide their mouth at me,
as a ravening and roaring lion.*

The reference to being poured out like water brings several pictures immediately to the mind of the Jew considering the Gospel--One, the water of purification, which pours from the laver. It was used to wash certain parts of the burnt offering sacrifices⁸ prior to their being placed on the altar, representing the temporal faith of the offerer being laid before God for cleansing of the inner man--Two, the declaration of Jesus that He was the source of living water for all who would come to Him for salvation--Three, the picture of water and blood, commingled by the high-priest of Israel and poured out at the base of the altar to speak of atonement for the sins of Israel. The imagery chosen by the writer of Hebrews is sharp and deep with meaning to those who read it. Pray that it should also be to us.

*I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
My heart is like wax;
it is melted within my inward parts.*

At the end of man's resources, this is the description of His condition. It was so of the Lord Jesus, rendered so by the hand of His Father--

*My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue cleaves to my jaws;
and You have laid me in the dust of death.*

His vision turns to those who are watching this spectacle. We can only marvel at the manner in which God revealed these truths to David so many years before their occurrence. **"Dogs"** are unbelievers who have not only rejected the truth but are now actively engaged in crucifying the very One who personifies truth. It is interesting to note that **"assembly"** is the same word translated **"church"** in the King James Version. It is a prescient comment on the apostate church prior to the final return of Christ for His Bride.

*For dogs have surrounded me;

an assembly of evildoers has encompassed me;
They pierced my hands and my feet.
I can feel every one of my bones.*

⁸Leviticus 1:9 The entrails and the legs of the burnt offering represent that portion of the sacrifice which is contaminated with sin by contact with the world, both inner (entrails) and outer.

*They look, they stare at me; they divide my garments among them,
and they cast lots for my clothing.*

Even in this state of extreme distress, persecution, and threat, yet there is recognition of God's overarching providence and care, an awareness that "all things work together for the good, for those who are called to God's purpose."⁹ In this verse, as others, "soul" refers to the humanity of the individual, the essence of humanness. Hundreds of years after David penned these words, the Lord Jesus Christ would speak real meaning to them as He took on flesh and placed His divine person within the limits of mankind in order to demonstrate true faith and secure our salvation.

*But, Thou, O Lord, be not far off;
O Thou my help, hasten to my assistance.
Deliver my soul from the sword,
my only life from the paw of the dog.
Save me from the lion's mouth;
and from the horns of the wild oxen You answer me.*

It is the Lord Jesus Himself who says:

*"I will declare Thy name to my brethren
In the midst of the assembly I will praise Thee.*

It is imperative that we know where these statements recorded by Christ's apostles to the Church of the New Testament originated. It is precisely through the insertion into the New Testament events of these very statements from Old Testament Scripture that we have been provided historical, palpable verification of the deity and humanity of the Lord we serve. Here in Paul's letter to the Hebrews, he has reached back into David's Psalms and drawn forward the image, which these people have fed on throughout generations--images of Messiah to come, the Christ prayed for as God's Deliverer, now come as a Man, God Incarnate. So these Hebrews are asked to listen carefully to, and receive, the message of Jesus of Nazareth. It is His testimony to the Father's provision for the salvation of man. **"I will put my trust in him"** is a statement attributed to Christ, not the author of the letter, and is spoken of the Father as the One in Whom trust is placed. This is consistent with the next statement; **"behold, I and the children which God hath given me"** brings us to the prayer of Christ, the High Priest of *all men*, in John 17:6; "I manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy Word." Pay careful attention to this next statement--all true Believers are children of the Almighty God our Heavenly Father. We are not simply *brothers* to Christ, rather we are united with Him, *in Him*!

⁹Romans 8:28 "The good" is that body of truth, which is Christ. "All things" may not work together for temporal pleasure or even justice as the world sees it; but they do redound to the glory of our Lord.

I will declare your name unto my brethren, in the midst of the assembly will I sing praise unto You. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God has given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
Hebrews 2:12-15

The Doctrine of Reconciliation

Just as we, children of the Almighty, are first flesh and blood, so too did our Redeemer become fully flesh and blood, man, that He might die *as a man* and satisfy the full requirements of man's condemnation to die because of sin. Christ did not come as a spirit creature, but *as man* because only within mankind is there the function of a priest, an intercessor between a righteous God and sinful man. Becoming our high priest, He could, and did, make *reconciliation* for the sins of the people. To be *reconciled* is to bring two things together, satisfying all differences that keep them apart. In reconciling us to God, the Lord Jesus satisfied these elements of the barrier, which separated man from God--

Sin: Because man (the first) longer displayed the glory and he was created. In order to restore alive spiritually. This is the reason why Regeneration is foundational to conversion. Our human spirit is *regenerated* in a person being made alive.

SIN

Adam) had willfully sinned, he no image of God, the state in which him, he had to again be rendered who is spiritually dead but is now

PENALTY

Penalty: Breaking God's Law

penalty, death. There were two deaths in view; spiritual death, which was immediate and experienced by loss of their covering of light (the visible glory of God); and physical death, which was temporally impending, giving urgency to their change of will towards obedience. Without physical death man could have

(do not eat) carried with it a procrastinated forever.

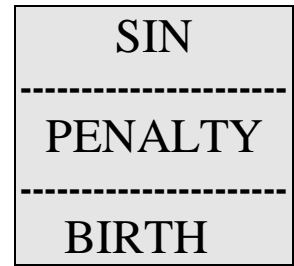
BIRTH

Birth: Born as descendants of the possessor of a soul, mind, body,

disobedience. In order to be extricated from the curse of humanity (spiritual and physical death) we must become free of the old nature and alive to God Who is spirit. As Christ told Nicodemus in John chapter 3, "You must be born again." The *new birth* is God's provision for making us alive spiritually and bringing us into His family as His children.

First Adam we are fully human, will, and an old nature of

Satisfying the demands of righteousness and removing these barriers is the definition of *reconciliation*, the work of Jesus, the high priest of mankind. In offering himself, as a man, He paid the penalty, brought a new nature into us by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit and now presents us to the Father as newborn children.



For truly He took not on him the nature of angels; but He took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He himself has suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted. Hebrews 2:16-18

Section 3. Chapter 3:1-6 The Son's glory over the house of God.

The third section presents ideas associated with completeness and the Son's association with the whole realm of God the Father's reign. Because the Hebrews held Moses in such a high position as their historical representative before God, it is necessary that Jesus be shown to be superior to Moses as the sole mediator of God's covenants with His people. Where Moses was to be accorded honor as the master of his house, it was to be recognized that Jesus was the builder of the house in which all believers are placed.

The Son is superior to Moses. 3:1-6

"Holy brethren" defines the audience for this letter. The author, Paul, was first, one *set apart* (holy) to Christ Jesus and second, a Jew by birth entitled to call these Hebrew Christians *brethren*. They are all together **"partakers of the heavenly calling"** as ones who accepted Jesus the Christ as the "High Priest" of all that they professed to believe. **"Consider Jesus"** the writer says, the **"one sent with a message"** and the only man qualified before a righteous God to perform the office of **"High Priest"** placing the acceptable sacrifice before a righteous God. Don't overlook His **"being ever faithful to the One who appointed Him,"** God the Father. Moses their forefather was faithful within his house, but **"this man,"** Jesus, **"was counted worthy of more glory than Moses"** because He was the author of our salvation.

(3:1-3) Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, being ever faithful to the one appointing him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. Hebrews 3:1-3

(3:4-6) People recognize that the honor of a fine piece of work, of a magnificent house, accrues to the reputation and standing of the builder. It speaks of his/her skill, dedication, attention to detail, and ability. And, the writer says, **“every house is built by some man”** to whom honor is given. **“But”** introduces a contrast between man, who builds houses, and God, the builder of **“all things.”** And, having built his house, Moses **“was found faithful. . .as a servant”** rather than as the one who had conceived of the house (speaking both literally of his home and figuratively of his descendants). There is another contrast; **“but”** compared to Moses the servant, **“Christ as a son over his own house”** is superior to Moses.

For every house is constructed by some man; but he that built all things is God.
And Moses truly was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Hebrews 3:4-6

Section 4, Chapter 3:7-4:13 **The Son is superior to Joshua. 3:7-4:13**

(3:7-11) In verse 7, **“if”** is a third class conditional **“maybe you will and maybe not.”** **“Hearts”** is plural and is from *cardias*, a word that is more closely associated with the center of our thoughts, or [mind] than with our emotions. **“The Holy Spirit says; ‘Today, if you choose to, hear his voice--do not close your minds as in the rebellion in the wilderness, when your fathers yielded to temptation and tested me and proved me through forty years of my works.’”** Isn’t it incredible that those Israelites who were delivered from Egyptian bondage so quickly forgot God’s provision and in their fit of pique, so set their minds against obeying God willingly, and tempted Him for over forty years. Every day they saw a miracle, the provision of food and water in the midst of the desert. Yet they remained obstinate in their defiance of God’s leadership. Are we, as humans in general, any different? We have the progressive revelation of the past 2000 years to attest to the authenticity of Jesus as the Son of God and yet, as a people, we still reject the historical proof, the empirical evidence for the infallibility of Scripture, and spend limitless resources in pursuit of *any* other explanation for our being here.

So, even as the Holy Spirit says; “Today if you will, hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation, in the day of the temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted [me], proved [me], and saw my works forty years.” Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, “They always err in their heart” and they knew not my ways. So I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest.¹⁰ Hebrews 3:7-11

(3:12, 13) So the warning to these Jews considering the claims of Christ on their lives is very apropos to our own lives as well, i.e.--having brought the reality of the **“living God”** before us

¹⁰ Numbers 14:23

for consideration, we must exercise all caution **“lest there be in any one of [us] a heart, an evil of unbelief in the departing from a living God.”** This sentence is built up of these parts--there is no indefinite article before **“heart”** signifying attention on the character or quality of the heart in question. In this case, the **“heart”** is defined as **“as evil of unbelief”** and “unbelief” is expanded and defined as **“departing from a living God.”** So, working back through the verse, we see this emerge; God is a ‘living God.’ It was the ‘living God’ who decreed that He would send His only Son to redeem man. It was the ‘living God’ who came willingly to do His Father’s will and give Himself on the Cross in obedience to the Father’s demands. It is the **‘living God’** who fills us with His presence as the Holy Spirit, and uses us to produce the character of the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives. We worship and adore a God who is alive, who is a real person as the ascended Man, albeit deity. We do not worship icons or idols, symbols or religions, ethereal being or human ideals. We worship a God of life, who would take it up, lay it down, and then rise from death to transform it into an eternal existence of infinite spiritual quality. Fail to believe that and you turn from the living God in disbelief of the Father’s revelation of Himself in His Only Begotten Son. What other path is open to such an unbelieving person but that position, which has its beginning and end rooted in evil opposition to all that God intended for His creation. While our intentions may be good, the pathway of unbelief does not lead to God, except as judge. To the unbeliever that message is that you are at a crossroad, turn away and there is certain perdition; turn to the Redeemer and you will find your Savior already reaching out to save you. To the believer, know that the most pernicious evil in the world today is one who claims the name of Christ, yet in his faithless mind is grasping the burden of Law as his life’s ethic. He is rejecting the freedom of grace and forgiveness secured to him by the sacrifice of Christ, and walks in darkness, serving the flesh rather than the Spirit within. The answer, accountability! Have around you brothers who would **“exhort [you] daily, while it is today, lest [you] be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”**

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.
Hebrews 3:12, 13

(3:14-16) The message to those who were in the process of considering their conversion from faithfully anticipating the Messiah’s coming, to His having come as the carpenter’s son, is this—sin in the world opposes the revelation of Christ in His role as Redeemer. Now that you have seen that One revealed, sin works to deceive you through hardening your heart to that truth. You must take your **“confidence”** to its end in order to be made **“partakers of Christ.”** In other words, there is no partial salvation as a member of the Body of Christ; you can’t simply live out your life holding onto the position of Israel before the Cross, and expect God to treat you in grace at the end of your life simply because you cannot, or will not, make up your mind to accept the ascended Jesus as the Promised Redeemer. To underscore that, the writer points back to the experience of their forefathers in the wilderness, where **“some, when they had heard”** of God’s deliverance from bondage, seized the opportunity to leave with Moses; but not all continued in their trust of God. In the wilderness there was much grumbling and complaining. They simply

did not continue to carry their confidence in God to deliver them through the wilderness and to the land promised them. They failed at the end of their trust, of trusting Him to sustain them in their journey. They couldn't even wait until the land was in sight!

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; while it is said, today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. Hebrews 3:14-16

(3:17-19) Egypt represents a place of discipline, of judgment. The entire nation of captives was coming out of Egypt under Moses' leadership. Within that great company, there were those whose confidence and faith in God to deliver them to the land promised them, wavered. They began to complain about conditions in the wilderness and lament their loss of sustenance during their journey. This lack of trust was sin. Because of it, they died in the wilderness and never made it to the land of promise. Note well, Christian—The Land of Promise, represents the Kingdom of God. The lesson to these Hebrews is clear—starting the journey by faith is not enough, it takes perseverance to the conclusion of the trip in order to enter the Kingdom of God. That was God's way of dealing with Israel in the past, under Law. For the Christian, the principle is the same, but the goal is death to self—we start by union with Christ in His death to sin, and move in concert with that when we daily reckon ourselves to be dead to sin, reaffirming that basic truth. As we do that, we live in His rest, union with the Only Begotten Son.

But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Hebrews 3:17-19

(4:1, 2) So, what is the lesson to us today, to those who are considering entering God's New Testament assembly? We should fearfully and carefully think through our claim to be His and hold our trust in Him up to close scrutiny, to see if we have actually committed ourselves to His way. Otherwise, we could be just like those who took the temporal blessing of relief from slavery and oppression, but then, complained and became embittered because there were unexpected difficulties in their walk as God's children. The Gospel had been preached to these Hebrews who claimed to be following Christ, just as God's promises had been made to those coming out of Egypt. But, faith in following was required of them and

O Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;
Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our
salvation. Let us come before His presence
with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to
Him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great
King above all gods.
In whose hand are the ends of the earth; the
peaks of the mountains are also His.
The sea is His, for it was He who made it;
and His hands formed the dry land.
Come, let us worship and bow down;
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for
He is our God, and we are the people of His
pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

was no less required of these. That is the same faith that is required today to grasp what is freely offered based on the shed blood of our Lord. Our means for living as Christians are the assets of divine grace, which pour like the living waters from the heavenly position of the risen, ascended Lord Jesus.

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Hebrews 4:1, 2

(4:3) **“We who have believed”** are those whose faith was exercised in response to the Gospel. By quoting Psalm 95:11, those Jews to whom this letter was written are brought back to both the wilderness wandering, and the very week of creation. Consider the opening words of this great Psalm—They speak of honor, obedience, and worship of the God of all creation, and also of Israel as a nation. These words are written in awe of a God without limits. There is nothing that He cannot do for His people—as an earthly nation, or as a heavenly assembly. So they are reminded of their natural forefather’s failure to trust God for the details of their lives right after He had delivered them.

(4:3-6) It is true that **“we who have believed do enter into”** the place of rest provided by the Cross, the ground of peace with God. This is precisely what He declared in the past on the basis of the “finished” work of Christ established **“from the foundation of the cosmos.”** It is a pattern of revelation that began with the seventh day rest of God at the completion of creation. It was reaffirmed to Israel as they approached the land promised to them by God and it is repeated again here for those considering the Gospel of the resurrected Jesus. They are reminded that those who did believe God in the past did not enter into His place of rest and peace. It is a matter of faith, not work, for **“the works were finished.”**

For we who have believed do enter into rest, as he said, as I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remained that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Hebrews 4:3-6

(4:7-8) As in the past, it is left to man to choose to believe. In David’s day, the people of Israel were entreated by God to **“harden not your hearts”** against the promise of God; He did not impose His desires for them to come to Him. So too, has Jesus offered the promise of peace and rest on the basis of His finished work, but since He did not impose His offer, the choice of belief still rests with individuals, for “whosoever will, may come” (John 3:16).

Again, he limited a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest,

then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. Hebrews 4:7-8

God's Place of Rest

Across the whole history of mankind, there is a provision of rest for man. The seventh-day rest was established in Genesis 2:3, when God rested because the work of the creation week was finished. In Egypt, prior to their release by Pharaoh, Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were instituted. This was a seven-day Sabbath, the first and seventh days were designated days of rest and they were to remove all leaven from their homes for the entire span of the feast days. This depicts that rest as being a time of separation from sin. During the wilderness wanderings, no food was provided on the seventh (Sabbath) day, provision being given on the sixth (Exodus 16:23-26) to be eaten on the seventh. In the Law, the seventh-day rest was written into every Levitical cycle. These Hebrew believers have been raised practicing the requirements of the Mosaic Law. It governed every aspect of their lives and imposed itself on every situation they faced. There was never a time when they did not have to measure their behavior according to that standard given to their forefathers. Now, Paul is telling them, there is a rest that is both a place and a condition. When you are in a condition of being *at rest*, the existence of a special place, one free from toil, is implied. What is the toil referring to? It is the work of understanding and keeping the law of God, of meeting His standard of righteousness. How is this possible, they ask? The answer, says Paul, is that first, you are required to **“cease from (your) own works, as God did from His.”** Second, it requires that you not disqualify yourself through **“unbelief.”**

There remains therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. Hebrews 4:9-11

(4:12) **“Quick”** is *alive* and **“powerful”** is the translation of *dunamis* from which we get the word dynamite. God's Word is a living, explosively powerful force among men and in heaven. Further, it is **“sharper than any double-edged sword,”** speaking of the short blade used by the Roman legions for close combat. It is the Word of God, which can **“pierce even to the separation of soul and spirit.”** The soul of man is that element of man, which can receive and process information within the realm of human phenomena. It is the part of man with which he relates to the material world. In other places it is called the “natural man” and involves the tactile senses and emotions of man. The spirit of man is that element of man, which receives and processes information about God. To know a true spiritual being, and God *is* spirit, requires that one be *spiritually alive*. Becoming spiritually alive is the practical result of regeneration. It is in our spirit that we are reborn, becoming children of God through belief and our subsequent *union with Christ*, the living Word. Regeneration is not the cleansing of our old self to make us acceptable to God. It is the creation of an *entirely new* being, spiritually alive, joined to the Son of God, heirs of the Father; yet, for the time being, living in the fleshly body where He found us.

So here is man--soul and spirit, mortally human and eternally alive, mentally alive to his

cumulative experience and morally alive to internalized values. What, or who, can divide those elements? The living Word of God, the Lord Jesus--the written Word of God, that canon of letters and journals marked by God as Holy Scripture. At the time this was written, there was no canon of the New Testament, simply some letters that were circulating, so the reference to Scriptures goes to the prophets and authors of the Old Testament. **“The joints and marrow”** calls attention to the physical nature of man. There is no way that they could have known in their day the function of the marrow, as we do today. The marrow of man is where antibodies are produced to fight off invasion of our body by bacteria or other harmful organisms, a type of inward sin. The utterance of God, the Lord Jesus, is the source of our defense, our only source, against sin. The joints represent the strength and ability of man to move, work, and create. In other words, it is the word of God, which can distinguish between man in his natural animal state and the needs of man to be protected from contamination in his natural state. Whenever a foreign organism gets into our blood stream and passes through the spleen, that organ recognizes it as foreign and makes a pattern specifically for that antigen. It then triggers production cells in the marrow, which began to crank out antibodies to attack that antigen. What the writer to the Hebrew believer is saying is that the Word of God (both the Son of God and His being the total expression of the Father to man) is the perfect discerner of the body’s needs, and the means by which those needs are met and the onslaught of the enemy of God is defeated.

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

(4:13) In addition to the view of the most miniscule parts of man, there is no **“creature that is not clearly revealed in His (the Word’s) sight.”** His view and sphere of actions take into consideration every single detail, no matter how insignificant they might seem to us, regarding every created being on Earth or in the heavens. It is one more expression of the omniscience of God.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Hebrews 4:13

DIVISION 3
Chapter 4:14-10:29
Christ, Priest in Heaven,
Foreshadowed by the Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrifices of the Law

Special notes to the Adult Sunday School Class studying this letter to the Hebrews, January 2005.

This group started our current studies in Genesis about two years ago. There, the foundational nature of God's promises to His people was revealed in detail. Immediately after the fall, His promise of a Redeemer, One who would resolve the issue of Sin and sins that had separated man from his Creator was given to Adam and Eve. In Genesis we learned of the promise to Abraham of an enduring Seed and a land that was his to possess forever. We saw Jacob, Isaac, and Joseph, living in light of God's commitment to them of earthly rewards. To the sons of Israel, God sent a governing body of Law through His servant, Moses, that covered every aspect of their life, social, governmental, and worship. We followed their move into bondage in Egypt and out through the parted waters, then on to the land of promise.

When we left Genesis, our next study was the letter of James to those Jews who had been in Jerusalem to experience the advent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2). James admonished them to continue to approach God on the grounds of peace and grace and avoid the temptation of returning to temple worship based on the Law. The core of his message is that new faith in the accomplished and finished work of Christ demanded new work (responses) or they would find that their faith without the works of Christ from within would be totally unproductive (dead).

First and Second Peter expanded on that theme; both letters still directed to Jews scattered—First Peter directed to all who were exposed to the explosive ministry of the Holy Spirit, and Second Peter directed particularly to those who had excepted that ministry of reconciliation and understood the difference.

After a brief overview of Hebrews, our detailed study of Romans laid the Gospel of Grace apart from the Law clearly in front of us and Galatians was a harsh repudiation of those who would ensnare Gentiles, who were never under obligation to the Law, in the condemnation for sure failure.

Rarely does the right message merge with the perfect point in time based on thorough preparation for a study like we face today. I cannot think of any group that is so prepared for this study in Hebrews 5 and 6. It is my opinion that the core of the Gospel as it was presented, first to His own, and then to the Gentile masses, is hanging in the balance right here. It is the balancing stone, the fulcrum of history, from a doctrinal perspective. The Holy Spirit is presenting to men the inevitable result of ignoring the Gospel as revealed to man on the Father's direction. It is the final warning to those who would choose the bondage of Law to the freedom of Grace. These two chapters are worthy of a lifetime of study.

Introduction to Division 3:

In His ascension into Heaven, the true and eternal sanctuary for man, Jesus opened the door for all who are identified with Him to enter. It is through the entry of the Last Adam into glory that we who are descendants of the first Adam have a clear pathway to that which God promised those who had faith. All of the Old Testament Priesthood pointed to that which was to come at some future point. All of the sacrifices made under the Law given to Moses spoke of that perfect Sacrifice which God required in order to have the crushing burden of penalty for Sin removed. Those who practiced such religious fidelity saw the need constantly repeat its demands, for the blood of bulls and goats could never accomplish the removal of Sin and its stains. Now, the writer of Hebrews says, there has been offered the perfect sacrifice, Jesus, who gave Himself in a single, unrepeatable act, to put away Sin forever and remove any residual spot that might mar humanity. What a contrast! The Law and its sacrifices were but shadow forms of the reality of Christ. What folly it would be to go back to those shadowy forms of religious practice instead of dwelling in the light of the risen Lamb. In the first case, one must stand on the ground of anticipation of deliverance; in the second case, one stands on the ground of peace with God and freedom from Sin.

Subdivision One Chapter 4:14-7: *The Priest Upon the Throne*

Introduction to Subdivision One:

As will be seen, the One on the throne of Heaven is the “High Priest” of God. It is He who rules from a seat over all of creation. Though He was made to be flesh in every sense that we are flesh, yet He was not touched by the Old Adamic Nature (for His father was God, not man). So, our heavenly High Priest is Man as envisioned by our Heavenly Father. It is to that perfect Man that we are now joined in inseparable union. If we could but live in light of that accomplished fact!

Section One, Chapter 4:14-5:10 The Priest Called of God

A Throne of Grace 4:14-16

It is precisely because we have such a “**great high priest**” that we should possess our Christian faith with confidence and assurance of our eternal salvation. It is the Man, Jesus, who has “**passed into the heavens,**” where our life is now centered. Because He is God’s appointed Priest, He makes powerful and continual intercession on our behalf with the Father. It is as His righteousness that we are presented to the Father, for we have been made righteous in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21). Our “**boldness**” to approach the “**throne of grace**” can only grow out of that righteous standing. There is no cowering here, as guilty, indicted sinners, but as those who have come through the death of the cross and have ascended by the victorious Lord Jesus. Now, mind you, this is being said to those, whose entire experience in the past has been one of

separation from God by the veil of the Temple and before that, in the tabernacle. Even the Ark of the Covenant was historically covered when it moved from location to location by the scarlet and purple veil of separation. Now Paul is telling them to approach the throne of God boldly! We simply cannot know the magnitude of change this was for that first generation joined to Christ.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.
Hebrews 4:14-16

The Priesthood under the Law 5:1-4

Priesthood assumes a people reconciled unto God. The intercessory work of the Priest is the necessary link between those two, God and man; without that work, the two would never be able to come together in any kind of relationship. Note contrast—The high priest “taken from among men” was a man of great compassion because he “also is compassed with infirmity (sin). Thus, he had to make atonement for himself as well as for the people. Christ, too, was taken from among men (by means of the incarnation) but, His office is heavenly, and His ministry is there before the Father. It is based on His work here, but is carried out there, where we, whose citizenship is entirely heavenly, need His representation forever. Another contrast—Aaron was “called of God” to be the High Priest over all Israel, and that was an earthly calling. Christ’s calling and appointment was from eternity past, when, in the bosom of the Father, He became the total manifestation of all that the Father would display of Himself to all creation, both earthly and heavenly.

For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man takes this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. Hebrews 5:1-4

Fulfillment in Christ 5:5-10

There are three elements in the fulfillment of the types of the Old Testament by the Lord Jesus Christ--First, His call and appointment by the Father. Second, the precise means by which He was “made to be sin for us, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”(2 Corinthians 5:21). Third, His being established by the Father, as a Man, in a position now exalted and acknowledged as the only One with the right to become our eternal intercessor.

The call v.5, 6

There is a tenet of Christian doctrine called *the doctrine of divine decrees*. It establishes the procession of decisions issuing from the mind of God acting in the persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. While God is but One in character or essence, the Godhead (the Holy Trinity) displays that character to man in three distinct Persons, each encompassing specific elements of the divine character for man to see. In this manner, we who are mere mortals may come to a more intimate knowledge of God and see Him at work in our lives. It was in response to that need on the part of man that the Son, that blessed second Person of the Trinity, expressed His obedience to the will of the Father and took on Himself the form of man. That willingness to obey on our behalf constituted the call of the Son. He, who was never not the Son of the Father, was begotten as a man, Son of God now flesh--*undiminished deity* and *fully human*.

So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. Hebrews 5:5

(5:6) Psalm 110 is a Psalm of David. It speaks of God the Father (“The Lord”) establishing Christ (“my Lord”) over all creation. It also includes this statement; *The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, “Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec”* (v.4). The Father recognizes the Son as occupying the place of a man--a man identified with another man, Melchisedec, who was acknowledged as a priest by Abraham, a priest *before* the Law was given through Moses. So, too, is Jesus the Priest of God apart from the Law, but by the appointment of the Father.

As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Hebrews 5:6

His humanity; suffering, subject to death, and deliverance by the Father v.7, 8

(5:7, 8) **“Who,”** refers back to Christ in verse five. Here we see the humanity (**“in the days of His flesh,”**) of the Lord Jesus as He offered **“prayers and supplications . . . strong crying and tears”** to the Father for deliverance from the crushing weight of sin which was to be placed on Him. Even in this state, He was still perfect in His obedience to the will of the Father. His suffering perfected Him in obedience. It is not enough to simply state that you are, or will be, obedient; you must act in obedience when put to the test. That is the lesson for us to learn from this example set by the Son of the Father. But, even more to the point of our experience, it was Jesus, the Last Adam, who was the obedient Son of God come in flesh—He is the source of our life and salvation. This point is virtually lost to the Church today; a message unheard from pulpits. More often than not, the Jesus that is presented in sermon and song today is the historical Christ on His way to Calvary, not the ascended Man.

Who in the days of his flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, (and was heard because of His piety); although He was a Son, yet He learned obedience

from the things which He suffered; Hebrews 5:7, 8

Resurrected, perfected, and honored v.9, 10

(5:9, 10) **“Perfect”** carries the idea of being made *whole, mature, or complete*. **“Having been made”** says that this perfection was not something that He grasped or declared Himself to be, but something that the Father did in order that the Son might then become **“the author”** or source **“of eternal salvation.”** Salvation is the prize and obedience is the means of attainment while He who is **“called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec”** is the object of focus. While this might seem quite basic to us as Christians 2,000 years on this side of the cross, it was more startling to the Jew who depended throughout his entire history on the legitimacy of the Aaronic priesthood in order to be represented before God in the Holy Place and at the altar of sacrifice. The entire plan of salvation as presented to their forefathers is being scrapped, done away with, and rendered of no more effect by the truth that is here laid bare. The Aaronic order equaled the Law; they were semantically linked to the same concept. If Christ’s priestly function and authority derived from Melchisedec, rather than by Aaron, appointed under the Law, then Christ’s standing as our mediator antecedes the Law altogether. The transitional Jew would see this and appreciate it in ways that are forgotten to the Church today and that’s what makes this epistle so very precious. On the heels of James and First and Second Peter, this epistle finishes the instructions to that group who were once burdened with the Law’s requirements, but are now faced with the Gospel of Grace.

And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; called of God a high priest after the order of Melchisedec.
Hebrews 5:9, 10

Section 2. (Chapter 5:11-6:20)

The rejection of unbelief and the confirmation of faith

Introduction to Section 2

2 The number two (2) is associated negatively with contrast, conflict, or division, and positively with, multiplication, strengthening, or expansion. Here we shall see that whoever opposes God in unbelief is rejected and that whatever is in disagreement with correct doctrine is also condemned by God and should be isolated from believers. To fail to exercise discernment is to allow that which describes the Savior (sound doctrine) to creep into the beliefs of the Body of Christ. In this case, unbelief of the Gospel is expressed by a return to Jewish practices of worship as governed by the Law.

1. Judaism is the Foundation of the Introduction of Christ Chapter 5:11-6:8

It is important to get a clear overview of the unfolding story of the Christ. His coming was foretold to Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15) established in the lineage of Israel and thoroughly illustrated by the life of the priest, Melchisedec. The whole of Jewish worship as proscribed by the Law was designed to hold before the faithful of Israel a picture of the coming Savior, the Messiah, the Lamb of God, the perfect sacrifice of which the daily sacrifices were only a shadow.

1. Babes in Christ 5:11-14

A list of characteristics of infants begins with a ‘short attention span.’ These believers are “**dull of hearing.**” They do not want to work so hard at learning the things now expected of them by God. They have grown up on the traditions of the Law, and now do not want to have to learn an entirely new set of rules and guides to righteousness. There is much that they need to hear of the Priesthood of Christ after the pattern of Melchisedec, but it is hard to interpret in words that they can understand and that is compounded by the fact that they are tired of listening, much less studying.

While they “**should be teachers,**” they are demonstrating a need for someone to teach them the very first things from their primer of doctrines of the Law, “**the oracles of God.**” Those “**first things**” are compared to “**milk**” suitable for babies. They cannot understand the “**solid food**” doctrines of grace, forgiveness, and living the life of Christ powered by the Holy Spirit, and their very dependence on principles of the Law as their ethic for living is evidence of their status as “**babes**” within the community of believers. The immature require rules imposed on them to govern their behavior and prevent them from doing harmful things. By contrast, the mature depend on their judgment, their understanding of the circumstance, the results of their action, and the consistency of their behavior with the character of Christ. Reverting to living under the Law negates all of the prerogatives gained by maturity. This is true in life generally and is specifically true of believers.

What is the activating factor in this continuum of growth from being a babe to a mature believer? It is application, exercise, experience--the process of learning of Christ by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit and, in faith, applying that new knowledge to the situation to face right at the moment.

What did Paul tell the believers in Rome? “Tribulation brings patience, and patience brings proof and proof brings hope and hope never causes us to be embarrassed or disappointed because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Romans 5:3-5). What is this but the individual honing of every believer by God in order to mold us into the depository of grace for which He saved us? Not by law, much less by the Law, but by *grace*. Called upon to testify publicly to our faith, what is the first feeling that we sense? It is usually one of embarrassment, a sense of inadequacy growing out of a sure knowledge that we cannot, out of our own resources, represent God to these people. We are forced to come face-to-face with how little we really know of the Sovereign of all creation. Well, I’ve got good news and bad news. The bad news (from a

“I thank my God at the whole remembrance of you. . .being confident of this very thing, that He, having begun in you a good work, will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:3,6).

purely human perspective) is that God is not going to allow you to languish in your ignorant state (see inset). Your experiences will pull you, either willingly or kicking and screaming, through the growth and discovery process. You see, God is faithful even when we are not and His faithful commitment to us is to complete us as His own children. He has (1) *declared us just*, (2) *rendered us righteous*, and (3) *placed us securely in His Son* with an eternal destiny.

Of whom we have much to say, and hard to be interpreted in words, since you have become dull in hearing. For when for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again which are the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. For every one that uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Hebrews 5:11-14

2. The danger of a return to Jewish practices. Chapter 6:1-8

(Heb 6:1, 2) It is significant that the **“first doctrinal principles”** have as their object **“the Christ.”** Use of the definite article **“the”** before Christ calls our attention specifically to the prophesied Messiah of Israel. The call then is to **“let us go on”** in a deliberate way and the goal of the effort is to attain to **“perfection.”** C.H.Mackintosh offers these comments: “There is not a single feature belonging to Christianity as distinct from Judaism in verses 1 and 2.” In other words, Macintosh is saying that in verses 1 and 2 the orientation is entirely associated with Israel under the Law. There is nothing there that is peculiar to, or intended to be owned by, the Church, the Body of Christ from Pentecost until His return. **“Repentance from dead works, faith toward God, baptisms (literally ‘washings’), laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and judgment”** are all precepts of the Law. He goes on; “In verses 4 and 5 there is not a single expression that rises to the height of the new birth or the sealing of the Spirit.”¹¹ This list of principles here in 1 and 2 is speaking of Levitical matters under the Law. Kenneth Wuest tells us that **“leaving”** is an aorist participle and that the action of the aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb, **“let us go on.”** **“Let us go on”** is in the passive voice, meaning that the subject, **“us,”** is being acted upon by some outside agent, **“let us be carried along.”** Since the aorist tense speaks of a once for all action, the verse could better be interpreted as:

Therefore, having abandoned once for all (leaving) the first doctrinal principles of the Christ, let us be carried along (go on) unto perfection; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. Heb.6:1, 2

(Heb 6:3) The apostle says that **“leaving”** these doctrines is exactly what he intends. He exhorts these Hebrews to **“abandon”** the Levitical animal sacrifices of the First Testament and to allow

¹¹C.H.M., *Short Papers*, p.127, Believers Bookshelf

themselves to “**be carried into**” the New Testament sacrifice, the Lord Jesus Christ. In 7:19 he will further explain that the Law of Moses, the Levitical Law, made nothing perfect (complete). That was not its purpose. If it was its purpose, then there would have been no need for any other priesthood, the work of the Aaronic priesthood would have been sufficient to remove sin. It was the inability of the Law to do anything about sin, which formed the basis for the Gospel. The Law delivered all the bad news that man could stand to hear; that he was thoroughly lost, condemned and totally incapable of doing anything about it. Thus, the *good news*, the Gospel as proclaimed by Christ to Israel and His disciples and to us by Paul, is that sin has been dealt with and sin’s power has been broken and no longer has any hold on us.

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

(Heb 6:4) **Right here is where most of the argument starts over just what this passage says to us--**Does “**once enlightened...have tasted...made partakers**” indicate that these have become believers and thus members of the Church of Jesus Christ? Or, do those terms describe the work of the Holy Spirit in *offering* to Jews the good news of the Gospel of the risen and ascended Christ? If the former is true, then you have accepted that a believer can come to know the Lord, though not fully, and subsequently lose salvation by falling away or rejecting the truth as revealed. Eternal security is then dependent upon *enduring* in the faith. On the other hand, if the latter is true, then you have accepted that the Gospel may be offered and if rejected possibly lead to a hardening of the heart towards repentance. I would like for you to consider yet another possibility.

First, consider that the recipients of Paul’s letter are Jewish. Some of them have accepted the risen Jesus as Lord and are, in fact, members of the Body of Christ. Others may be considering the claims of Christ, but have not moved to accept Him as Lord, considering Him the Messiah of Israel and themselves as faithful Jews. Members of this latter, Messianic group are in the throes of concern about *how* to worship. This local body, considered to be Christians, has departed from assembly on the Sabbath (the seventh day) and now meet on the Lord’s Day (the first day of the week) to commemorate Jesus’ resurrection. There is no presiding priest to receive and offer their sacrificial offerings (as was their habit to bring), nor is there any opportunity to receive the laying on of hands or the benefits they have always expected from the Levitical washings.

Second, there are new Christians, converted from the ranks of Judaism, who are finding it very difficult to give up their past habits of worship as defined in the Law and by tradition. It is part of their heritage and identification with their families.

In addition, there are some among this local body who are now listening to others who want them to retain their old traditions and practices of worship and essentially move them (the practices) into the arena of worship by the Church when it is gathered. They have memories of being led into experiences of repentance by the very observance of worship as inscribed by the Law and rabbinical practice. Tradition! Is it a stabilizing force against the onslaught of pagan practices? Or, is it a chain to the past that prevents further maturity and gaining new understanding?

I believe that the answer given here by Paul addresses all circumstances. True repentance means coming into agreement with God regarding sin and sins in the life of the believer. For the redeemed, it means to grasp the peace that is ours by means of the grace *in which we stand*, and *on that basis*, to worship the Father. The slain Messiah has risen as our victorious Lord, and the Law has been filled full and *completely satisfied*. **To go back and practice those elements of the Law, which were only shadow forms of Christ, is to accept symbolism over reality.**

First, you would have to turn away from the reality of the risen Lord and take the position of one waiting for His arrival. That can never bring the heart into agreement with the Father, at whose side the Son now stands in heaven. For the true believer, repentance can never be gained by those practices, because the Holy Spirit speaks only truth to our spirit as He enlightens and truth has moved beyond the Law. What did John tell us? “By Moses came the Law, but by Jesus Christ came grace and truth” (John 1:17).

But, even for those who have never become true believers there is a warning. Having heard the Gospel and having been brought face-to-face with the claims of Christ by the wooing of the Holy Spirit--these Jewish members of the assembly are on the horns of a dilemma. Those practices under the Law, which were effective avenues towards repentance in their past, are no longer to be honored by God as acts of acceptable worship because they require rejection of the work of Christ in satisfying the requirements of the Law. To offer yet another shadow sacrifice, whether it is a submission to Levitical baptism, a pronouncement by laying on of hands, or prayers for the resurrection of the dead, constitutes a denial of the absolute and final sacrifice, Jesus the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God. **Therefore, having heard the Gospel they are effectively cut-off from that practice, which gave them solace in the past, and now they are thrust upon the Gospel to accept or reject. There is no middle ground or alternate position to take.**

Listen up Church! What was true in Paul’s day is more so in ours; believers who would toy with Jewish practices, feasts, pageantry, Holy Day observances, dietary laws, etc., are moving onto the very same dangerous ground that Paul warned against in this first generation assembly. You do not, nay, you *cannot*, build the Body of Christ on a foundation of Jewish worship! Israel has an Earthly destiny, the Church, the Bride of Christ, has a heavenly destiny. Believing Israel celebrated their position of God’s elect among other men. The Believer today celebrates the position of the Last Adam at the right hand of God in heaven. One has the promise of a land, forever; the other, the promise of *union* with God in Christ.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. Heb. 6:4-6

(6:7-8) The analogy drawn here to make his point is to call attention to something that is common to man, rain! From the rain, which falls on all men, springs herbs for those who tend the ground,

and this is a **“blessing from God.”** But, that same rain also stimulates the growth of weeds and thorny bushes, **“whose end is to be burned.”** The lesson is sharp and clear—God brings experiences into the lives of all men, which bring them individually to a point of decision about the Son. Those who turn away and reject the truth when it is presented to them by the Holy Spirit will find that whatever standard or moral compass that they used to bring themselves into a perceived state of moral acceptability will be taken away. As the Jew is hoisted on the petard of the Law, so every man who rejects the Gospel is hoisted on his own standard of righteousness.

For the earth which drinks in the rain that comes often upon it, and brings forth herbs fit for them by whom it is dressed, receives blessing from God: But that which bears thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

Hebrews 6:7-8

2. Things that accompany salvation. Chapter 6:9-20

Lewis Sperry Chafer listed 33 things that every believer obtains at the moment of his/her personal salvation. Others have also identified many advantages that our position in Christ brings to us, both in time and for all eternity. Chafer’s list includes these elements of the believer’s Riches of Grace In Christ Jesus:

1. We are ***In the Eternal Plan of God***: Included in the plan of God, we are individually: *Foreknown*, “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom. 8:29). We are the *Elect*, “knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you;” (1 Thess. 1:4). We are *Predestined*, “being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the council of His own will.” (Eph. 1:11; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:5). Each of us has been *Chosen*, “For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt. 22:14). Each has been *Called by God*, “Faithful is He that calls you” (1 Thess 5:24).
2. We have been ***Reconciled***: Christ has broken down the barrier separating man from God and replaced it with His own life and death. First, we are reconciled by God, “And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 5:28,19; Col. 1:20). Second, we are reconciled to God, “Much more being reconciled to God (Rom 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:20).
3. We have been ***Redeemed***: By Christ’s death, we have been redeemed by God, “In whom we have redemption through His blood” (Col. 1:14). Further, we have been redeemed out of all condemnation, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).
4. We are now ***Related to God Through a Propitiation***: which means that Jesus Christ is both the means by God has been satisfied and the place where God is satisfied as to the demands of His perfect character. “And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).
5. ***All Sins are Covered By His Atoning Blood***; “Who His own self bare our sins in His body on the tree” (1 Pet. 2:24).
6. ***Vitally Conjoined to Christ for Judgment of the “Old Man” Unto a New Walk***: Through our union with Christ, we have been “Crucified with Christ,” “Knowing this, that

our old man was crucified with Him” (Rom. 6:6). We have been rendered dead with Christ; “knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him that our body of sin might be made powerless” (Rom. 6:6).

7. **We are Free From the Law.** When we were joined to Christ we were united with God’s perfect sacrifice, which totally satisfied the requirements of the Law. “Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die once and for all to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another” (Rom. 7:4).

8. **We Have Become Children of God.** We have been made alive by means of our rebirth as New Creation believers, members of God’s family. “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His Great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses and sins, made us alive together with Christ” (Eph. 2:4,5).

9. **Adopted (Placed as Adult Sons).** “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery for fear again, but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons” (Rom. 8:14,15)

10. **Acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.** It is the Father’s own declaration which states our acceptability. “But, by His (God’s) doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and human standards and sanctification and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30).

11. We have been **Justified.** To have been rendered free from sin establishes our relationship to our Heavenly Father; “Therefore having been justified once and for all by means of faith, we are continually at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).

12. We have been **Forgiven All Trespasses.** We have been declared free from any indictment for sin; there is no penalty due. “There is therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).

13. We have been **Brought Close** to God. In Christ we are identified with God’s perfect sacrifice and as such are always before the face of God. “But now, in Christ Jesus, you who were formerly far off (in Adam) have been brought close in the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13).

14. We are **Delivered From the Powers of Darkness.** Satan no longer has a claim on any believer. We cannot be taken again back into sin, for we have died to it. “For He delivered us from the authority of darkness and delivered us to the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Col. 1:13).

15. We have been **Translated Into the Kingdom.** Being in the Kingdom of God, we are to live in Him; “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him” (Col. 1:6).

16. We have been secured **On the Rock Christ Jesus** by means of our having been joined to Him by the Holy Spirit at the moment of our salvation.

17. We are the Father’s own and constitute **A Gift From God to Christ** in response to His work of grace on our behalf.

18. We have been spiritually separated from our position “in Adam” and totally identified with God through being **Circumcised in Christ**

19. Because we are joined to the appointed High Priest of Heaven, we are made to be **Partakers of the Holy and Royal Priesthood** of which Christ Heads.

20. Because we are the elect of God from the Cross to the Second coming of Christ, we are identified as **A Chosen Generation and a Peculiar People** called the “New Creation.”

21. *Having Access to God*
22. *Within the "Much More" Care of God*
23. *His Inheritance*
24. *Our Inheritance*
25. *A Heavenly Association*
26. *Heavenly Citizens*
27. *Of the Family and Household of God*
28. *Light in the Lord*
29. *Vitally United to the Father, Son, and Spirit*
30. *Blessed with the "First Fruits" and "Earnest" of the Spirit*
31. *Glorified*
32. *Complete in Him*
33. *Possessing Every Spiritual Blessing*

1. God is not unjust when He forgets the works of man.

Considering the cost of our salvation and the benefits available to us by God's redemptive work and mercy, there is no way that God can be called "**unjust**" when He "**forgets**" (overlooks) the works that these Hebrews performed in His name, but under the Law, and which, in many cases, were still being performed. That which was done under law is rewarded under law. "**But**" introduces a contrast and places emphasis on what the writer is going to say next--"**we earnestly hope that each one of you demonstrate the same diligence to the extent that you realize full assurance of hope.**" In other words; don't settle for less than all that you may gain by means of your having been joined to Christ. You cannot obligate God by works done in the past under the Law. Now, we might have some difficulty understanding the full implications of this particular entreaty because we were never born under obligation to the Law. But, this generation of Jewish converts had been, until the moment that they, individually, heard the Gospel of the risen Christ. This word of admonition is specifically to them. It does have application to us, however, because so many believers today want to insist on using the Law of Israel as a Christian ethic. It would not work when Paul wrote to these Jewish members of that local assembly and it certainly won't work today. His final word on the matter is this "***faith and patience brings an inheritance of the promises. Works are forgotten.***"

But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which you have showed toward his name, in that you have ministered to the saints in the past and continue to minister. And we earnestly desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that you not be slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Hebrews 6:9-12

2. The basis of Christian hope-God's promise. Chapter 6:13-20

When these Hebrews finally acknowledge that their relationship to God is no longer based on their deeds under the Law, even their obedience to it, they must have hope. Paul gives them the basis of that hope by taking them back to father Abraham. Prior to the Law being given, God **“made promise to Abraham.”** That dual promise of blessing and multiplication of Abraham’s seed includes these very Hebrews to whom the letter is addressed. They know this is true. Their life as **“heirs of promise”** is testimony to God’s faithful delivery of what He has promised. Further, it is a commitment based on his character, his omnipotence, his veracity, his unchanging nature, and his sovereignty. There was, nor is, any higher authority on which to swear.

Abraham’s part was that he **“patiently endured,”** he waited on God to deliver, he entered into an attitude and a place of rest. This is the meaning of Sabbath, a place and time of rest. To fully appreciate this, note that the full completion of God’s promise to Abraham would not take place until *the Seed*, the Lord Jesus Christ came as a man, was crucified, risen and ascended to the right hand of the Father as Sovereign of all creation. In Him, *the Seed of Abraham*, the promise to Eve of a deliverer¹² is fulfilled. In Him, *the Seed of Abraham*, the remnant of Israel (believing Jews) are redeemed to live forever on the new Earth with David as their King and Christ as Lord. To Him, *the Seed of Abraham*, the Church is joined as His bride, becoming one with Him and is *the spiritual seed of Abraham*, reigning in the risen Jesus from His Father’s house, over all creation, forever. Since this is based on the **“immutability (unchanging nature)”** of God it has been so from the beginning. The **“two immutable things”** are, (1) His nature, and (2) His Word. He does not change, and He does not lie!

For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Hebrews 6:13-18

(6:19) Now there is drawn a mental picture before these Hebrews of what Paul is attempting to get them to understand. He uses phrases from life on or next to the sea. Of **“sure”** Wuest says, “It speaks of something that cannot be made to totter when put to the test. What is being put to the test? The **“an anchor of the soul”** *hōs agkuron tēs psuchēs*.” This does not say that we are sure when put to the test, but the **“anchor”** most certainly remains *unshaken*. **“Both sure and steadfast”** *asphalē te kai bebaian* refers to an ability to keep on going when challenged by a load. Again, it does not say that we will never falter, but that the **“anchor”** will meet the challenge and not ‘totter,’ *sphallō*. Now, where is that “anchor” located? It is **“within the veil”** *to esōteron tou*

¹² Genesis 3:15

katapetasamatos, speaking of the veil separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. The veil of the temple had been ripped from top to bottom on the day of crucifixion, but until that moment, only the high priest of Israel could enter that chamber with the blood of sacrifice to make atonement for the sins of Israel. Now, the veil of separation is one of unbelief, through which everyone must go in order to enter God's Kingdom. Jesus is the **"forerunner"** *prodromos*, having been **"made a high priest forever"** *archiereus eis ton aiōna* (thus qualified to enter the Holiest of Holies) and now has entered into **"that place within the veil"** his heavenly home. He is that "anchor"--our hope!

Which hope we continually have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which anchor enters into that place within the veil; where the forerunner for us is entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.
Hebrews 6:19, 20

(7:1-4) **"Salem"** is a synonym for Jerusalem (from Uru-salim, "City of Peace").¹³ Melchisedec is both the ruler of Jerusalem and a priest who worshiped God (Gen. 14:18 "El Elyon"). He recognizes the God of Abram as "El Elyon," **"the most high God."** As Abram is returning with all the goods that were taken from both Sodom and Gomorrah, both Melchisedec and Bera, the King of Sodom, come out to meet the victorious army. Melchisedec brings out bread and wine for the returning warriors and greets them with a blessing and thanks to God. In respect of this, Abram gives Melchisedec a **"tenth"** *dekatēn* of all that they have brought back. Bera, in contrast, suggests that Abram should give all the people over to him and **"take the goods for [himself],"** an offer that is summarily rebuffed. Abram says that he **"will not take a thread or a sandal thong"** from the goods of the King of Sodom.¹⁴

For this Melchizedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abides a priest continually. Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. Hebrews 7:1-4

(7:5-6) Now, here is a great paradox (says the writer to the Hebrews)--Out of the sons of Levi, the priests of Israel were chosen and appointed to **"the office of the priesthood"** *tēn hieraterian* (lit. 'the priest's office'). In their office, the Law allowed them to take **"tithes"** from the Israelites (**"their brethren"** *adelphous*) for their sustenance, even though they all came **"from the loins of Abraham."** In contrast, Abram met this priest, Melchizedec, and paid a tenth part (a

¹³Unger's Bible Dictionary, Moody Bible Institute Press, 1957.

¹⁴Genesis 14:23

tithe) to him, even though he was not a descendent of Abraham, the source of the promises of God's blessings to them all. Why is this important?--Because the priesthood of Israel had become a privileged class who "took" from the people without delivering them the blessings of Abraham. The writer of the letter is stressing that the principle of blessing delivered from God is to be the basis of honor in the form of their "tithes" and that they should look *outside the camp* for God's answers to their needs.

(Heb 7:5 KJV) And those who truly are of the sons of Levi who receive the office of the priesthood, have commandment according to the Law to take tithes of the people, that is, of their brethren, although they have come out of the loins of Abraham: but the one whose descent is not traced from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. And as I may so say, Levi also, who received tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him. Hebrews 7:5-10

(7:11) **"If"** is a second class conditional clause that assumes a negative; [*If, and it is not true*] that **"perfection [completeness] were by [through] the Levitical priesthood,"** then **"what further need was there that a priest of a different kind should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?"** **"Another"** is *heteros* and means [*of a different kind*]. They needed to see that the Levitical priesthood and their sacrificial system did not ever make one complete or perfect before God. They were but shadows, illustrating the real, which was yet to come. Because of that, the real sacrifice would require a perfect priest. That priest would not be a descendent of Aaron in substance or practice.

If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?
Hebrews 7:11

(7:12-16) The point of argument is quite simple: If there is a change of priesthood from one under the Law (who administered the rites prescribed by the Law) to another, appointed apart from the Law; then, is there not a necessary change in the force and authority of the Law itself? The implied answer is, of course! The Law defined the priest and the priest enacted the Law. If a priest enters who meets every requirement of the Law, without exception, then is not the Law completely satisfied and in need *not of one to fulfill* its demands, but of one who *embodies* it in whole? In other words,

the Law is no longer a standard, which is to be met,
but a standard achieved and exceeded.

A second point is that every tribe of Israel is represented before the altar prescribed by the Law, in

the persons of the priesthood defined by the Law. God had separated the Levites unto Himself that they should represent all their brethren by tribal distinction, in their duties and functions in the Tabernacle. All Israel could identify with the priests who performed the rituals of sacrifice and offerings. However, no one of them (the priests) could finally settle the demands made upon all Israel by the Law. One came who did do just that. That priest, appointed outside the tribes, does not represent any one of them, but some other body of men. That assembly is the Body of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Church, the assembly of souls of just men made perfect. He was the priest after the order or **“similitude of Melchizedec”** rather than after the order of Aaron.

For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertains to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there arises another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Hebrews 7:12-16

(7:17) From Psalm 110:4 the prophecy of Christ’s priesthood is cited as marking this sweeping change in the appointment of the High Priest from outside the Aaronic line, **“disannulling”** (setting aside) that provision of the law in order to usher in a **“better hope”** for the people of God. That **“better hope”** is rooted in the fact that the Law was totally satisfied and it had no lingering claim on man; there was no penalty that it could require, because its demands were fully and finally met. That change applied first to Israel, if they would but accept it, as they were the first to whom the offer of grace came (John 3:14, 15). But, specifically to the Church of the New Testament (Acts 2:ff), this is the door to *new creation*¹⁵ hope and salvation through rebirth. Through that salvation, the means of regeneration, and the fact of reconciliation, we are drawn near to God. This is a concept that has to be continually presented to those born under the Law, because they have a history and tradition of living separated from God, even as His chosen people. God rested in their past, behind the veil, on Holy ground, and accessible only by their High Priest who offered the sacrificial blood of atonement. They had no national conscience of oneness with God.

For he testifies, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. For, there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by which we draw nigh unto God. Hebrews 7:17-19

The appointment of Christ is superior to the appointment of the sons of Aaron

(7:20-22) In previous verses, the argument is that a change in priests brings a change in the Law

¹⁵ Galatians 15-Paul emphasizes that the requirement of circumcision has now become passé, and the only thing relevant to life in Christ is the new creation rebirth of the believer on this side of the ascension.

under which he serves. Now the question is, ‘who appointed this Priest’ (speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ)? His appointment was on the basis of **“an oath.”** It was Jehovah who swore; **“Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.”** On the basis of God the Father’s stated decree, Jesus of Nazareth was made a Priest, a **“guarantor of a better testament”** than the one then in existence, the Mosaic Law!

And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord swore and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:) By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. Hebrews 7:20-22

The Result of His Resurrection

(7:23-25) As proof of the sweeping change in their tradition and history, they are reminded that the priests of Israel have all died. But, in contrast, Jesus rose from the dead and lives to continue His priestly service of intercession. His office is **“un changeable”** though His work of atonement is complete. There is that sense in which He is continually saving those who are continually coming to Him. That is not to say that our salvation is dependent on our continuing to persevere, for that would deny our union in His death, but that there are those continuing to come to Him out from lost mankind and He is continuing to receive them to Himself. Because one comes to Him, he is saved **“to the uttermost,”** secured unto God, reborn, and forevermore a new creation. That is an irreversible fact of eternal proportions.

And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continues ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:23-25

(7:26-28) Not only is His priesthood different because He lives, but it is qualitatively superior to that of the Aaronic line. As to His person, He is **“holy”** *hagios*, set apart to God’s purpose; He is **“harmless”** (lit. innocent), the Law having no claim on Him through His own life; He is **“undefiled,”** by His actions as a man He never breached the requirements of the Law under which He was born. He is **“separate from sinners,”** though He lived and moved among them, He never became one of them by partaking of their sinfulness. Therefore, it was necessary that, on the Cross “He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). Now, He has been placed, exalted, **“higher than the heavens”** as the Lord of all creation. His work of sacrifice is finished and it was on the basis of the decree of the Father that He was appointed to His task.

For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needs not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the

word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore. Hebrews 7:26-28

The Better Covenant 8:1-13

Priesthood and Promise 8:1-7

(8:1, 2) Of those qualities listed in v.26, 27, the point is; **“We have just such a high priest”** one who meets all those qualifications and who has now taken a position **“on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.”** The point of the verse is that the priest under law was identified on earth as a man, but has not, still as a man, taken a heavenly position. This points to the ascension of the Lord Jesus, our High Priest. Further, he is a **“minister of the sanctuary”** that is in heaven. He is not a minister of the Tabernacle built by man, even though at God’s specific direction, His is the sanctuary built by God within the heart of redeemed mankind.

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Hebrews 8:1, 2

(8:3-5) The function of the **“high priest,”** the very purpose to which he **“is ordained,”** is **“to offer gifts and sacrifices”** to God. It follows, then, that the Lord Jesus Christ, as mankind’s High Priest, has both gifts and sacrifices to offer to the Father. Now, if He were on the earth in the day that this was written, He would not be acceptable as a priest under the law, for those sons of Aaron already occupied that position. So, of what then, is He the High Priest? What is the basis of His authority? The Aaronic priesthood was very rigidly contained in the patterns given to Moses on the Mount by God. The Law then defined in painstaking detail the rule of life for both the sons of Aaron and the sons of Israel before whom the priests ministered.

For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man should have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. Hebrews 8:3-5

(8:6-7) The answer to the question regarding the source of His authority is that **“He is the mediator of a better covenant”** than the Mosaic Law. While the first covenant had its promises, the second had **“better promises.”** The inference is drawn (says Paul) that **“if the first covenant had been without fault, then there would have been no place sought for the second covenant.”**

But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

Hebrews 8:6, 7

The Mosaic Covenant Superseded 8:8-13

(8:8-13) Where was the fault found? It was in the sons of Israel—they simply could not, nor would not, meet its high demands of righteousness and perfect justice. So the promise of a both a new day and a **“new covenant with the house of Israel,”** was made by God—not on the same terms as that made to the fathers of these Jews, **“because they did not continue”** in the covenant that God made with them. This **“new covenant”** will be on different terms altogether. There are three particulars to this new covenant mentioned here—(1) it is to be *“with the house of Israel;* (2) it is *yet future;* and, (3) it will be *“after those days,”* referring to the passing of a specific series of events or days. Newell says, “that is, when the present dispensation has passed and other circumstances have come in—the “good things that are to come” (9:11; 10:1).¹⁶ The conditions under that new covenant are quite different from those under the first—God’s laws will be **“put into their minds,”** and written **“in their hearts.”** They will, **“from the least to the greatest,”** know God as Lord. **“Their unrighteousness”** will be met with mercy, and their sins and their iniquities will *not be remembered* ever again.

For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, a new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away. Hebrews 8:8-13

The Better Sanctuary 9:1-10

The Sanctuary under the Mosaic Covenant 9:1-5

(9:1-5) The first covenant was tied inseparably to the Tabernacle, for it was there that God chose to dwell among men—without the tabernacle, there would have been no presence of God in their midst. It was truly the *tent of meeting*. The book of Leviticus is a detailed account of the divine service and ordinances that were conducted there in the midst of the camp of the sons of Israel. The tent of meeting was a grand type, a display in shadow form, of all that God intended to do in the world of men. From the courtyard with the Brazen Altar, the sons of Aaron entered the first compartment, the Holy place. There, they found the golden table on which the twelve loaves were arranged on their golden plates, each representing one of the tribes of Israel, God’s

¹⁶ William R. Newell, *Hebrews Verse by Verse*, p167, Baker, 1947

provision for all mankind, each in its particular place, flavored with myrrh and oil. Then, they saw the golden candlestick, the light of the Gospel, and that God had chosen to dwell with men, and finally, the great veil that shielded the priests of men from the presence and holiness of God. Behind that great veil, on which was embroidered the name of God, there was the Holy of Holies, that inner compartment in which stood the Ark of the Covenant with its three objects inside—Aaron's rod that budded, the tablets of stone on which the 10 words were written, and a golden bowl of manna—each of these objects represented Israel's gross national sin, their failure to trust God! The lid of the Ark had a raised part in the middle called the "Mercy Seat" and it was shadowed by the wings of two cherubim, who looked down into the Ark at the representations of Israel's sin. These are the guardians of the justice and righteousness of God, His holiness, and they look down in judgment on the sins of Israel.

Then the first covenant indeed had both ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made, the first, in which were both the candlestick, and the table, and also the setting forth of the loaves, which is called the sanctuary (*Ayia*, "Holy"). And after the second veil, the tabernacle that is called the Holiest of all, which had the golden censer, and the Ark of the Covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Hebrews 9:1-5

A temporary ritual 9:6-10

(9:6-10) It was into the Holy Place that the sons of Aaron went to serve God, by sprinkling the blood of the offerings before the Lord and on the horns of the Altar of Incense—and this they did on a daily basis. But, it was only the High Priest of Israel who could enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement with the blood of the sacrifice for both himself and for all Israel. He alone could go beyond the veil of separation, a picture constantly before the sons of Israel that the way into the presence of God was not yet revealed. That did not change as long as the "first tabernacle" remained as the dwelling place of God; but when the veil was rent at the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ, the way in was opened to every man, never again to be closed. The imperfect sacrifices paled and passed into history in the light of the perfect Lamb of God. The "washings" from the water of the laver gave way to the washing in the blood of the Lamb.

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. Hebrews 9:6-10

The Better Sacrifice 9:11-10:18

The *validity* of the New Sacrifice 9:11-14

(9:11-14) Christ came, and assumed the duties of **“a high Priest,”** ministering first to the sons of Israel those **“good things to come”** at Pentecost. The **“tabernacle”** in which He ministered was **“not made with hands,”** but was the eternal presence of the Father. Into that presence, He bore his own blood, once and for all satisfying the judgment of a righteous Father and the Law that defined sin and sins. Having rendered us clean before the Father, He **“purged”** the consciences of those sons of Israel from their **“dead works”** of the Law in order that they might **“serve the living God.”** By the same manner, He purged the consciences of Gentiles from their dead works, by which they intended to earn their way into God’s grace.

But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Hebrews 9:11-14

The *necessity* for the New Sacrifice 9:15-22

(9:15-22)

And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they, which are called, might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator lives. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament, which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. Hebrews 9:15-22

The *finality* of the New Sacrifice 9:23-10:18

(9:23) The implication of God’s work on earth in matters that are entirely heavenly is referenced here. It was not only the resolution of man’s dilemma with sin that pointed to the Cross; but, it

was the resolution of conflict **“in the heavens.”** In fact, the writer says, these things which we see on earth are a **“pattern” (a copy) of things in the heavens.”** There is a temple of God in heaven (Rev. 11:19) and it is there that the God of all creation is to be worshiped by all in heaven and on earth. What we see here is only part of the picture of God’s unfolding truth.

After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, and the seven angels who had the seven plagues, came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their breasts with golden girdles,
Revelation 15:6,7

The sacrifices that were made in the earthly tabernacle and temple are but copies of things that exist in God’s heavenly kingdom. The sin with which we are plagued is a copy of the original sin committed in heaven by Lucifer. The physical sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God was a pattern of the spiritual **“better”** sacrifice He made before the Father to cleanse the heavenly temple.

It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.
Hebrews 9:23

(9:24) Therefore, when Christ rose from the tomb and ascended into heaven, it was because the work of sanctification of the patterns of things on earth had been completed. Then, He entered the **“true”** holy place, in heaven, where He now appears **“in the presence of God for us.”** Think of this, Child of God. We have been taken by Jesus, our Lord, from this world of copies and patterns and set before God the Father, in the Son.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Hebrews 9:24

So the reality that must be associated with the death of Christ, if we are to communicate a true picture of truth, is that when Christ dealt with the question of Sin, it was on the basis of Sin both on earth and in heaven. Christ’s sacrifice had effects that were far above any conditions that we might experience. He totally resolved the violation and corruption of sin before the Father, both in heaven and on earth.

(9:25-28) Now, the priests of Israel were only copies of the great High Priest, and were practicing their office in a **“copy”** of the temple of God, which is in heaven. First, this **“copy”** was the tabernacle in the wilderness. Later, it was the Temple in Jerusalem. As the glory of God filled the heavenly temple, so did the Shekinah glory fill the tabernacle and temple on Earth.

But, in the cycle of the year of worship, the high priest on earth would enter the Holy of Holies **“every year”** bringing the blood of the sacrifice for the sins of Israel to pour out on the Mercy

Seat and the four horns of the Ark of the Covenant. No so with the perfect Lamb of God. Jesus, having sacrificed Himself on the Cross, rose from the grave and ascended into heaven to take His place in the Heavenly Temple.

In His singular death, He identified with all mankind, Adam's progeny, in order to **“put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”** Note that He is not *covering* sin with His blood; He is putting it **“away.”** Remember the words of John,

**“Behold the Lamb of God who
takes away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29)**

How radical a concept was this to Jews considering the Gospel? Well, remember that in the Holy of Holies, behind the veil, where only the High Priest could enter, rested the Ark of the Covenant.

In the Ark were three items: Aaron's rod that budded, a Golden bowl of manna, and the Tablets of the Law. Those three items represented Israel's greatest periods of corporate, utter, failure as a people chosen by God. On top of the Ark was the Mercy Seat, over which the wings of the two Cherubim were spread. They looked down to the Mercy Seat and into the Ark and represented the Justice and Righteousness of God judging the sins of the people. When the High Priest brought the blood of the sacrifice into the Holy of Holies, he sprinkled it upon the Mercy Seat. Thus, when the Cherubim (Justice and Righteousness) looked down at the sins of the nation, they saw the blood placed there by the high priest and **“atonement”** satisfied their demands because the sins of Israel were *covered by the blood*.

Because our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus, has entered the heavenly Holy of Holies, bringing the blood of His sacrifice with Him, we enter clothed in His righteousness. The entire scene has **finality** written all over it! His work is complete!

Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Hebrews 9:25-28

(10:1-3) Compare that completed work of Christ with the Law. Because it was only a **“shadow,”** it did not reveal the whole work. Therefore, it was necessary to repeat its acts often, in order to stimulate the consciences of Israel to their sin and sinfulness over and over again. If the sacrificial practices of the Law could make one righteous, then a single performance is all that would ever have to be experienced by any Israelite. But, that was not the case; so they were repeated over and over to draw attention to sin.

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the

comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.
Hebrews 10:1-3

(10:4-6) Consider also that the **“blood of bulls and of goats”** did not **“take away”** sins, but it covered those sins with the blood of a sacrifice in order to make atonement. The sins of Israel were covered by the blood of the sacrificial animals as a type of the life and death of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. **“No pleasure”** literally means *no satisfaction*. God was never expiated by those animal sacrifices. It took the blood of the body of His only begotten Son to assuage the guilt of man, remove the stain of sin, and take the sin away from man forever.

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.
Wherefore when he comes into the world, he says, Sacrifice and offering you would not, but a body have you prepared for me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you have had no pleasure. Hebrews 10:4-6

(10:7) Speaking of Christ, the words of the Psalmist (40:7, 8) echo across the prophetic years to underscore the uniqueness of the sacrifice He came to make on behalf of mankind, all according to the will of the Father. It was difficult for the Old Testament Jew to understand the full implications of verses like these because they did not have a clear vision of the promised Messiah coming as the Only Begotten Son of God, a Man, completely submissive to the will of Jehovah, offering forgiveness and mercy to their enemies as He brought salvation to the chosen people.

Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Hebrews 10:7

(10:8, 9) **“Thou would not,”** means that God the Father did not order these sacrifices to be performed nor would He take satisfaction from them. It was simply not **“allowable”** by God. The Law was given in response to the demand of the people of Israel for governance; Exodus 19 makes this quite clear. Nothing about the Law, or anything provided by the Law was ever intended to, nor could it, provide satisfaction to our righteous God. The works of the Law were always only shadows of the real, the incarnate Christ, the Last Adam. Therefore, in doing the will of the Father, the Son **“takes away”** the Law and its shadow forms in order that He might **“establish”** or make real, the second, which was the sacrifice demanded by a just and righteous God.

Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou would not, neither had pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He takes away the first that he may establish the second.
Hebrews 10:8, 9

(10:10) Thus, it is through the will of the Father that **“we are sanctified”** (set apart) as now free

from sin and its definition, the Law, and it was accomplished **“through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.”** **“Once for all”** has a twofold application. First, it is a measure of the all-encompassing scope of forgiveness that is available to mankind in the sacrifice of Jesus.

There is no sin that has *not* been atoned for
by His blood!

Does that not tell us that no man or woman is condemned because of sin, but because they reject the payment for their sins made by God’s own Son. That is the ultimate rejection of grace. Therein rests the salvation of those who live in innocence, babies, toddlers, and those who might be mentally challenged. Who are those in this great company? No man knows, but the Father knows exactly who they are and His perfect justice prevails. It would be presumptuous to suggest, as some do, that all who are the Father’s elect are granted the mental capacity to understand the historical Jesus like most in the Church of Jesus Christ. Second, it is a statement of the finality of the sacrifice made by Jesus. There is no small act, no garnish, or no additional touch, which can be, may be, or should be added to that supreme sacrifice. Total satisfaction of the demands of righteousness and unyielding justice were met on the Cross. To suggest that there is even a modicum of merit or value in anything that man might do, in addition to that which He did, as a man, is to do unspeakable violence to the very concept of Grace. Our role is to receive. Our privilege is to take the offer of mercy and accept the gift of salvation that is free to us, but so horrendously costly to our Savior.

By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Hebrews 10:10

(10:11-13) A contrast is drawn between the Aaronic priest, who **“stands every day”** doing the works of the Law for his brethren and **“offering over and over the same sacrifices.”** This was a process that left every site occupied by the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and eventually the Temple mound, soaked in the blood of bulls and goats. What a grave, but glorious, picture that presented to men. But they could **“never take away sins.”** This is why the practices of the Law are so empty. It is why the Church of the ascended Lord Jesus cannot allow their assemblies to degenerate into the pageantry and celebrations associated with that period when only shadow forms existed. All of their celebrations looked forward to Calvary, while we stand on that ground—the ground of peace accomplished—and look up. We do have a risen Lord, not one approaching the Cross, but rather One risen from the death that it imposed (for as Luther said “Our spouse is a bloody husband to us.”¹⁷ Let us live in total recognition of that blessed fact in everything that we do. Once that work was finished, our Lord took His place at the **“right hand”** of the Father. There He waits until, at the Father’s direction, His enemies will be **“made His footstool.”** But know this, “He will not let us have this world until He has it. His day is at

¹⁷ Exodus 4:25 This brings Sarah’s retort to Abraham to mind on the occasion of Isaac’s circumcision, “Thou art a bloody husband to me.”

hand, and for that day He waits.”¹⁸

And every priest stands daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. Hebrews 10:11-13

(10:14-18) It was by means of that **“one offering”** of Himself that He **“perfected”** (made complete) **“forever”** those of us **“that are set apart (sanctified)”** unto God. They, and we, are reminded that this is what the **“Holy Ghost”** was given to signify as a down payment (earnest) on all that we are to inherit as heirs of God. As far as the Israelite was concerned, this is the new **“covenant”** that embodies the laws of God **“written into their hearts and in their minds.”** On God’s part, He states that; **“their sins and iniquities I will remember no more.”** Since there is no more sin, there is no longer a penalty. So there is **“no more offering for sin.”**

For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.
Hebrews 10:14-18

The Practical Consequences Chapter 10:19-12:29

(10:19-22) At the moment of Christ’s death on the Cross, the veil separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place in the Temple was rent from top to bottom. Man was no more prevented from entering onto that holy ground, where only the High Priest of Israel could previously go with the blood of atonement. It signified in such finality that God had opened access to His very presence to every man who would come in faith and approach the throne, because the perfect sacrifice had been made, once for all mankind and forever. Therefore, we have the privilege of entering into His presence with **“boldness.”** The veil of separation represented the whole of the Law. It defined what was not acceptable to God, what kept man apart from a righteous God. That veil has now been replaced by the body of the Lord Jesus. His life, His sacrifice has set aside the Law as any rule of life for the believer and is the **“new and living way”** of approach to the Father. The ascended Jesus is the **“high Priest over the house of God.”** The confidence of our faith is based on the fact that He gives us the desires of our hearts and compels us through a cleansed conscience. For us to continue to harbor guilt for sins committed is tantamount to denying the efficacy of the sacrifice He made for those very sins. So, it is with profound gratitude that we accept His mercy, His unmatched love, and His gift of faith, which we then return to Him and to God the Father in moment-by-moment trust.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a

18 Andrew Jukes, *The Law of the Offerings*, p.205)

new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Hebrews 10:19-22

(10:23-25) Having accepted the gift of faith, given to us by God, we are to **“hold fast”** (draw it close) knowing that **“He is faithful”** to keep us in it. That outworking of trust based on faith is to take two pathways in our lives; one; we should be always considering how to **“provoke”** (stimulate) one another to **“love and good works.”** And, two, we should meet together for the purpose of mutual encouragement (**“exhorting one another”**).

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised). And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. Hebrews 10:22-25

(10:26, 27) Here is the same lesson that was presented in chapter 7. Once you have seen the Gospel of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ in payment for the full penalty for sin as specified in the Law, for that is **“the knowledge of the truth,”** you cannot go back to the sacrifices of the Law, those sin offerings of the past, which covered the sins of the faithful. The veil has been rent, the priesthood has had its office fulfilled, the demands of the Law have been met, and there is no longer any work that man can or should do. There is no judicial place for penance. There is no judicial merit in remorse. There is only the outworking of faith, which itself was a gift of God. That faith will keep us objectively centered on Christ while the world around us deteriorates and constantly moves away from His provision.

For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Hebrews 10:26, 27

(10:28-30) If the Law was harsh, in that those who broke it **“died without mercy”** on the testimony of **“two or three witnesses,”** how much more worthy of punishment is that one who, having seen the Gospel of the saving sacrifice of Christ, **“the Son of God,”** and then declared that selfless act, which set mankind apart from sin (**“sanctified”**), to be **“an unholy thing?”** It is because they have been given so much that they are held accountable. The principle again is apparent:

WITH KNOWLEDGE COMES RESPONSIBILITY!

The **“Spirit of grace”** has presented the freedom of the Gospel individually to men. To reject the person of the Lord Jesus as the substitutionary sacrifice for one’s own sin is to declare Him unacceptable and declare the blood, which established the covenant of God with man, ineffective. This is going to incur the sure judgment and wrath of God, for **“vengeance belongs unto Me, I will recompense”** is His promise. He is the **“judge”** of His people.

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, do you suppose, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that has said, Vengeance belongs unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. Hebrews 10:28-30

(10:31) Here are the options that these people face: they can accept the Lord Jesus as the source of a New Testament, and declare their allegiance to Him as their Savior, or they can attempt to cling to the traditions and requirements of the Law (those 'elemental doctrines') of their past, and thereby reject the fulfillment of that Law, which was embodied in the death of Christ. If they do the latter, they will find themselves, not in union with their Savior, but in the hands of a **“living God,”** acting in His wrath. Does it occur to you that the Christian is in a very similar situation regarding the basis on which we live daily? We can accept the Lord Jesus as the ascended source of our life today, or we can go back to the Law, to that vehicle designed to bring Israel to the cross, and there attempt to find our rule of life. If we do that, then are we not rejecting the death of Christ to sin? If we don't accept the fact that we have died to sin in His death, through union with Him, then there is no escaping the fact that we choose to live as if that sacrifice was never made. Why would we attempt to take on the burden of keeping the Law, when that perfect One did that on behalf of every man, satisfied its every demand, and sat down at the right hand of the Father to await the arrival of His Bride.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Hebrews 10:31

(10:32-34) In the process of their considerations, Paul suggests that they remember those days prior to the crucifixion and immediately after the resurrection and all the way to Pentecost. That includes the period in which they were **“illuminated”** as to the truth of the Gospel. At that time, they were moved to share their assets joyfully with Paul, because they knew that they had **“in heaven a better and enduring”** storehouse of blessings. They were acting in their faith!

But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a spectacle both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, while you became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.
Hebrews 10:32-34

(10:35-37) So, they are admonished not to cast that confidence away, knowing that there was a **“reward”** for such actions. But, they are to have **“patience”** regarding God's promise of reward. Isn't that the same problem that their fathers experience in the wilderness? God had promised them their own land, but they were impatient—In order to claim their heavenly reward, they must wait for the promised return of the Lord; patiently wait. This is exactly the same thing

that is going on in the West Bank territory of Jerusalem today. Settlers, not willing to wait until the Palestinian issue is resolved by their leaders, have moved into disputed territory and constructed homes and communities, exacerbating an already tense confrontation.

When Paul says, “**for yet a little while,**” he is expressing the expectancy of those believers that the return of the Lord Jesus was imminent. They lived in positive expectation that they would live to see that return, just as we do today.

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which has great recompense of reward. For you have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.
Hebrews 10:35-37

(10:38, 39) The “**faith**” of the “**just**” is firmly rooted in the love of His appearing. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and there is no greater hope in the Body of Christ than that of the return of the Lord Jesus to claim His own, prior to the wrath of God falling on the world of unbelievers.

Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Hebrews 10:38, 39

(11:1) The confidence of the Body of Christ in the promise of the return of the Lord Jesus is palpable in the lives of the assembly. As we move together as a body, our wills are shaped by our collective expectations that what God has revealed to us of His intentions are inexorably coming to pass in our lifetime. This is a feeling that we share with Believers of every generation since the first after the ascension. Our faith remains the evidence that those things not materially visible to anyone not resting in Him are in fact real. We are like the oak bending in the wind—no one can see the wind, but they see the reaction of the oak.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
Hebrews 11:1

(11:2) It was the faith of the elders that secured to them “**a good report.**” Their commendations by the Lord Jesus were given for their faith, not for their deeds. What follows is a list of those whose faith provided them with reputations that have lasted across the centuries. First, the elders of the sons of Israel are commended.

For by it the elders obtained a good report. Hebrews 11:2

(11:3) Second, it is by **faith** that creation is understood. It has been a given for over 2000 years that man will not come to the point of being to create anything out of nothing, but that is what

Genesis tells us that God did in creation.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things, which are seen, were not made of things, which do appear. Hebrews 11:3

(11:4) Third, Abel brought an animal from the herd to the altar at the gate of Eden. There he sacrificed it by cutting its throat and spilling its blood to satisfy a righteous God and make atonement for his sins. When Cain brought his offering, it was produce from the fields, the product of his own labors, and more importantly, it was a portion of food intended to be eaten by man—a self-sacrifice, something given up for God. His offering was rejected by Jehovah, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Through his blood offering, the testimony of Abel, through his obedience and his faith that God would be satisfied with the offering He desired, yet speaks to us. The lesson is this—God does not need our production, He desires our life. In the letter to the Romans, Paul stated it this way, “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, set apart, acceptable to God, as your reasonable service.”¹⁹

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaks. Hebrews 11:4

(11:5-6) Fourth, Genesis 5:24 tells us that Enoch **“walked with God, and he was not,”** that wonderful idiom for being taken to heaven without passing through death. Try as hard as we might, it is hardly possible to imagine the quality of life and walk that a mere man must have had with God to be taken out of this life without dying. Then, we remember that during the time of Jacob’s Trouble, there will be two witnesses on earth, proclaiming the Gospel of the ascended Lord Jesus, and that they will die in their efforts, to be raised again. In Hebrews 9:27, we read that, “it is appointed to man, once to die.” There were two men who did not die at the end of their lifetime on earth, Enoch and Elijah, who was taken up into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). Their lives were marked by seeking the face of God, and His pleasure. Thus, the reward was great, and their appointed final testimony yet future.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
Hebrews 11:5-6

(11:7) Fifth, Noah was warned by God that rain was coming. He had never seen it rain (Genesis 2:6), but he did not waver, and immediately started on the Ark construction project because he believed God and worked in fear of what was to come. It lasted 120 years (Genesis 6:3), during which time he constantly announced to those around him the coming judgment and destruction. The fact that his family was preserved as **“just”** (unpolluted by the angelic infiltration) remains as

¹⁹ Romans 12:1

testimony to the quality of his faith, and he became **“heir to the righteousness,”** which can only come on the basis of faith in God’s word.

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness, which is by faith. Hebrews 11:7

(11:8) Sixth, the word of God came to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees; instructing him to leave his family and the land in which he lived, and to begin a journey to a land promised to him as an eternal possession by God. His journey was not entirely in accord with God’s instructions, however, for he did not leave his family behind as he was told to do, but took with him his father, Terah, his uncle, Nahor, and his nephew, Lot. What a price he paid for that bit of disobedience—Terah died in Haran, the wilderness, and Lot presented enormous problems, culminating in Sodom and Gomorra. But along the way, there came the promise of a seed, and the sure confidence that God would deliver what He had promised, and Abraham’s belief became the pattern of faith for all who followed him.

Note the significance of Abraham **“dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob,”** even as he **“looked for a city.”** The city built by God represented security, a place of safety, a sanctuary, and the tents put him in a status of dependence entirely on God for safety and security. His vulnerability yielded faith in God, and his faith yielded in righteousness.

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place, which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city, which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Hebrews 11:8-11

(11:11) The seventh example of faith is Sara, who gave birth to Abraham’s son, Isaac, when Abraham was 100 years old. Though long past menopause, her faith was the source of strength in the conception and birth of Isaac. Though she laughed at the promise, God remained faithful to His purpose of blessing through Isaac.

Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Hebrews 11:11

(11:12-) Now, watch this carefully—having listed seven examples of faith leading to righteousness and blessing, Paul goes back to Abraham and his seed as the eighth, and remember that eight is the number of new beginning, of new life! How appropriate that he points to the seed of **“one,”** Abraham, (and him as a type of one risen from the dead), an innumerable **“multitude.”** Pentecost (Acts 2:1) is the fiftieth day, the previous 49 demonstrating seven Sabbaths, and the first eighth day the birth of the Church, the dawning of the Age of Grace! Here, we are seeing the

natural seed of Abraham multiply, according to promise, and they all **“died in faith,”** even though they had not **“received the promises”** that they hoped for, but saw them yet in their future. Their grand testimony before God is that they **“embraced”** the promises and were **“persuaded”** that they were to come to pass, to the extent that they openly declared that they were **“strangers and pilgrims”** on earth, being citizens of the country to which they traveled.

As Paul says, if they thought about it, they could have returned to the country from which they came, but they lived in faith that the one to which they traveled was **“better,”** a **“heavenly”** city.

Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.
Hebrews 12:16

(11:17) Continuing on the thought of new life, resurrection, Abraham’s faith was put to the test when he was to offer Isaac. But, knowing the sure promise of God, regarding his **“only begotten son,”** Isaac, he was proceeding on the belief that God would **“raise him up”** after he had died on that altar. This is what the eighth day of new beginning is all about. For the Christian, we die with Christ on the Cross, and, like the Lord Himself was raised from the grave and death, so too, are we raised from that death to newness of life. Paul is taking all of these Old Testament examples and parading them before these Hebrews who are attempting to understand the implications of new life in union with an ascended Lord.

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. Hebrews 11:17-19

(11:20) In Isaac’s walk of faith, he brought to his progeny the sure promise of God that what was promised was to come. Isaac was a living testimony to the love and care of God for His chosen ones.

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. Hebrews 11:20

(11:21) Jacob continued that blessing by demonstrating the continuance of God’s faithfulness to the sons of Joseph.

By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped,

leaning upon the top of his staff. Hebrews 11:21

(11:22) Joseph was so sure of the promise of the land that he gave specific instructions regarding his remains to be buried there. What is that but identification in death with the promises of God and looking forward to his resurrection among the people of God? That is the perfect precursor to baptism and is consistent with the message conveyed by the Levitical washings at the laver.

By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. Hebrews 11:22

(11:23-30) The line of faith continues with Moses' parents, whose faith led them to hide him for three months after his birth, without fear of the king's commandment to slay the children of the sons of Israel. So, when Moses matured as a young man (following after the faith of his parents), he rejected his position as the grandson of Pharaoh and chose rather to join the Hebrew people in their affliction. In taking on the reproach of the Egyptian people, he identified with Christ in His reproach with a view to riches **"greater than the treasures in Egypt."** It was faith in God promise that led Moses to leave Egypt, without fear of Pharaoh; to keep the Passover without fear of the angel of death, because he was covered by the blood sprinkled on the lintel; and last, to pass "through the Red sea," in which the armies of Egypt drowned.

Don't miss the fact that it was after seven days of trusting God for victory that the walls of Jericho fell (Joshua 6:1ff). On that seventh day, the work was finished and the victory won. Every inhabitant was slain, men, women, children, and herd animals, all slain. That brings to mind the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Israel and the Gentiles at the birth of the Church at Pentecost. When the believer is placed into union with the Lord Jesus, it is at that moment that all that he was *in Adam* dies with Christ, a positional change before God—just as the old inhabitants of Jericho were slain. It also is the point where Jew and Gentile stand as one before a just and righteous God.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. Hebrews 11:23-30

(11:31-40) Rahab represent one of faith in the midst of chaos. Her faith was expressed in the knowledge that Jehovah had given the land to the Israelites (Joshua 2:8-11), and led her to turn

against her own people and embrace the coming army of Joshua. There, in her window, was the cord of scarlet, by which the spies entered and by which they escaped; speaking of the blood of the Lord Jesus, the means by which we are drawn to the Cross and the means by which we escape the certain condemnation of come to those in unbelief. Her faith would extend beyond her years through her son, Boaz (Matthew 1:5), the great-grandfather of David the King (Ruth 4:21)!

In Judges 8:15ff the story is told of Gideon's faith that the Midianites were given to the hands of his 300 soldiers, against all odds. As Newell offers "This is Mark 11:24 again, 'a conviction of things not seen.'"²⁰

Barak was called by Deborah, a prophetess, who sat in judgment over Israel at the time (Judges 4:4ff). God had told her that the oppressing Canaanites were to be delivered into the hands of the sons of Israel. Barak believed her account and with his army pursued and killed every single one of them.

Samson was the only judge over Israel that never used an army against the enemies of Israel. He was a man of contrasts; he took the vows of a Nazarite (Judges 13:5), yet gave himself to ungodly alliances (Judges 14:1-3). He was Spirit-led from time-to-time (Judges 13:25; 15:14); yet he consorted with harlots (Judges 16:1ff). His strength derived from God's enablement, and when he trusted God's leading, his actions were unmatched by any man.

Jephthah became a judge over Israel at the elders' request, for he was a "mighty warrior" (Judges 11:1). As the son of a harlot, he was rejected by the sons of Israel, so that he left and associated himself with coarse people in Tob, a near country. Pressed by the Amorites, the Israelites called Jephthah to come and protect them. In his appeal to God for victory, Jephthah made a vow (Judges 11:30) that on his return from victory, he would give unto God the first thing that passed through the door of his house. Thinking that it would be an animal of the herd or flock, he was stunned when his only daughter danced through the doorway to greet him. After giving her two months respite from his vow, he did as he said and gave her to the Lord, probably as a servant to the Levites and priests.

Samuel was the last of Israel's judges. Like Samson, he was a Nazarite (1 Samuel 1:11), which meant abstinence from alcohol and sexual promiscuity, untrimmed hair (signifying dedication of the whole man to God), and absolutely no contact with a dead body (Numbers 6). Lockyear tells us that Samuel served as the Lord's prophet (1 Samuel 2:27-35; 3:19-21; 8:22), condemning the faithless Eli. He also served as an intercessor, and deemed it a sin not to pray for others (1 Samuel 7:5-8; 8:6; 12:17, 19, 23; 15:11). When he offered sacrifices (1 Samuel 7:9, 10) and anointed kings (1 Samuel 10:1; 16:13) he was performing the duties of a priest.²¹

By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of

²⁰ William R. Newell, *Hebrews Verse by Verse*, p.389

²¹ Herbert Lockyear, *All the Men of the Bible*, p.295

Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Hebrews 11:31-40

(12:1-2) The **“great cloud of witnesses”** is a reference to that list of predecessors just given, and by inference, to the angelic throng who look into the affairs of man, and also the world of unbelievers, of people without faith in God, who observe our actions and the process of our decisions. That places a great importance on how we live our lives; because of that, we should **“lay aside every weight,”** the burdens of worry and anxiety that drag on every decision. Like the runner before the race, we strip to shorts and shoes, bare essentials; we shed everything that might be a hindrance in the least way. We also should lay aside **“the sin,”** not sins, but sin in the singular. That refers to the indwelling presence of sin, the Adamic nature within us as sons of the first Adam. How is this possible for one who lives in flesh? It is accomplished only one way, through union with the living Christ; by embracing Him in His ascended glory and thereby becoming the righteousness that is of God in Him; a fact made possible by His having become sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). That being done, we can then **“run with patience the race that is set before us”** with our eyes fixed on our Lord Jesus, **“the author and finisher of faith.”**²² The order here is important—We become aware of the spiritual realm in which we live (**“lay aside every weight”**), we deal with our own sin nature (**“and the sin which does so easily beset us”**), and *then* we get on with our lives (**“run with patience the race that is set before us”**). But, note the most important change—now our eyes are fixed on Jesus, not the historical figure of the Gospels, but the ascended Lord at the right hand of the Father; the Man, now glorified!

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1, 2

(12:3-4) The mind of man naturally goes to heroes when we think of the accomplishments of men and women in general—Joe Lewis and Muhammad Ali in their prime were studies in fluid, grace

²² It is not “our faith” but faith. The Lord Jesus is the “Perfecter of faith” (see Newell, p.402). The point made is that The Lord Jesus is the One Who had *perfect faith*!

and strength; Torville and Dean raised pairs skating to new levels; George S. Patton could inspire men to give their lives in the muck and mire of the battlefield; Mother Teresa showed how to give life to those who do not even have the means to ask for help; Billy Graham has reached tens of millions with the simplest Gospel and without a shred of scandal; but, who are we to fix our minds on as children of a living God? We are to **“consider Him that endured”** the mocking and scorn **“of sinners,”** the object of our gaze, the Lord Jesus Christ. Why? Why is it so important that we keep Him before our thoughts and ideas? It is to prevent our becoming **“weary”** in the battle against the flesh and sin itself, and from our becoming **“faint”** or weak, in our minds. Paul reminds them, and us that we **“have not yet resisted (sin) unto (the shedding of our own) blood,”** as have the saints listed previously. Today, we live in a country that is relatively secure from the kinds of life-threatening circumstances that many Christians have to face daily because of their expressions of faith. Has that led to a trivialization of our prayer life? Do we find ourselves praying for solutions to inconvenience, rather than to real needs in the Body of Christ out there in the world?

For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds. You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Hebrews 12:3, 4

(12:5-10) As **“children”** in the faith, we received exhortation from the written Word, just as these Hebrew believers have received instructions verbally. Both the instructions they received from those Apostles of God, and the written Word, which we study, bring principles of **“chastening”** from the Lord—neither we, nor they, should **“faint, when (we are) rebuked of Him”** for this is a sign of His love for us. **“Scourges”** means to take a cat-o-nine tails, a multi-strand whip with bits of stone plaited into the tips, designed to tear away bits of flesh with each stroke, and ply that across the back of the one being punished, or disciplined. The picture is one of severe discipline. But, it is linked with the relationship of a father to his son. In today’s society, that is unthinkable, but it is the motivation here that is in view. There is nothing that our Heavenly Father will not do to draw His sons to Him, including the most severe acts of discipline—this is the mark of true love, *agape*! Tolerance is *not* a sign of love, when it leaves the relationship in doubt! The one not being disciplined knows that it is because of one reason; there is no standing as a son. My father had seven sons. Our respect for him grew out of two things, his character demonstrated through his actions daily before us, and his willingness to exercise the discipline required to build up our own character and to teach us that there were consequences to our decisions and actions.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaks unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chastens not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of

spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Hebrews 12:5-10

(12:11-13) Does that mean that we take pleasure or find joy in our discipline (punishment), either as children or as fathers? Absolutely not! **“Lift up your hands, which hang down”** is a call to action rather than stoic endurance without a response to what you see as a need for correction. It is a call to leadership, both in the family and in the Body of Christ. **“Feeble knees”** refers to an aversion to step into the fray. We withhold correction because we are unsure of our grounds—study the issues until we are sure of the governing Biblical principles. Or, we are reluctant to offend, because it might cause tension—be willing to love enough to risk the discomfort in order to win righteousness for the one being confronted. **“Make straight paths for your feet”** means to bring your walk into conformity with the expectations of the ascended Lord you serve.

Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them, which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands, which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Hebrews 12:11-13

(12:14) Here’s the action plan for living as a Christian:

(1) **pursue peace** with all men, which means to live without rancor or strife directed towards another.

That’s going to require several things; clear statement of your principles and respect for their privacy. It’s

incredible how much gossip is passed along under the guise of *praying for* someone else’s needs.

Galatians 6 does not tell us to *share* another’s burden, even less to *bare* it; but to *bear* it. (2)

Pursue holiness. That means living a life that is set-apart unto God. Holiness comes from the same Greek root word as ‘saint’ or ‘sanctify’ and speaks of separation from something (the world) and unto something (God) and His purposes. Solomon saw it this way; “I know the concern, which God has given men to be afflicted with. Everything He has made proper (appropriate) in its due time, and He has also placed the love of the world (“eternity” NASB) in men’s hearts, except that they may not discover the work God has done from beginning to end.”²³

Paul put it this way in his first letter to the Believers in Corinth; “But, natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are foolishness to him, because they are spiritually discerned” (2 Corinthians 2:15). In other words, the chastening of the Lord is not going to be understood by any natural sense; it requires the regenerated human spirit, instructed by the indwelling Holy Spirit, to have the mind of Christ towards the Father who applies the rod of correction. The results you might expect are also addressed—diligence and faith dispels **“bitterness”** and enables us to continue to access the grace of God and the assets of divine heir-ship.

Galatians 6 does not tell us to *share* another’s burden, even less to *bare* it; but to *bear* it.

It is interesting that the first two examples of failure **“of the grace of God,”** are giving in to

23 Robert Gordis, Koheleth, a study of Ecclesiastes, p. 146, Shoken Books

human appetites—fornication, inappropriate pursuit of a sexual appetite, and Esau, who sold his birthright for one bite of food; these are two appetites common to all human beings. Stop looking for exotic or unusual ways to fail; brother, look at the basic things that motivate your walk through life.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Hebrews 12:14-17

(12:18-21) Here is one of the great contrasts of this letter—Paul takes them back to memories of what that mountaintop experience must have been like, when Moses was receiving the Law from God. They were forbidden to come up to the mountain, even on its lowest reaches. Their forefathers saw the clouds, the darkness, the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of God speaking His instructions to Moses. These visions were recounted in vivid detail. They knew that not so much as one of their animals were allowed to touch the mountain, or be stoned or slain. Even Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake” (Deuteronomy 9:19). That depicts a nation in fear of Jehovah.

For you are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) Hebrews 12:18-21

(12:22-24) **“But”** introduces the second part of this contrast. Moses went to the top of Mount Sinai to receive the tablets of the Law; while these Hebrews **“are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God.”** They have come to a **“heavenly Jerusalem,”** not the earthly one, which was promised to their forefathers, and the throng before them includes **“an innumerable company of angels.”** They have come **“to the general assembly and church (*ekklesia*, ‘body of called out ones’) of the firstborn.”** **“Which are written in heaven”** refers to the general assembly and the church, the former being the company of OT saints, and the latter the Body of Christ begun at Pentecost. Those among the Hebrew company who have not laid hold of grace and embraced the ascended Lord Jesus, are standing before what is perhaps their final opportunity to move from their position as OT faithful and into the realm of the Church of the New Testament. If they reject this opportunity, they will not remain as part of the saved of the Old Testament, but will joined those condemned by their own rejection of the risen Lord Jesus. They will then be those who “have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away,” now to find that “it is impossible to renew” those Old

Covenant practices under the Law that previously brought them to “repentance.”²⁴ They are facing **“God, the Judge of all,”** either in the strength of their faith in Christ, or on the basis of their own merits. They are surrounded by “the spirits of righteous (just) men made complete (perfect).” This is that company that has been joined to the First Born of many brethren, the means by which they have been made perfect. He it is, who is **“mediator of the new covenant”** with **“the blood of sprinkling,”** His own blood, which **“speaks forth better things than that of Abel,”** who offered innocent animals from the herd in compliance with the dictates of God and in accordance with the instructions of his father Adam. Paul has already talked about the inadequacies of the Law, now he takes them all the way back to Cain and Abel, the Law not even being in place, to prove that the blood of Calvary is superior to any other substitute as the means by which God is satisfied and redemption is secured. It is the blood itself, which speaks of better things than Abel.

But you are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel. Hebrews 12:22-24

(12:25-27) So, the admonition is that they **“refuse not Him that speaks”** with His blood. That’s the voice of the blood of the Lord Jesus, offered on earth during His incarnation. If that is rejected, then there is surely no escape if one should **“turn away from Him that speaks from heaven,”** the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. His wrath is going to shake **“not the earth only, but also heaven,”** and that shaking is to remove **“those things that are shaken”** leaving only those unshakable things behind. If you are not thinking ‘Jesus, the Rock of my salvation’ at this time, then you have missed the entire point of this passage.

See that you refuse not Him that speaks. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaks from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He has promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, ‘Yet once more,’ signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Hebrews 12:25-27

(12:28, 29) **“Therefore”** points back to the previous statements declaring that those of faith **“are receiving a kingdom, which cannot be moved (shaken).”** That’s a statement of *fact*, not a conditional clause based on some action on our part—every man of faith who is joined to the First Born Son of God has an inheritance that includes that unshakable kingdom. Our response is to be **“grace,”** that quality of character that can *only come* from our Lord at the right hand of the Father, and that enables us to serve Him acceptably, with righteous reverence and fear (awe), knowing that our God is **“a consuming fire.”**

24 This was the entire discussion of Hebrews 6:1-8

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom, which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:28, 29

The True Believer's Manner of Life

(13:1-4) **“Brotherly love”** is love born of commonality. It speaks of that affection we have for those in the Body of Christ, because we hold beliefs in common, we worship the same risen Lord, we fear the same Heavenly Father. And, at the same time, we exhibit hospitality towards strangers and unbeliever's, for in doing so, some have found that they were dealing with **“angels”** sent from the Father to bring out His best in us. We are to **“remember them that are in bonds”** for the cause of Christ, as if we are **“bound with them.”** There are also those who **“suffer adversity,”** and we are to pray for them as if we were also suffering in like manner.

In declaring that **“marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled,”** Paul is endorsing the family union of man and woman, and stating that sex in marriage is not going to be judged by God, like **“whoremongers and adulterers”** will be judged.

Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them, which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Hebrews 13:1-4

(13:5, 6) **“Conversation”** is *‘manner of life,’* which is to be conducted **“without covetousness.”** The bane of man's existence is to compare himself with others around him and find that jealousy is driving him to desire what they have. The believer is to **“be content with such things as we have,”** knowing that God is providing exactly what we need.

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Hebrews 13:5, 6

(13:7-9) **“Them, which have the rule over you,”** refers to spiritual leadership and teachers, for they **“have spoken unto you the word of God.”** These are to be followed as to their faith and manner of life (*conversation*). If you desire to teach, be sure that you note the grave responsibility that you take on, for those taught have the right before God to hold you accountable as an example of the principles that you teach. In this way, you will not be **“carried away by different and strange doctrines.”** We are to be oriented to grace, and not to the practice of **“meats,”** whether they were associated with idols, or where they might be eaten. It is in the area of food that our exercise of liberty is most often seen. Why? Because that is the most

usual interface we have with others in this world, both believers and unbelievers.

Remember them, which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and forever. Be not carried about with different and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. Hebrews 13:7-9

(13:10) Here is the coupe de grace for any earthly priesthood, even that which had been ordained by God over Israel. **“We,”** every believer, **“have an altar”** at which we stand before God in worship and which is inside the very core of our being (*our bodies now being the temple of the Holy Spirit*) **“from which altar those”** priests of Israel **“who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.”** Believer, understand this foundation principle of Christianity. At the expense of all other knowledge, grasp this firmly--God had appointed the sons of Levi that dedicated tribe of servants, to serve Him and all Israel in the Holy Tent, the Tabernacle. There, they did the work of offering to God the millions of animal sacrifices brought by Israelites in order to affect repentance and gain forgiveness of sins. From those offerings, the priesthood and Levitical orders were to take their daily sustenance. Their food was the sacrifices of their brethren. As right as that life was, in it's day and before God and man, not one of them may approach the individual, personal, internal, eternal, perpetual, presence of God within the heart of the believer, which is the privilege solely accorded to the New Creation Christian. The altar spoken of here is only to be found in the redeemed *mind* [heart] of the New Creation, because that is where is Holy Spirit is in residence. There, He has exchanged our old minds [inherited from the first Adam] for the mind of Christ [the last Adam]. There was no such provision in the Law. Nor was there any such provision prior to the Law from Adam to Moses; only since the advent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.
Hebrews 13:10

(13:11) In Leviticus 4, God gives Moses the instructions for offering a sacrifice for both an unintentional sin by an Israelite or a sin by an anointed priest. The priest is to take a bull from the herd, one without defect (v.3). He should take it to the opening of the outer curtain of the tabernacle and lay his hand on the head of the bull; signifying transfer of the sin from him to the sacrificial animal. Then he is to cut the bull's throat, catch the blood and take it into the Holy Place, where there is the Table of Bread,²⁵ the Lamp-stand,²⁶ and before the veil that separates the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, the Altar of Incense.²⁷ There, the priest will dip his finger in

²⁵The table with loaves representing each of the tribes of Israel represents God's specific provision for each of His people in their time of need and dependence.

²⁶The lamp-stand represents God's presence among men, the light of the Gospel of a Redeemer and the fact that they are God's chosen people.

²⁷The altar of incense represents man's prayers and petitions to God. As the smoke of the

the blood and sprinkle it before the veil seven times. (Seven being the number of completion). The priest will next take blood and place it on the horns of the Altar of Incense, signifying the acceptability of the prayers of the faithful because they are set apart (*sanctified*) to God.

Then, the rest of the blood of the sacrifice is taken out of the Holy Place and into the court, where it is poured out at the base of the Brazen Altar; the place where burnt offerings are made. The priest shall remove all the fat from the bull, including all the fat surrounding the entrails. This fat represents that, which develops as a result of any animal taking in more food than is necessary.²⁸ He will remove the kidneys, the organs that the body uses to selectively discard what the world allows the animal to feed on, but is not required for ordinary life. And, he will remove the spleen (the appendage on the liver), the organ in the animal that recognizes foreign objects in the body (organic blood contaminates) and triggers antibody production. All of these parts are placed on the Brazen Altar for a burnt offering.

altar rises before God's name woven into the fabric of the veil, so, too, does the prayer of God's faithful appear before Him.

²⁸Note that in removing the fat, both that layer which can be seen from without is removed, but also, that internal fat which is not seen. In this, we have a picture of both inner and outer cleansing from sin..

Finally, the hide, head, entrails, all flesh, and any other remnants of the bull, are taken outside the camp to a **“clean” place**²⁹ where the ashes of the Brazen Altar are dumped. There, everything is burned with wood until it is all reduced to ash. Use of a **“clean place”** means that whether on the Brazen Altar or outside the camp the animal is set apart unto God.

For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest because of sin, are burned without the camp. Hebrews 13:11

(13:12) Here is the object of the lesson of the tabernacle and all of the animal sacrifices--The reality is that **“Jesus also, in order that He might sanctify”** (set apart from the first Adam and unto the Last Adam) **“the people”** by paying once and for all for their sins **“with His own blood,”** though He paid with His blood offered inside Israel, according to the Law, He **“suffered”** as a man **“outside the gate.”** Inside the gate He resolved the issue of the Law for all Israel. Outside the gate He suffered for the sins of all mankind and made His sacrifice complete. To use a contemporary frame of reference; His death was not a Jewish thing, it was an Adamic thing.

Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.

(13:13) What is the expected response? First, look at what the writer is saying to those Jewish converts to whom he is addressing this message--Do not go to Him as in the camp, but go to Him as outside the camp. Go to Him as a member of Adam’s race, **“bearing His reproach,”** not because He was a persecuted, misunderstood, Jewish rabbi; but because He died for all mankind and every one of us is a child of Adam in need of redemption. So, bear His reproach *as a man*.

Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing his reproach.
Hebrews 13:13

(13:14) This next statement does not have the impact on us today as gentile believers that it had on these Hebrews to whom the Gospel is being presented. The Jew had lived their entire history with Jerusalem as their focus. The promises of God to them of a land that is their inheritance forever secured Jerusalem and the site of the Temple as essential to their worship for eternity. But, the writer is now saying to them that **“here,”** in this place, the land of promise, Jerusalem in particular, **“we”** who believe **“have no continuing city”** which is our inheritance, **“but”** *in contrast* to an earthly city of promise, **“we seek one”** which is yet **“to come,”** that heavenly Jerusalem spoken of in 11:10.

For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Hebrews 13:14

²⁹A “clean place” is a spot that has not been used to dispose of human waste. It has not been used as a latrine. The spiritual significance is that where the sons of Adam go, the contamination of their sins is also to be found.

(13:15-16) It is **“by means of Him,”** Jesus, that we have access to God. “Therefore, let us keep on offering the sacrifice of praise to God continually” as the priests offered the animal sacrifices for sin. Our offering of praise **“is the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.”** But, our obligation as priests does not stop there. It extends to our **“doing good and communicating”** the Gospel of the risen, ascended Christ to all with whom we have to do. That was the message to those Hebrews who are considering the full implications of the Gospel, and it is very relevant to believers today who want to know how to live the life of the Lord Jesus in today’s terms.

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Hebrews 13:15,16

(13:17-19) Further, we are to **“obey”** civil government as well as spiritual leadership. We should **“submit ourselves”** to their leadership as ones who **“watch for you souls,”** whether or not they fully understand their role and obligations to God. How obedient should we be? Well, obedient enough, that those in authority are happy with our actions.

Additionally, our responsibility, as well as our privilege, is to pray for others in the Body of Christ. Note that the writer does not solicit their prayers for ease, for provision, or for deliverance from any problem that may be pressing. He simply asks that they pray for their willingness to **“live honestly.”** This is the Christian’s overarching charge from the Lord Jesus Christ—**“live honestly.”**

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as ones who must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner. Hebrews 13:17-19

The New Covenant for Israel and the New Covenant for the Church

(13:20) In his benediction upon the believers being addressed here, Paul invokes blessings that obtain to the redeemed of Israel and to the New Creation believers of the age of Grace. Fail to make the distinction and you will surely co-mingle blessings and end up with God’s faithful in the wrong place of blessing in eternity. One means of salvation; grace through faith--two eternal destinies; one earthly, the other heavenly.

Thus, there are two covenants referenced here. Though both originate through the principles pointed out in this letter, all of the blessings are associated with and appropriated through the perfect sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Here is a brief look at some comparisons--

ISRAEL'S NEW COVENANT

Israel's New Covenant--replaces the old Mosaic Covenant. "But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by so much indeed, as He is mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no seeking for a second. . . When He said 'a new [covenant],' He has made the first old and the thing being made old and growing obsolete [the first covenant] is near [in the process of] vanishing." (Heb. 8:6,7,13). "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah" (Jer. 31:31).

The Blood of the Cross--"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,' declares the Lord, 'I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them' declares the Lord, 'for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more'" (Jer. 31:31-34). "For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Rom. 11:27).

The Holy Spirit--Is to be given to Israel in order that they might do those things that the Law of

THE CHURCH'S NEW COVENANT

The Church's New Covenant-- "For you have not come to a mountain that may be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words. . . But [in contrast] you have come to Mount Zion and to a city of the living God, to a Jerusalem which is heavenly, and to myriads of angels, to an assembly and church of first-born ones having been enrolled in heavens, and to God, judge of all, and to spirits of just men having been made perfect, and to Jesus, Mediator of a new covenant, and to sprinkling blood, which is speaking a better thing than the blood of Abel" (Heb. 12:24). "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; this do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11:25). ". . . our competency is from God, Who also has made us competent ministers of a new covenant, not of letter, but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the spirit makes alive" (2 Cor. 3:5b,6).

The Blood of the Cross--Redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:19). "Elect. . . unto obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus" (1 Pet. 1:2). "For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the purity of the flesh, how much more with the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:13,14).

The Holy Spirit--Brings union with Christ to every believer by which he/she becomes God's

God demands and keep all of His statutes.
"And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause

Israel's New Covenant (Cont.)

you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep
My ordinances, and do them" (Ezek. 36:27).

The Life--Under the new covenant for Israel, each faithful subject will be given a new fleshly heart fit for an eternity on a new eternal Earth "And I saw a new heaven *and a new earth*; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away" (Rev. 21:1), forever subjects of their King. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26).

The Law--"I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts" (Jer. 31:33).

The Land--First it was promised to Abraham "And the Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'to your descendants I will give this land'" (Gen. 12:7) "I will give it to you and your descendants forever." (Gen. 13:15) "And you shall dwell *in the land* that I gave to your fathers" (Ezek. 36:28). "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob, My servant, in which your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell in it, even they, and their children, and their children's children forever; and My servant, David, shall be their prince forever" (Ezek.

new creation. "But when the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, He

The Church's New Covenant (Cont.)

saved us, not on the basis of works in the sphere of righteousness, which we did, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us abundantly through our Savior Jesus Christ.

The Life--The life of the New Testament believer is Christ's life, risen and situated forever before the throne of the Most High. "Set your mind on things above, not on things that are on the earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Whenever Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Col. 3:2-4). "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21).

The Law-- "Therefore my brethren, you also were made dead to the Law by means of the body of Christ, resulting in your being joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God. . . we have been released from the Law, having died to that in which we were constantly bound, so that we now constantly serve in a newness of Spirit and not in oldness (outworn as to usefulness. *Wuest*) of the letter" (Rom. 7:4,6). "For I, through the Law, am dead to the Law" (Gal. 6:14).

The Heavenlies--"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are having been saved) and *raised us up* with Him, and seated us with Him *in the heavenly places*, in Christ Jesus, for this purpose, that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:6)

37:25).

“In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I so

The Church’s New Covenant (Cont.)

and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that *where I am*, there you may be also.” (John 14:2,3).

Paul’s benediction on these believers emphasizes that Jesus was “**that great shepherd of the sheep**” throughout the history of Israel and that His Father, “**the God of Peace,**” is now making each individual who knows Jesus as Lord complete (“**perfect**”) through the “**blood**” sacrifice “**of the everlasting covenant**” established between Jesus and the Father with believing man as the beneficiary.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.
Amen. Hebrews 13:20, 21

Paul’s Benediction

(13:22-25) He closes his letter with a plea that they endure this “**word of exhortation,**” for it is written “**in few words.**” There is much more that could have been said, but this is offered in an economy of words. He expects to come with Timothy, who is already at liberty, and who plans to come with him. They are to show respect (salute) to their pastors and teachers and all the brethren. His closing words are a most precious blessing—“**Grace be with you all, amen.**”

And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words. Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. Grace be with you all. Amen. Hebrews 13:22-25