

EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



LAST WORDS COMMENTARY.

**LAST WORDS TO HEBREW
BELIEVERS**

by

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[BOOK 5]

Revised Easter 2022

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

Professor Simon Greenleaf was one of the most eminent lawyers of all time. His "Laws of Evidence" for many years were accepted by all States in the United States as the standard methodology for evaluating cases. He was teaching law at a university in the United States when one of his students asked Professor Greenleaf if he would apply his "Laws of Evidence" to evaluate an historical figure. When Greenleaf agreed to the project he asked the student who was to be the subject of the review. The student replied that the person to be examined would be Jesus Christ. Professor Greenleaf agreed to undertake the examination of Jesus Christ and as a result, when he had finished the review, Simon Greenleaf personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Professor Greenleaf then sent an open letter to all jurists in the United States jurists saying in part "I personally have investigated one called Jesus Christ. I have found the evidence concerning him to be historically accurate. I have also discovered that Jesus Christ is more than a human being, he is either God or nothing and having examined the evidence it is impossible to conclude other than he is God. Having concluded that he is God I have accepted him as my personal Saviour. I urge all members of the legal profession to use the "Laws of Evidence" to investigate the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you find that he is wrong expose him as a faker but if not consider him as your Saviour and Lord"

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?**Salvation is available for all members of the human race.**

Salvation is the most important undertaking in all of God's universe. The salvation of sinners is never on the basis of God's merely passing over or closing His eyes to sin. God saves sinners on a completely righteous basis consistent with the divine holiness of His character. This is called grace. It relies on God so man cannot work for salvation neither can he deserve it. We need to realise that the creation of this vast unmeasured universe was far less an undertaking than the working out of God's plan to save sinners.

However the acceptance of God's salvation by the sinner is the most simple thing in all of life. One need not be rich, nor wise nor educated. Age is no barrier nor the colour of one's skin. The reception of the enormous benefits of God's redemption is based upon the simplest of terms so that there is no one in all this wide universe who need be turned away.

How do I become a Christian?

There is but one simple step divided into three parts. First of all I have to recognise that I am a sinner (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4; John 5:24).

Secondly, realising that if I want a relationship with Almighty God who is perfect, and recognising that I am not perfect, I need to look to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour (1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16).

Thirdly, by the exercise of my own free will I personally receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, believing that He died personally for me and that He is what He claims to be in an individual, personal and living way (John 1:12; 3:36; Acts 16:31; 4:12).

The results of Salvation

The results of this are unbelievably wonderful:

My sins are taken away (John 1:29),

I possess eternal life now (1 John 5:11,12),

I become a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17),

The Holy Spirit takes up His residence in my life (1 Corinthians 6:19),

And I will never perish (John 10:28-30).

This truthfully is life's greatest transaction. This is the goal of all people; this is the ultimate of our existence. We invite and exhort any reader who has not become a Christian by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to follow these simple instructions and be born again eternally into God's family (Matthew 11:28; John 1:12; Acts 4:12; 16:31).

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(All Texts that are bold typed in this book are to be referred to for additional biblical information on what the passage under study is saying. This are not "proof texting", but resources for additional depth to your study.)

HEBREWS (The Superiority of the Messianic Faith)**(In Troubled Times, before the end comes, Enter into His Rest, not more legalism!)****INTRODUCTION**

As Galatians and Romans demonstrate the necessity of the grace-faith walk with the Lord, as the only Saviour, so Hebrews demonstrates the SUPERIORITY of the faith in the Lord over legalism or any other form of religious observance. It completes the “trilogy” of books (with Galatians, Romans) on the vital nature of the “faith-rest-grace” life.

The author speaks of the “better way” that is opened up to mankind through the perfect work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross and on Firstfruit’s morning. It is more than “better” it is the completion of all that has been in place before. All that went before pointed to this last action of a loving God for mankind, so that we could achieve all that God wants for mankind in time and in eternity. First Advent work has prepared for the Second Advent’s final actions.

Written to Hebrew (Jewish) believers in the Lord in the Roman Province of Judea, it calls them to stand for the true Messianic faith, and not go back to the things that in Christ are replaced with something better. At this time the church was still strongly Jewish, with Gentile believers only gradually overtaking Jewish in numbers by the 60s of the first century. The early church was a Jewish church, and the believers would have referred to themselves as “Messianic” (that is, believers in the messiah-ship of Y’Shua/Jesus).

Given the Jewishness of this book it is vital that readers understand basic Messianic Jewish terminology. Their catch cry was, “Yeshua Ha’Meshiach”, or in our terms today, “Jesus the Messiah (Christ)”. All that Moses looked forward to in the structure and content of the Law was to be found in fullness in relationship with Jesus Christ.

These early Jewish believers in Judea were determined to retain their Jewishness while still fully acknowledging their faith in the Lord Jesus. This was a balancing act that was a hard thing to maintain at that time, for with the Temple still active, and the temptation to offer sacrifices very strong, it was too easy to re-enter and offer the daily sacrifices. It is this that the author of this letter addresses. How can we retain our culture and at the same time retain the purity of the new faith? The problem was of course that the “new faith” was the completed “old faith”. The pull to the “shadow” was still strong, for it was the very fabric of their cultural life since Joshua and Zerubbabel had brought the Exiles back and built the second temple. There was a cultural and historical pull to temple worship that was hard for Jewish believers to resist, and yet they had to, in order to fully stand in the grace-faith message. There was also limited time before this second temple would be swept away and those clinging to it would soon be clinging to a ruin.

The answer was, for the Jewish believers to truly “be Messianic” in a post-Pentecost sense, and if that means being, in the eyes of the Pharisees, un-Jewish, then so be it! The Jewish believers in the Lord Y’shua are being called to stand for the truth and separate themselves from everything that the Lord has fulfilled and therefore replaced, standing where he stood, and being prepared to pay the same price he paid!

It is a call to separation, for positioning, and to be at all times facing and standing for the truth! The truth that the author is arguing for is the truth that the Lord, as the last and complete sacrifice, has replaced ALL THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEMS! There are to be no more sacrifices on the Temple altar, only the sacrifice of the heart and life of the individual believer on the altar of service to their Lord who has fulfilled the Law. Jesus was the visible member of the God-head who gave Moses the Law on the Mount, and he is the one who has completely fulfilled it, so moving away from it was not heresy, it was obeying the order of the one who gave the Law to Moses!

From **Hebrews 10:1**, we can see that the letter to the Hebrews was written before the Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70AD, indeed it makes sense that it was written before the first siege of Jerusalem began in 66AD, for from that date no-one could get into or out of the city, except for a brief time when the siege was raised, the besieging Roman Army driven back to Caesarea and defeated at Beth Horon. The church in Jerusalem used that period of days before the Zealots sealed off the city again, and all fled to Pella in Jordan, and this book played a part in their decision making. It reads as a last warning to the Jewish people in general, and a warning to the Jewish believers to maintain their visible difference to their tradition-following neighbours, so that all see that the salvation issue is the Messiahship of Yeshua; that mankind stands or falls by their attitude to him. It is the author’s call to leave the temple and indeed the city of Jerusalem itself, before it is too late to escape the calamity that is coming.

Paul’s warnings against legalism, and “lucky rabbit’s foot” religion (that the very presence of the temple will save) may be seen as running a parallel course to Jeremiah’s warnings before the Babylonian invasion and destruction of the First Temple. Galatians is 18 years before 70 AD (equivalent to 605 BC – first fall of the city – Daniel goes to Exile), Romans is around 10 years before 70 AD (equivalent to 597 BC – second taking of the city – Ezekiel goes into Exile), and Hebrews only 6-4 years before 70 AD, (equivalent to the start of the last and fatal rebellion before the Babylonian destruction of the city).

SEVEN THEMES/TOPICS OF HEBREWS

1. There is a limit that God sets to rejection of his person and plan. We can go too far, and when we do God judges, both individually and nationally. Hebrews is a book of warning to the believers and unbelievers of the

nation Israel that they are heading for the so called, "Fifth Cycle of Discipline", in accordance with the five stages or cycles of divine discipline explained in Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28-30.

The reality of God's judgement upon the people was close. The Roman armies were coming and the city of Jerusalem and the nation itself was to be destroyed. All believers in Jerusalem got out of the city in the year before the final siege proper began. They had believed the warnings given to them, and had prepared for leaving - **Luke 21:20-24** - detailed instructions were given by the Lord, and followed when the first siege lifted.

2. Hebrews also warns believers regarding false religion, hypocrisy, apostacy and legalism. When men reject the grace and truth of God's Word and Way of life they adopt "religious" practises which, while they look holy are simply false and spiritually powerless. A revival of false religion (That of the Pharisees-Saducees) characterised the last days of the nation Israel - 67-70 A.D. This is the period into which this letter came as a warning.
3. Hebrews explains the purpose and role of angels, and explains the angelic conflict and its relationship to man. Chapters 1 and 2. We are to grasp our place in this universe and the next creation – the eternal state (Revelation 21-22) and see the protective screen of the angels around us. We are to see that the Lord has prepared all spiritual resources we need to bring us through to eternity in joy – and to live every day as a "Sabbath-Rest" of faith and focused work/witness/worship.
4. Hebrews reveals the truth of the fullness of the glorious person of Jesus Christ, the authors purpose is to lead all believers into a daily occupation with Christ. This work, with 2 Timothy, has more perfect tenses used than all Paul's other works. The perfect tense in the Koine Greek means that the action of the verb occurs at a point in space-time, but the results go on forever. This is the author's theme – that what Jesus has done through his unique person as Immanuel, and his role as our eternal High Priest, is eternal in its scope. Worship is to be our strength and ground of stability. **Isaiah 61:1-3**.
5. Hebrews is a call to advance in the Christian life, to stimulate growth and eventual maturity of the believer. The author strongly calls the people of God to "come out" from all that distracts them from living each day in the presence and power of the Risen Lord.
6. Hebrews challenges every believer to live their lives in and through the principle of grace; to stop any playing with legalism, or other forms of what is, since the Cross, false religion, and serve God with purity of mind and deed, in grace by faith.
7. Hebrews tells us of Christ's High Priesthood, and what that means to us in our daily Christian lives. It also addresses the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, teaching us what that means for our daily life.

AUTHORSHIP

The authorship debate has raged since earliest days. The early church believed Paul to be the author and that is the position of this study. It is written in the loftiest Greek of the New Testament, but this is due to the version we have being a carefully crafted translation of the original, which was clearly written in Aramaic.

Peter mentions that Paul wrote to the Jewish church in his last letter, **2 Peter 3:15**, and this is the only letter that would meet this requirement, and I personally believe this is it.

Compare the following verses of Hebrews to the letters of Paul.

Hebrews 1 : 1, 3,	2 Corinthians 4 : 4, Colossians 1 : 15, 16.
Hebrews 1 : 4, 2 : 9	Philippians 2 : 8, 9.
Hebrews 2 : 14	1 Corinthians 15 : 54, 57.
Hebrews 7 : 26	Ephesians 4 : 10.
Hebrews 10 : 12, 13	1 Corinthians 15 : 25
Hebrews 8 : 5, 10 : 1	Colossians 2 : 17
Hebrews 7 : 16, 18, 19	Romans 2 : 29, Galatians 3 : 3, 24.

It is certainly NOT necessary to believe Paul wrote it, for in heaven we may be told that it was Barnabas, Apollos, or another who wrote the words, although I think it is Paul, possibly translated back into Greek by someone like Apollos. Remember, the final author of Scripture is the Holy Spirit, and this is truly a "God-breathed" letter that will encourage all believers to stand for the Lord their Saviour and King, and that is the authors purpose. This author's opinion is that it is Paul's letter to the church that he cared for, but was very suspicious of him, and so he doesn't trumpet his authorship.

It is a letter that rings powerfully true in our Covid years! Before catastrophe fully occurs we are to "come out" from all side-tracking interests in the natural realm, and stand with the one who gave his life, shed his blood, for us on the cross. This is a warning and teaching letter and it has a clear "outcome" for it's purpose; we are to be free of religious systems, and are to stand with the Lord Jesus Christ, as members of his Royal Family, and fellow priests of his priesthood. It was the "last words" warning before the final fall of the city and destruction of the temple and its warning resonates for us in the last years before the Lord's return.

He is superior to all things, and we are to live in the reality of his superiority, not go back into religious systems that are part of something inferior. Superior spiritual living In Christ is the theme of this letter. For a good discussion of authorship refer to David Stern's, "Jewish New Testament Commentary", pages 660 - 661. The other issue in this letter is the extensive use of the perfect tenses of the Greek verbs. Paul's last letter, 2 Timothy has the most by far of all his letters, but Hebrews is close behind that letter, and close to the last works of the Apostle John. The perfect tense reminds us of the eternal nature of the decisions we make over each of the seven points above. Choices = Consequences is the theme as it is in each of the "Last Words" books of the New Testament.

OUTLINE OF THE LETTER

(The outline below follows that of Dr J Vernon McGee of, the "Thru the Bible Radio" Commentary.)

PART 1 CHRIST OPENS A WAY THAT IS SUPERIOR TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SYSTEM

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 1. | Christ is superior to all previous revelation | chapter 1 : 1 - 3 |
| 2. | Christ is superior to angels
His deity is superior
His humanity is superior | chapter 1 : 4 - 2 : 18
1 : 4 - 14
2 : 1- 18 |
| | 1 st DANGER Warning Beware of Drifting! | 2 : 1- 4 |
| 3. | Christ is superior to Moses and the Mosaic system | chapter 3 : 1 - 4 : 2 |
| | 2 nd DANGER Warning Beware of Doubting | 3 : 7 - 4 : 2 |
| 4. | Christ is superior to Joshua | chapter 4 : 3 - 13 |
| 5. | Christ is superior to the Levitical Priesthood
He is our Great High Priest4 :
Who is a Priest? | chapter 4 : 14 - 7 :28
4 : 14 - 16
5 : 1- 10 |
| | 3 rd DANGER Warning Beware of Not Hearing | 5 : 11 - 14 |
| | 4 th DANGER Warning Beware of Departing | 6 : 1- 20 |
| 6. | Christ is after (superior to) Melchizedek
He is superior to Abraham
He provides better assurance than other priesthoods
He provides a better covenant
(He sums up all perfection and permanence in his priesthood | chapter 7 : 1- 28
7 : 1- 10
7 : 11 - 19
7 : 20 - 28
7 : 23 - 28 |
| 7. | Christ has a superior sanctuary to the old priesthoods - a better covenant built upon better promises.
We have a true tabernacle
We have a new covenant
We have a true sanctuary
We have a superior sacrifice
We have the Lord's encouragement | chapter 8 : 1 - 10 : 39
8 : 1- 5
8 : 6 - 13
9 : 1- 10
9 : 11 - 10 : 18
10 : 19 - 25 |
| | 5 th DANGER Warning Beware of Despising | 10 : 26 - 39 |

PART 2 CHRIST BRINGS BETTER BENEFITS AND BETTER DUTIES Chapters 11 -13

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | Faith | 11 : 1 - 40 |
| 2. | Hope The Exhortation to Hope(Confidence) and Endurance
The Christian Race
Our Athletic contest
The Discipline of the Son who the Father wants to win
Advance in your training with confidence
Know to what place you have come | 12 : 1 - 29
12 : 1, 2,
12 : 3 - 4.
12 : 5 - 11
12 : 12 - 17
12 : 18 - 24 |
| | 6 th DANGER Warning Warning Against Indifference | 12 : 25 - 29 |
| 3. | Love
The secret life of the believer
The social life of the believer
The spiritual life of believers
Benediction | 13 : 1 - 25
13 : 1- 6
13 : 7 - 14
13 : 15 - 19
13 : 20 - 24 |

CHAPTER 1

SECTION 1 CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE PROPHETS - CHAPTER 1:1-3

HEBREWS 1:1- 3

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

KEY WORDS

Sundry	polumeros	piecemeal, over a long time.
Divers	polutropos	in many varied ways.
Spoke	Laleo	aoist, active, participle, with dative of advantage. Has spoken to, completed action in view, with benefit to those spoken to.
Last days		a phrase used by the Rabbis indicating the time of Messiah.
Spoken	laleo	aoist, active, indicative; once again the completed action of the verb. As the Lord spoke thru the prophets, so he has completed speaking thru Christ.
Appointed	tithemi	aoist, active, indicative; he has placed, appointed, assigned.
Heir	kleronomos	the one to whom the total deeds of the property fall as sole heir of all things.
Made	Poieo	aoist, active, indicative; he made, created, formed, completed action.
Worlds	aionas	plural, the ages of time (also physical astronomical worlds)
Being	Eimi	absolute being of the creator God in view here. JHWH.
Brightness	apaugasma	radiance, shekinah glory of God, radiating as the Sun, not reflecting like the moon. This is a direct claim of Godhead for the Son of God. He is JHWH. Express image character impression, stamp of the original, exact reproduction of,
His person	hupostasis	the substance of God. The nature/substance/essence of his being, of the Lord, is equal to, identical with God the Father.
Upholding	phero	present, active, participle; he dynamically holds the universe together, and is the one, whose power, directs its operation and destiny.
Word	rema	spoken word.
Power	dunamis	dynamic power; once again the Lord is active, not the passive "first cause".
Purged	katharismos	cleansing, purification, in the sense of dealing with the spiritual needs.
Had	Poieo	aoist, middle, participle; in his own person he did the purging of sin, and the action is completed.
Sat down	kathizo	aoist, active, indicative; he took his seat of power and authority, as a king or general does once victory is won, or a task completed.
Right hand	dexia	the place of honour and power and authority. Refer Ephesians 1:20 also.
Majesty	megalosune	the majesty, glory and wonder of the highest kingship.
High	upselos	in the heavens(as high as you can get).

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Introduction of the Unique Son. Verses 1 - 3

The writer of Hebrews has a central theme, that is, the pre-eminence of the Son in his person over all created beings, and in His perfect work for mankind's salvation his pre eminence over all previous works by God's servants, be they angelic or human. He is the unique person of the universe, the only one with the position, purpose and power of the only born one of God.

All aspects of the Divine Drama of Redemption were part of the plan of God to bring salvation, and all had their part to play and played it equally, until the Lord Jesus Christ came. He alone is head and shoulders above all the rest or the servants of the salvation plan, for he is both it's author, with the Father, and He is it's focus.

Hebrews is the book that with Colossians, tells us of the glory of the Lord; He is high, and here He is lifted up.

SEVEN GLORIES OF HIS UNIQUENESS:

1. Jesus Christ is the heir of all things.
2. Jesus Christ is the focal point of history.
3. Jesus Christ is the revealer of the Holy Character of God.
4. Jesus Christ is co-equal with God the Father.
5. Jesus Christ is the Creator and sustainer of the universe.
6. Jesus Christ is the Saviour of mankind.
7. Jesus Christ won the Angelic Conflict.

While the revelation through the prophets was mediated by Angels, the Son is superior to angels; therefore, he delivers through his life and work, a superior revelation. The writer is making a strong contrast between the past and the present; he is in effect saying to quote W B Yeats from his poem 1916, "all is changed, changed utterly, a terrible beauty is born".

The birth, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord changes history forever. There is now time before the Cross and empty tomb, and time after it. The contrast he is making underlines for the first Jewish believers in the Lord, that the Lord is superior to all they had in Judaism, and that they are to move on and away from their old way of worship and life to the new way he has opened up for them. With the torn Temple curtain the very fabric of Judaism has been torn from top to bottom. God has opened the way directly in to his presence and there is no more need, nor place, for priests and sacrifices. The Cross is empty, the tomb is empty, and so is the Temple Mount after the Romans judged apostate Judea in August of 70AD.

Verse 1. This book begins with no introduction. The author prefers to remain hidden, and for a reason; his subject is Christ, and he does not want to get distracted onto any other person. There is no celebrity other than the Lord of glory, and this is the theme that the author is going to try to get across to the early hearers of the letter, and through the same Holy Spirit to ourselves.

The letter begins with the person and plan of God, and goes straight to the point that God has communicated with humanity over the centuries. No people group has ever been left without witness in God's creation. It has come in many different ways, at many different times and places, but we have never been without revelation.

It is interesting to observe that religious thought and practises are a part of all cultures and the archaeologists tell us that they have found no peoples who have not worshipped. Atheism is a recent and actually quite rare phenomena in history, and a sign of the end. Psalm 2:1ff.

God has spoken in the past in many different ways and through many different means, but in these last days the Lord has spoken directly in the person, and through the words and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The writer contrasts all previous history with the present revelation of the Lord. To the Jewish believers the system of Judaism was still their faith, the faith that looked for the coming Son, and therefore the vindicated faith. They clung to it, to it's rituals and the glory of the Temple system.

It had all spoken of him and it was all precious to them for that. The writer is going to call them out, to tell them to walk away from the rituals forever, and even to leave their precious city of Jerusalem itself, but he is gentle with them and does not rush to that point. He lays his case out in this letter, and begins with the prophets, and moves from there to each of the elements of the system of Judaism, demonstrating point by point the superiority of the Lord and the need to separate themselves from the past completely, so as to better witness to the newness of life in Christ.

The contrast in these first verses is strong; in the prophets, is compared to, in the Son. The stark contrast is meant to be felt like a lightning bolt. Israel considered itself a nation built upon the Fathers, the Law, and the Prophets. By the end of verse one the writer has confronted the hearers with the fact that the Lord is superior to the Fathers, and the prophets. The fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and all the great prophets are consigned simply to the past, it is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son, who is the person of the present and the future. He alone is our eternal and temporal hope!

Verse 2. In verse two this superiority is underlined again by the concept of heirship. The Son has already been appointed the heir of all things; He now holds the title deeds to the inheritance passed on to him by the Fathers and the prophets, but even more, he is appointed heir by God the Father.

He is heir by appointment, through what he has done during his incarnation, but even before this the writer reminds us he was the creator of all things. He made the worlds. Note that the word translated "worlds" refers to far more than the physical world and planets, and universe, it refers to the various ages of history. This concept takes us even further than the notion of a physical creator, and brings us face to face with eternity, before space and time were made! He formed the very elements that form Einstein's equation.

Verse 3. Verse three goes even further, and would have shaken the first hearers and brought them to their knees. The first point the writer makes is that the Son was the very ‘Shekinah’ glory of the Godhead. To be the brightness of the glory of God he had to shine in his own person as God. He is JHWH of the past age of Israel, and he is the Son in this new age! He is the exact image of the Godhead, the very substance (hupostasis = standing stable under one essence) of God.

This is the most powerful verse claiming the deity of Christ. Not only was he creator of the ages, he is upholder of all matter and energy in the universe. He is not a “clock-winder” for the universe, but the dynamic force ever behind it all. He established the power within the atoms that make up the universe, and he controls their power and their ultimate destiny. The universe and all it contains, and where it is going, is all in his hands.

He spoke the universe into existence, and it was and is under the power of his spoken word. He visited this tiny planet to fulfil his plan, and once he did that he re-entered heaven and sat down on the “right hand” of God the Father. Remember, when you read this that the meaning of these words to the hearers is the clue to the significance of each of these verses. It is the Jewish way of seeing things that gives us the clue to the author’s points. Messiah’s role was to “purge sin”, and the task was perfectly completed. The word used indicates the completeness of both his cleansing and purification of the sin problem of mankind; the good news that we have to proclaim is that the sin problem for mankind has been solved perfectly and forever.

He sits at the right hand of the “greatness on high”. To sit in the ancient world was the sign of the person in authority, and to sit on the right hand of a king was the sign of heirship; it was the place of power. While the king ruled he ruled through the actions of the one who sat on his right hand.

This is the writer’s point; the Lord Jesus Christ is the on-going and active ruler of the universe, sitting at the place of power. He is perfectly secure in his position, in his power, his purpose and plan, and has provision for those who serve him. We serve the living God, and he is in the place of power and provision for us. We have all the resources we need to follow his instructions for he is King of kings and Lord of lords, and post-Pentecost has given us all the Spirit to indwell.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

There is only one true Celebrity in the history of this world, and HE is the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us each examine ourselves in the matter of pride, for before him all our pride must evaporate like the mist when the sun rises. **Matthew 6:28-34, James 1:10-11.** The writer brings us face to face with the glory of the Lord as our Saviour God, and this glory must get into us, enliven us and burn out all impurity and foolishness. In the Lord’s service there are no celebrities, only servants, who are honoured, and will receive great blessing now and forever, in and through their service. **John 12:26, 13:4-17.**

Do we remember our place, not in false humility, but in truth and confidence? We are the servants of the living God, we are not just servants, but members of his Royal Family through our position in Christ Jesus. These things are things to glory in each day. No believer who knows these things has any shortage of matters for thanksgiving and praise daily.

All the peoples of the history of the earth have worshipped. They have done so in many different ways through the ages, and the writer here tells us that all is changed by the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The question we must ask ourselves is, do we worship as if we understand the final and superior nature of the revelation contained in the person and work of the Lord? He is our great Creator - God and he has completed the work for mankind’s redemption, and sits at the right hand of majesty waiting for the moment, that he alone knows, when he will end the process of this age of history by his return. Do we see this? Do our actions and our worship reflect the knowledge of this?

All that is in the realm of space and time were made by him, and he is Creator-Lord and King of all! What is our response to all this? Do we worship his majesty, or is our worship as formal and stale as the Israelite’s had become within the confines of their Rabbi controlled (Rabbinic) Judaism. The writer will call these people out from their formal religiosity to a living daily newness of faith and worship of the Lord of lords. As we reflect on who he is let us also reflect on the need to test all our actions, and all our worship to ensure it is appropriate to the one who has called us to live in his light. **John 8:12, 12:35-46, Ephesians 5:8.**

Do we see the position of the Lord now? He is seated at the place of power over all that is in space and time. Is there any shortage of power with him? The answer can only be a resounding, “NO!!!”. If the Lord has the power and glory, we have the position in Him whereby we have the provisions we need to do all that he asks us to do. Do we rejoice in his power and provision or are we moaning in the midst of our problems? Given his high position, we have no problems, only opportunities to see his power work out in time, over which he is Lord!

What a difference this knowledge will make to our lives our witness and our worship, If it is applied to the testing situations of our daily life. This letter is full of such challenges; let us meet them with confidence in the person and power of the one whom we lift our voices to and worship.

B. PASTORAL

God has never left man without his witness and word. God has always spoken, even though in many different ways; by direct promises, by words heard aloud, by dreams, by visions, by laws, by rituals, through history's processes, by poetry given to holy men and women, through teaching of Holy Spirit empowered people. All these have had but one objective, and the writer's point is, that objective has been reached in his age; the long expected Messiah has come. God has not just spoken, he has come, he has pitched his tent amongst his people, the creator has become a creature and dwelt amongst us. He has revealed his plan down the ages, and in this generation, the writer says, he has taken his prophesied place as the central person in this plan.

Whenever we stand before people to proclaim the gospel message, let us remember that this is it! He has come, God has stepped down and entered his creation, this is the visited planet! The glory of this "good news" must never be lost. The incarnation is the amazing event of all history.

All too often we follow the teaching of men, and the emphasis that our church has had rather than the central message of our apostolic faith. That central message is the message of the incarnation, the glory and wonder of the person and work of Christ. Our early brothers and sisters in Christ did not preach, "hell fire and damnation", they preached the "good news" of a visited planet, and a completed plan for the salvation of all who would place their faith and hope in the risen Lord of all.

Their message was a hope filled and powerful one to a world hungry for light. In our day, as in the days of our spiritual fathers, unsaved mankind is seeing more and more the black holes of hopelessness, they see the dark of evil. Our task is to let the light shine so that they might see hope.

In all our preaching the central message MUST get through to all the hearers; that the Lord has come, that he rules and that his plan is going to its inevitable conclusion. History is "HIS STORY", and the next main event is his return to rule on earth. Some say, "wow, isn't the tribulation next?", well, yes it is, but it's not the "main event", just another satanic side track for those who reject the Lord of Lords. The "main event" is the Second Advent – the Lord is coming, and He will be victorious!

Our message must emphasize the glory and person of the Lord for it is he alone who rules and we are on His side, the winning side. This positive and powerful confidence filled message must be the one that all hear from us as his preachers. Christianity is Christ, and his person and work are all positive. There is nothing negative in the person or work of the risen Lord. The unbelievers must know when they walk away from him, that they walk away from hope, power, life and peace; they deny themselves a future, for they have walked away from the Lord of and over all. This is the powerful message that flows from these first verses of this great letter. Let us ensure we get it right so that all might know the one of whom this letter speaks.

DOCTRINES

SERVICE

1. Our duty is to surrender our entire lives to God. (Romans 12:1)
2. Willingness is essential. (Judges 5:2, 8:25, Isaiah 1:19, 2 Corinthians 8:3)
3. Service in the big things requires by faithfulness in the small things.
4. Monotony and difficulties are transformed into the opportunities with the correct attitude (Matthew 6:33)
5. Everything we do should be "as unto the Lord" (Colossians 3:17)
6. Service to Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men (Romans 14:18)
7. Our work should be completed. (John 4:34, 17:4, Acts 20:24, 2 Timothy 4:7)
8. The example of Christ. (Matthew 20:28, Luke 22:27, Philippians 2:7)
9. Qualities of our service:-
 - a) It is demanded. (Hebrews 12:28)
 - b) It should be immediate. (Matthew 21:28)
 - c) It is abundant. (1 Corinthians 15:58)
 - d) It is according to ability. (Matthew 25:22, Luke 12:48)
 - e) It is in co-operation with God. (2 Corinthians 6:1)
 - f) Must be exclusive (Luke 16:13)
 - g) In the power of the spirit (Romans 1:9)
 - h) Undertaken in Godly fear (Hebrews 12:28)
 - i) Motivated by love (Galatians 5:13)
10. It is :-
 - a) following Christ (John 12:26)

- b) for him whom all Christians serve (Colossians 3:24)
- c) service to God. (Acts 27:23)

11. It requires:-

- a) turning from idols (1 Thessalonians 1:9)
- b) fasting and prayer (Luke 2:37)
- c) ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-4)

12. Benefits of Service:-

- a) It glorifies God. (Matthew 5:16, John 15:8)
- b) It enriches life. (1 Timothy 6:18-19)
- c) It gives a pattern for imitation. (Titus 2:7)
- d) It encourages others in their tasks. (Hebrews 10:24)
- e) It shows neighbourliness. (Luke 10:36-37)
- f) It lightens life's burdens. (Galatians 6:2,16)
- g) It demonstrates love. (John 21:15-17)
- h) It demonstrates faith. (James 2:17-18, 1 Peter 2:12)
- i) It is Christlike. (John 13:12-15)

13. The model servant (Genesis 24)

- a) does not pre-empt his master. (v2-9) We should wait upon the Lord and not run ahead of time.
- b) goes where he is sent (v4,10). We should be in the geographical will of God.
- c) does nothing else. God has specific tasks for every believer to perform. We should concentrate on our own area and not get sidetracked.
- d) is prayerful and thankful. We should always realise where our power comes from and not get proud when we have spiritual blessings and prosperity.
- e) is keen to succeed (v 17-18, 21). We should be keen to evangelise. (Romans 1:14-16)
- f) speaks not of himself but of his master. Who and what we are is not important, who and what Christ is of the greatest importance. (v 22, 34-36)
- g) presents the true issue and requires a clear decision. (v49) We should present the gospel and other doctrine clearly and expect results.

WORSHIP AND PRAISE

1. The Hebrew word used in worship is "shokoh" - to bow down.
2. The Greek words are as follows:-
 - a) proskueo - prostrate yourself. (1 Corinthians 14:5)
 - b) sebomai - lack of arrogance. (Matthew 15:9)
 - c) sebazomai - stand in awe. (Romans 1:25)
 - d) eusebeo - act with devotion. (Acts 17:23)
3. Worship is the attitude of the believer when he approaches God in awe, fear and respect. (1 Chronicles 29:20, Matthew 22:21, Romans 13:17)
4. We should never be casual or flippant with God. (John 13:13, Hebrew 10:19-21)
5. Worship is an expression of bible doctrine that a believer has in him and is applying. All expression of doctrine is worship. (Nehemiah 8:6-10, 9:3)
6. We should worship the Lord in spirit, controlled by the Holy Spirit, and in truth, reflecting doctrine accurately. (John 4:23-24)
7. It is therefore of critical importance that we worship in accordance with biblical doctrines. This is especially important in singing as because of pleasant music it is easy to forget or ignore the meaning of the words being sung.
8. People worshipped the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 2:11, 9:38)

9. People who do not worship God will worship demons. (Deuteronomy 8:19-20, 11:16, 30:17-20, Romans 1:25)
10. All will eventually bow before the Lord. (Isaiah 45:23, Romans 14:11, Philippians 2:10)
11. In eternity there will be perfect worship as there will be perfect knowledge of doctrine. (Revelation 4:8-11)
12. Worship begins at salvation. (Mark 5:1-10, 18-20)
13. Worship expresses a believers concentration on his Lord. (Psalms 29, 66, 96, John 12:1-11)
14. The song of worship. (1 Chronicles 16:7-36)
15. We worship through:-
 - a) Reading God's Word. (Colossians 4:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:27, 1 Timothy 4:13)
 - b) Studying God's Word. (2 Timothy 2:15, 3:15)
 - c) Teaching God's Word. (Acts 2:42, 6:7, 12:24, 18:28, 1 Timothy 4:6, 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:2)
 - d) Preaching God's Word. (2 Timothy 4:2)
 - e) The sacrifice of our praise. (Hebrews 13:15)
 - f) The sacrifice of our good works. (Hebrews 13:16)
 - g) The sacrifice of our bodies. (Romans 12:1)
 - h) The sacrifice of our substance. (Philippians 4:18)
 - i) The receiving of His Son. (John 1:11-12)
 - j) The keeping of the Ordinances. (1 Corinthians 11:2)
 - k) Through the singing of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs. (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, James 5:13)
 - l) Prayers, Intercessions, Supplications and Thanksgiving. (Acts 2:42, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6, Colossians 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, 8)

(MANY DOCTRINES OF CHRIST WILL BE COVERED IN THIS STUDY OF HEBREWS – IT'S ALL ABOUT HIM)

CHRIST JESUS – EMMANUEL

1. SCRIPTURE - He is the Word John 1:1-5,14

2. BIOGRAPHY

As God, Jesus Christ has existed eternally with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (John 1:1-5). As the God-man, Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20), born of a Jewish virgin, Mary (Matthew 1:18) in Bethlehem of Judea in 6 BC. His legal father was Joseph. Both Joseph (Matthew 1:16) and Mary (Luke 3:23), were descended from David, through Solomon and Nathan. Circumcised on the eighth day (Luke 2:21-24). He grew in knowledge and grace. He was baptised by his kinsman, John the Baptist, in the Jordan (Matthew 3:13-17) at the commencement of His ministry, and then went into the desert to be tempted by the devil for 40 days and nights (Matthew 4:1-11). Jesus spent the next three years in a ministry ranging throughout Palestine, healing the sick, preaching, teaching and encouraging those to whom He ministered that they turn to God. Betrayed by one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, He suffered six trials before Jewish and Roman dignitaries before being condemned to death. He died on the cross on the Passover in AD 32, completing His perfect ministry and life on earth, and securing salvation. God raised Jesus from the dead on the feast of first fruits three days later. He ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives ten days before Pentecost (Acts 1:8-11). In heaven He was given the place of commendation at the right hand of the Father, where He makes intercession for us and waits for His enemies to be made His footstool. Jesus Christ will return with His saints to reign for 1000 years (Revelation 20:1-6) and will judge unbelievers at the last judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). Believers will spend eternity with Jesus Christ.

3. EVALUATION

Jesus Christ has absolute characteristics:

- a) Sovereign of the universe. Yet He became subject to human frailty.
- b) Absolutely righteous. Yet He became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- c) Totally fair. He is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9).
- d) Complete love. He provided salvation for us while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:8).
- e) Everlasting life. He became subject to death, even the death of the cross.
- f) All knowing. He knows everything from beginning to the end.
- g) All powerful. Yet He allowed Himself to become the perfect sacrifice.
- h) Everywhere. Which means He can assist each believer individually in the Christian life (Matthew 28:19,20).

- i) Unchangeable. Thus His promises are always true and never change (Hebrews 13:8).
- j) Truth. Thus in a world of half truths and lies we have a person with absolute purity and truth (John 14:6).

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) As a perfect person with no sinful nature, Jesus Christ was able to provide salvation.
- b) Jesus Christ at all times worked in conformity with God's will (John 10:30).
- c) God had to forsake His Son on the cross when He judged the sins of the world in Christ.
- d) In Christ we are seated in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6).
- e) Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35).
- f) There is only one way to God, through Jesus Christ (John 14:6).
- g) We will be resurrected as believers to life eternal with Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).
- h) Jesus will return again to reign from Jerusalem for 1000 years (Revelation 20:4).
- i) Satan is a defeated foe (Colossians 2:15).
- j) We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us (Romans 8:37).

5. HIS PURPOSE

- a) He came as God's perfect sacrifice for sin (John 1:29).
- b) He came to be lifted up (John 3:13-15).
- c) He came as the Bread of Life (John 6:50-51).
- d) He came as the Good Shepherd (John 10:10-11).
- e) He came to die for the people (John 10:49-52).
- f) His cross came before His crown (John 12:23-24).
- g) On the Cross righteousness and justice met, only then was God free to love man in Christ (John 15:12-14).

SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST

The glorified Jesus Christ is superior to angels (Hebrews 1)

- a) in Name (Hebrews 1:4)
- b) in relationship (Hebrews 1:5)
- c) at the Second Advent (Hebrews 1:6)
- d) in His ministry (Hebrews 1:7,8)
- e) in appointment (Hebrews 1:9)
- f) as Creator (Hebrews 1:10)
- g) in character (Hebrews 1:11)
- h) in His position (Hebrews 1:13).

LIGHT

1. God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5)
2. The Lord is the visible manifestation of that light. (John 1:4, 8:12, 12:46)
3. The Lord's coming as the Light of the World was prophesied. (Isaiah 49:6)
4. The light was seen in the darkness of the world. (Matthew 4:16, Luke 2:32)
5. The Lord brought light and immortality through the gospel. (2 Timothy 1:10)
6. Believers are said to be light bearers. (Matthew 5:14-16, John 12:36)
7. We are said to be the children of the light. (John 11:9-10, Ephesians 5:8, 1 Thessalonians 5:5, 1 Peter 2:9)
8. Light is necessary for man's existence on the earth. (Ecclesiastes 11:7; Jeremiah 31:35)
9. Divine guidance of Israel was provided by God through light. (Exodus 14:20)
10. Bible doctrine in the soul is portrayed by light. (Psalms 119, 105,130)
11. The gospel is called light. (2 Corinthians 4:3,4; 2 Timothy 1:10)

12. Salvation brings the believer out of darkness into light just as the planet Earth was brought out of darkness into light by God. (Luke 1:79; 1 Peter 2:9).
13. Satan is the distorter, the angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:14)
14. Satan's strategy is to outshine the true light with his own false gospel. (2 Corinthians 4:3-6)

PROPHET

1. The gift of prophecy and the office of the prophet are distinguished in Scripture. In the Old Testament there were those who had the office of prophet, and served in an official capacity within the worship system of Israel but there were also those who at times were given the gift of prophecy to give a special prophecy even though they were not full time prophets. Elijah was a man with the office and the gift, where-as David had the gift at times but not the office.
2. The roles of the person with the office of prophet were many and varied:
 - a) - Aaron was a preacher Exodus 7:1
 - b) - In Nehemiah's time the prophet-preacher had a role to exegete the Word of God clearly so that the people would know the truth. Nehemiah 6:7, Hosea 6:5,
 - c) - As revivalists they were to call people to repentance. Judges 6:7-12, Zechariah 7:7-12.
 - d) - They were to oppose apostasy so that those who were likely to be misled by a false teacher would have no excuse. 1 Kings 18:36-39, 40, 2 Chronicles 25:15 Ezekiel 2:5, 2 Kings 20:11.
 - e) - They were encouragers of the people. Ezra 5:2.
 - f) - They were sometimes song/worship leaders for the people. 1 Samuel 10:5.
 - g) - They led in prayer at worship. 2 Chronicles 32:20.
 - h) - They were the advisers to the kings and they were associated with coronations. 1 Samuel 10:1, 1 Kings 11:28, 29, 2 Kings 9:1-6, 2 Chronicles 12:5, 2 Chronicles 12:6, 15:2-7.
 - i) - They were spiritual advisers or seers for the kings; they "saw" the immediate future and so were able to advise the kings of the right decisions. 1 Samuel 9:9, 2 Samuel 24:11, 1 Chronicles 21:9, 24:29, 2 Chronicles 19:2, 33:18, 2 Kings 17:13, Isaiah 29:10,
 - j) - They were fore-tellers of significant future events. 2 Samuel 7:5-16, Amos 9:11, Isaiah 9:6,7, Isaiah 53, Ezekiel 34:22ff, Micah 5:2, Daniel 9:26, Zechariah 13:8, Joel, Zechariah 14, and many more.
 - k) - God intended them to be the shepherds and vine-dressers of the nation. As such they were to be the type of Christ, who is referred to in the Old Testament as "the great prophet". Deuteronomy 18:15-19, Zechariah 13:5,6, Matthew 21:11, Luke 7:16, 8:18-20, 24:19,23-26, John 7:40,41.
3. The Methodology of the prophets. There was no "set" formula for the prophets to follow, but certain things were established as "tests" for the people to be sure the prophet was genuine.
 - a) - The prophet had to have a spiritual life witness that was like Moses. Deuteronomy 34:10-12.
 - b) - God spoke to the prophets by dreams and visions. God spoke to Moses face to face but he was an exception. Numbers 12:6-7.
 - c) - The prophet had to be totally confident of his message, as he was judged by God if there was any falsehood in it. 1 Kings 22:13,14, 2 Kings 5:8.
 - d) - There were to be no secret prophecies, everything was to be open and clear, so that all the people might be warned of God. Jeremiah 23:25-29.
 - e) - The prophet had to be specific in his message and had to be obeyed literally. 2 Kings 5:10-19, note especially verse 13.
4. There were always false prophets; in fact the great prophets of the Old Testament were always outnumbered by false prophets in their own day. Jeremiah 2:8, Ezekiel 13:1-23.

Our Lord warned us that there will always be false prophets about. Matthew 7:15-23.

Note The Lord's Words here in that the personal walk of the prophet is to be paid attention to:-

No spiritual fruit in their life = no truth in their words.

God allows the false prophets to operate without immediate judgement upon them, so that believers are always presented with an obedience test, to see whether we will obey the Scriptures or follow our own lusts to judgement.

False prophets will abound at times of poor Bible teaching. Weeds only grow in poorly cared for soil. Hosea 4:5,6, 9:7,8.

5. Tests that believers must apply when confronting a person claiming the gift of prophecy.
 - a) - The words of the prophet will never contradict the Word of God. Jeremiah 23:33-36, 2 Peter 2:1-3, 1Corinthians 14:32.
 - b) - The prophet will never call people away from genuine worship of God. Deuteronomy 13:1-5.
 - c) - The prophet will always be specific and the prophecy will be able to be tested. Deuteronomy 18 : 20 - 22, Jeremiah 28 : 9.
 - d) - Any prophet who asked for money was to be treated as false. Jeremiah 8:10.
 - e) - Any prophet who was a drunkard was to be treated as false. Micah 2:11.
 - f) Any unconfessed sin of envy, jealousy, strife, etc in their life , they were false! Jeremiah 23 : 11.
 - g) - If they were found only in groups they were probably false, as God's prophets were men alone. 1 Kings 22:5-8, 18:22.
 - h) - Does the prophecy accord with Scripture (this is more than just not contradict)? 1 Corinthians 14:37,38, 2Kings 23:2.

PARAPHRASE

In very many ways, over the whole history of mankind, God has spoken to our ancestors through the prophets, but in these last "Messianic" days he has spoken directly to us in and through his Son. This is he who he has appointed the heir of all things, through and by whom he created the ages of time. He is the Shekinah glory of old, JHWH, the exact expression of the substance of the Godhead, for mankind to see. Even during his time upon earth he was dynamically holding the universe together by his words of power. By himself he made the final sacrifice for mankind's sins, dealt with all our spiritual needs, then ascended back to heaven, and sat down on the right hand of power in the heavens, in the place of rulership and majesty."

NOTES

SECTION 2. CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO ANGELS - CHAPTER 1:4-18

HEBREWS 1:4-9

“4. Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, ‘Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?’ And again, ‘I will be unto him a father, and he shall be unto me a Son’ 6 And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, ‘and let all the angels of God worship him’ 7 And of the angels he saith, ‘who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire’ . 8 But unto the Son he saith, ‘thy throne oh God is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. 9 Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. ”

QUOTATIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The number of quotations from the Old Testament is very significant in this passage as seen below

“Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath 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?’ (**Psalm 2 : 7**) And again, ‘I will be unto him a father, and he shall be unto me a Son’ (**2 Samuel 7 : 14**). 6 And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, ‘and let all the angels of God worship him’ (**Psalm 97 : 7, Deuteronomy 32 : 43**). And of the angels he saith, ‘who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire’ (**Psalm 104 : 4**). But unto the Son he saith, ‘thy throne oh God is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (**Psalm 45 : 6, 7**). ”

KEY WORDS

Being made	ginomai	aorist, middle, participle; having become.
So much	tosouto	by how much more!
Better	kreitton	better by comparison, also stronger, more noble, more powerful than others.
Inheritance	kleronomeo	perfect , active, indicative; completed action, results going on forever, he has obtained the inheritance of majesty and glory, as the heir of all things.
Excellent	diaphoros	comparative also, going further than kreitton; more excellent above all kinds of beings, (here referring to the angels, who are “more excellent” than men.
Thou art	eimi	absolute, you are!, you ever will be!
Son	Huios	adult son able to be the heir.
Today	semeron	“The day spoken of here is the day of his glorious victory and vindication. The resurrection, ascension, and glorification should be viewed as forming a unity each one contributing to the exultation of the son to transcendental heights of power and dignity”(Hughes). Quoted in Reinecker, Vol 2, page 319.
Begotten	gennaio	perfect , active, indicative; once again, completed results that go on forever are in view here. The Godhead causes the birth of the Son in the human realm.
Will be	Eimi	future, middle, indicative; within the Godhead, the Father adopted a role towards the Son, as of a human father to support the son in his role/work. The Son also adopted an attitude of respectfulness towards the Father as of a son towards the father who supports him. This is HOLY GROUND here; there is far more here than we can fully know from this side of eternity.
Bringeth in	eisago	aorist, active, subjunctive; to bring into the world, in sense of presentation of a king to his subjects.
Worship	proskuneo	aorist, active, imperative, with the dative of advantage; a command, let the knee be bowed, fall on your knees and worship; there is benefit in this!
Who	ho	Literally, “HE is the one who”
Makes	Poieo	present, active, participle; keeps on making, ordering, directing, the angels to be.
Ministers	leitourgos	minister, servant, temple worker/priest, bringing God to man.
Flame of fire	puros phloga	heat/fire, a flame. Is this personification or symbolic, or do the angels really take the form of flames of fire? It may underline the fact that they are formed of a different substance than us; the matter of their bodies is energy organised in a different way to ours.
O God	o theos	the Son is here referred to as God. It is a strong reference.

Forever	eis ton aiona tou aionos	is unto the ages of the ages.
Sceptre	rabdos	the symbol of ruling power over the earth and the ages.
Righteousness	euthteros	uprightness, what is absolutely right, with honour, truth and correctness.
Love	Agapao	aorist, active, indicative; who have loved righteousness.
Hate	miseo	aorist, active, indicative; who have hated
Iniquity	anomia	lawlessness, the rejection of God's laws and standards.
Anointed	chrio	aorist, active, indicative; has anointed as a king.
Gladness	agalliasis	gladness and joy of the celebration of coronation of a king.
Fellows	metochos	partners, companions, comrades, colleagues.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

This section builds on the first three verses and demonstrates the deity of Christ, and his superiority to all created beings, for as verse two pointed out, he created the ages of time; He is the creator! Let us look at the whole section first by way of summary.

THE SEVEN SUPERIORITIES OF JESUS CHRIST: (VERSES 4 - 14)

1. His superior name. vs. 4-5 (Exalted humanity)
 2. He is the "First-Born" of all humanity; he is heir, priest for the whole family of mankind, and ruler of all. The Second Advent is when all will see Him take up His privileges as the Firstborn. vs. 6 (The right of Rule, Priesthood, and Inheritance.)
 3. He created Angels and provides their function. He is their superior and King. vs. 7
 4. He has an eternal Throne, superior to all other authorities. vs.8 (Eternal Son, Eternal Throne - based on the perfect Plan of God).
 5. His appointment (Anointing) is based on the Eternal Plan of God (Divine Decrees). vs. 9
 6. We all change, but as Immutable God, He never changes. He is superior to what we call "the laws of nature", he does not decay and die, and through his power we too enter this and defeat space, time, and death. vs. 10-12 (Eternal Life, Eternal Sovereignty).
- Remember, He created the ages of time. He is beyond the space/time structure of this universe and he holds it together. The end of the universe is described in **2 Peter 3:10-13**, and is pictured as a dissolving of the elements, at the time when the Lord stops holding them together, the universe implodes on itself.
7. His completed work was secured through his victory in the Angelic Conflict, by his defeat of Satan on the Cross, on resurrection and ascension day. vs. 13-14

The reason to set out all these things is made clear by the writer of Hebrews; "therefore", because of the place and position of the Lord as ruler of all, we must get serious about learning of what he requires and being obedient to it. "We must pay much closer attention to the things we have heard". (Doctrines of the Church Age). With this overview in mind let us examine each verse of this section in turn.

Verse 4. In his humanity the Lord Jesus Christ was born inferior to the angels, (**Hebrews 2:7, 9**), but he became their superior through victory in the Angelic Conflict (Invisible War) through the Cross and Empty Tomb, and so inherited a greater inheritance than they have. This means he has also a greater name. What does this mean?

A name in the ancient world often was a title, for example, Caesar was a name but actually a title for rulership. The name given indicated the status of the person, and new names were given to adults to reflect their status and achievements. In Roman times there are many examples of this, eg, Augustus, Germanicus, Asiaticus), and in recent English history the great general Arthur Wellesley, who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815 was given the Dukedom of Wellington after which he was always known as "Wellington". His title became his name. Think then, in light of this practise what the writer means.

What are some of the titles of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Bible Topic Book there may be as many as fifty [50!] names listed that refer to the Lord. Many of them demonstrate the superiority of the Lord over the angels.

If we look briefly at a few, that the angels and man use for him we will see the truth behind the verse. He is called by them and us, Son, Lord, Heir, King of Kings, Saviour, JHWH, Emmanuel, and Elohim. All these names are superior to the names of the angels, and the writer will take a number of these with passages from the scriptures to illustrate the Lord's prophesied superiority. He has, as the victor over sin and death, as the God-Man, "inherited" forever a superior title and position to all the angelic host, and so we, in union with Him, share this exalted position of superiority to the angels, who the author will go on to point out, now serve us. This is a momentous point and it will be repeated.

Verse 5. To underline this lordship and rulership of all things the writer asks the question; to which of the angels has God the Father ever said, “you are my Son”? This follows the same sort of question in verse four where he asks, to which of the angels has God the Father ever said, sit down at my right hand?

The answer to both questions is of course is, ‘to none’, for that place and position was the Lord’s alone. There is only one Saviour and Lord of all and it is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the central person of history for he is both creator and controller of time itself, as the writer has already identified in verses two through four. The Lord Jesus holds the universe together, and when he acts at the end of space-time it will fold up like an old tired blanket. **2 Peter 3:10-18.**

Paul will go on through the next ten verses to quote seven passages from the Old Testament which prophetically, before the Cross/Resurrection, pointed out that Messiah was superior to angels. Logic then follows, if we are now in vital and eternal union with the Lord Jesus Christ, then we are also now superior to angels!

The phrase, “this day I have begotten you”, was to cause great problems throughout early church history, for the heretics of that day, through to our own, argued that this meant the Lord was not equal to the Father, but was a created servant and therefore inferior to the Father, while being superior to angels and men. What does this passage mean?

Note first the **perfect tense** in the Greek, indicating an act at one point in time, with results that go on forever. Then look at the word, “today”, for as noted above in the Key Words section, this refers to the moment of victory not the crib in the manger. The concept of both “begotten” and “Son” (sonship) refer to his heirship not his being born as humanity. It is his position in heaven now that is the writer’s focus in this letter, and what led to that. The virgin birth and his taking on humanity will be mentioned in verse six, but his rulership stems from his victory in the Angelic Conflict and that is the “day” when he is declared the exulted and ruling Son.

There is a good word study in looking up every reference to the Lord as a “Son”, for there are many verses that refer to the Lord as Son. In the world of Jesus day there was a distinction made between a humanly born Son and the Son as Heir of all things, and a father would often wait until his natural son had proved himself worthy to rule over the house before formally adopting him as his son and heir. In Roman days the ceremony for this was called “Toga Virilis”.

The Lord is “Son of David”, and “Son of Man”, by his human birth to the Virgin Mary, by obedience in baptism the Father calls him, “Beloved Son”, through his ministry he is called the “Son of God”, but it is by victory in the Angelic Conflict, through the Cross, Resurrection, and Ascension that he enters heaven and becomes the exulted Son, the Heir of all things, the ruling Son at the right hand of the Father. The writer looks at this as, “the day of His exultation”.

The next phrase is equally important for us to bow our knees before. We are on “Holy Ground” here, and are at best scratching the surface of meaning and significance of these things, that will only be fully known in heaven itself where, freed from the shackles of time and space ourselves, we can see as clearly as the Lord does. The Lord was the true Son of the Father, in that he took the role assigned to him in perfect obedience and fulfilled it perfectly.

Verse 6. Here we come to more comfortable ground for us, to the Christmas event, the incarnation. When he was born as man to the Virgin Mary the angels were there and they worshipped him; even before his victory on the Cross and over death at the empty tomb, they worshipped Him. Even before his victory the angels recognised the one who was born to be King of Kings. If they worshipped him as the baby in the manger, for they knew who He was, how much more will they worship him as the heir of all things after his great victories in his Incarnation?

By starting at heaven and working back to earth the writer has underlined the superiority of the Lord over angels powerfully, and reminded us that we need to look up more often ourselves, and remember that we serve a risen Lord, who sits in the place of power. We have access to that place in prayer, **Hebrews 4:16**, and we will live forever in that place in the new heavens and earth that are beyond space-time.

Verse 7 In this verse the writer underlines the difference in role and position of the angels compared to the Lord. Our Lord is referred to as the “servant”, **Isaiah 42:1-4**, as quoted in Matthew 12, but even as the servant of the Father, sent to win our salvation, he has servants, as we do, and the writer points out, those servants are the angels. The angels serve both the Lord, and ourselves as his children by faith. We are part of the Angelic Conflict, and through the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour and King, we are positionally superior to the angels, and they know it.

The elect angels are our servants, and they are the Lord’s ministering spirits to the believers, to protect us in the Angelic Conflict. The angels were described by the early Hebrew writers as either like fire or wind/spirit/breath (Hebrew - ruach), both of which remind us that they are made of a different substance than us. Though superior in form and power, now they are our servants, and through our position in Christ, they are inferior to us, and certainly inferior to the Lord of all.

Verse 8 The passage from Psalm 45 refers to the ruling power and majesty of the Lord. His royal throne (thronos) is forever; he has won a throne by his work on the Cross, that is an everlasting one. The symbol of world rulership, the sceptre, is the sceptre of righteousness, for that is the nature of his victory; it was the victory of righteousness over sin and evil and death. He has a kingdom, and he is a king forever. The angels are servants forever, but the Lord’s service to the father makes him King forever after.

Verse 9. The Lord's perfect character as will be revealed in the person and work of Jesus the Messiah is prophesied here in Psalm 45, and the writer of this letter reminds us all that it referred to our Lord. He loved righteousness, and he was perfectly righteous. He alone was fit and able to go to the Cross and pay the sacrifice for the sin of mankind, and he did it in perfect righteousness, as the perfect sacrifice. Righteousness and Justice are the two sides of the Holy Character of God that meet at the Cross, just as they met above the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant. **Psalm 89:15, 97:2, Isaiah 9: 6-7.** In his perfect person and completed work the Lord Jesus fulfilled all the elements that were part of the Mosaic Law, right down to the very structure of the Ark.

For his completed work he is anointed as the victorious King, and is exulted, receiving a higher place above his companions upon the earth, his disciples, and also all mankind who will follow him. He has been lifted up, as a man, above all mankind, through his victorious work in defeating the power of sin and death, and has become LORD OF ALL "lords" (angelic forces) AND KING OF ALL KINGS (human rulers).

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

We celebrate Christmas, the day of the remembrance of the Lord's human birth to the Virgin Mary, and it is important to remember the incarnation, for our salvation depends on his being "Immanuel"; fully human as well as truly God, but why is it that for most, we do not refer to or celebrate the Ascension to heaven and the time when He came into his true Sonship and Heirship of all things, for this is his place now. **Isaiah 7:13-17, 9:1-7, 13, 21, Acts 1:4-12.**

He is no longer the "gentle Jesus meek and mild" of the song, he is the ruler of all things, and he sits at the right hand of majesty. It is this exulted place that has significance to us, for it is from here that he answers prayer and controls the destiny of his church. We need again to be reminded of heavenly realities for our destiny and eternal security is rooted and grounded in these things.

In our daily life we will find the tests of faith easier to handle if we have the "eternal life perspective"; that is, if we see things from the perspective of eternity rather than time. The biggest challenge is often not sin, rather it is distraction. We are distracted by the things of space and time, the things that will not last, and so we miss out on seeing the things that matter eternally.

The Lord calls us as the risen, exulted Lord of glory, seated at the right hand of majesty: this is our Lord and King, he is the one we are to serve and look to. Have you this day had that vision of reality? For that is the truth for you and I!

It is vital we know the details of his earthly ministry and remember his words, for they are our guide to life here and now, but it is equally vital we remember where and who he is now and worship his majesty. Have you today bowed before his majesty and given praise for who he is and the power he has over your life? Many today are living their lives in awe of angels and in fear of demons. There is no doctrinal/biblical truth that would produce such beliefs or behaviours.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews has begun his letter with a strong challenge to get our perspective right. The Lord is lord of all, and that means he has power and ruling authority over angels, both elect and fallen demons.

Through our position with him we are in a superior place ourselves to the angels and demons. No angel can do anything other than obey him, and the elect angels are our servants under the authority of the Lord to serve us so that we can be without distraction in the Angelic Conflict. Their job is to handle the demonic forces that might sidetrack and hurt us, so that we are free to do our job of life witness, evangelism and teaching about the Lord of Glory. Let the angels do their job; do not give a thought to the demons, leave them for the angels to deal with, and concentrate on doing your job believer!

The Lord desires us to have a daily appreciation of his position, his power, and his plans for us. He is Lord of the angels, and he is our Lord; let us serve him in appreciation of these things, and obedience to his clear teachings. In light of this, "Give no thought to your life...." Just serve the Lord in spirit and in truth. **Matthew 6:25-34, Luke 12:22ff.**

B. PASTORAL

As pastors are we not challenged as we read this letter? How much emphasis in our teaching have we given to the present position, power and place of the Lord Jesus as king of kings and lord of lords? Do people get the impression of majesty when they hear us speak of the Lord? We serve a risen Saviour, an exulted Lord, a coming King, and this powerful image is the one that must be before our people at all times in their daily battles in the world of distraction in which we live.

The Lord's superiority over angels and demons is to be clearly taught. Too many live as if the Angelic Conflict depends on them! He is in control and has already won the war, and we are to live as victors not be cowering like cowards in fear of demons, or in awe of angels. They are either our servants or our enemies; our servants, the elect angels follow the Lord's direction to keep us safe and secure, while the demons are dealt with by the angels, and themselves can do nothing unless the Lord allows them! **1 John 4:4.**

Biblical perspective saves us from fear, but the people must hear these truths before they can believe and apply them. Let us preach the whole counsel of God's Word and so save our brethren from fear and distraction.

DOCTRINES**ANGEL**

1. There are two kinds of angels:

- a) Elect Angels (1 Timothy 5:21) - those which have chosen to remain with God.
- b) Fallen angels - those which have rebelled against God and followed Satan:
 - i) imprisoned ones (Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4) - apparently active on earth prior to the Flood (Genesis 6).
 - ii) demons, currently active on earth (1 Corinthians 10:20,21, Mark 5:1-20).

2. There are various orders in the angelic realm.

- a) Cherubim (highest order) - (Genesis 3:24, Exodus 25:19-20). Cherubs were originally the defenders of divine holiness. Lucifer (Satan) was a cherub (Ezekiel 28:14).
- b) Seraphim - (Isaiah 6:2). Seraph means burning ones.
- c) Rulers, Principalities and Powers - can refer to human authorities, but usually refers to angels (and generally to fallen angels). (Ephesians 3:10, 6:12, Colossians 1:16). They control certain segments of the human race, they can control the voice and the mind (Mark 5:1-20).
- d) Ministering Angels
 - i) Guardian angels (Hebrews 1:14). Protect and assist believers.
 - ii) Angels of the waters (Revelation 16:5). Water is used as a prison. Abyss (Greek), refers to an underwater prison.
 - iii) Angels of the abyss (Revelation 9:1,11). An angel which has a special responsibility for the abyss.
 - iv) Angel of fire (Revelation 14:18).
 - v) Angels of judgment (Revelation 8:2, chapters 15,16) - trumpets and bowls.
 - vi) Watcher angels (Daniel 4:13).

3. Appearance of angels:

- a) Angels can appear as human beings (Genesis 18:1-2, Hebrews 13:2)
- b) Angels are described variously as having wings, many eyes, many faces (Isaiah 6:2, Ezekiel 1) and often glow with brilliant light (Matthew 28:2-3).
- c) Lucifer (Satan) was the most beautiful creature ever to come from the hand of God (Ezekiel 28:12-17).
- d) Angels are NOT pink fat babies with wings, or red skinned creatures with horns and forked tails.

4. Named angels:

- a) Lucifer, son of the morning, was the covering cherub over the Throne of God (Isaiah 14:12). His name is now Satan, the accuser/slanderer (Revelation 12:10).
- b) Gabriel a messenger angel (Daniel 8:16, 9:21, Luke 1:19,26).
- c) Michael a fighting angel (Revelation 12:7, Jude 9) and guardian angel of Israel (Daniel 10:21, 12:1).

5. Angels and Christ's Incarnation

- a) At his birth - (Luke 2:9-15)
- b) At his temptation - (Matthew 4:11)
- c) At his resurrection - (Matthew 28:2)
- d) At his ascension - (Acts 1:10)
- e) At the Second Advent - (Matthew 13:37-39, 24:31, 25:31, 2 Thessalonians 1:7)

6. Angels and Man

- a) Angels were watching at the time of creation (Job 38:7).
- b) Angels were present when God gave Moses the Law (Galatians 3:19, Acts 7:53).
- c) Angels are watching us now (1 Corinthians 4:9, Ephesians 3:10, 1 Timothy 5:21, 1 Peter 1:12.).
- d) The elect angels rejoice whenever someone is saved (Luke 15:7-10).

7. Many times revelations from God were mediated through angels:

- a) The Law of Moses - Exodus 3:2, Galatians 3:19, Acts 7:53, Hebrews 2:2
- b) Prophetic announcements to Daniel - Daniel 7:16, 8:16-26, 9:20-27, 10:1-12:13
- c) Prophetic announcements to Zechariah - Zechariah 1:9, 2:3, 4:1,5, 5:5, 6:4,5
- d) Announcement of the birth of John to Zacharias - Luke 1:11-20
- e) Announcement of the birth of Jesus to Mary - Luke 1:26-38, and Joseph - Matthew 1:20-21

ANGELIC CONFLICT

1. There is a spiritual warfare between elect and fallen angels, which affects the human race (Ephesians, 6:12, Rev 12).

2. Angels and mankind have a number of parallels:

- a) Angels began in innocence and full obedience to God (Job 38:7 Ezekiel 28:14-15)
Man began in innocence (Genesis 2:25)
- b) Angels sinned - rebellion of Satan (Isaiah 14:12-14)
Man sinned - rebellion of Adam (Genesis 3:1-7)
- c) Angels are divided into two categories - elect or fallen
Man is divided into two categories - believers and unbelievers

3. Freewill is the key to the angelic conflict.

- a) In eternity past, Satan was called Lucifer, the most important angel. However, he became proud and rebelled against God (Ezekiel 28:12-17, Isaiah 14:12-14). One third of the angels chose to rebel with Satan (Revelation 12:4,9).
- b) In eternity past, God sentenced Satan and the fallen angels to the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41). This sentence will be executed at the end of human history (Revelation 20:10). The delay in the execution of this sentence suggests that God created the human race to provide a clear legal witness to Satan and his angels of their sin. The whole of human history is to prove certain points to the angels.
- c) It appears that God created Adam and Eve, to show Satan that mankind, created lower than angels (Hebrews 2:6-7), would choose to obey God. Mankind therefore, by a choice of freewill, would decide whether to obey God and be blessed, or to disobey God and be judged (the same choice that Satan had).
- d) A test was instituted for man's freewill - obedience to God or disobedience. (Genesis 2:16-17). Adam - and therefore all mankind - sinned and thereby rebelled against God. All of mankind, therefore, is in the same condition of sinful rebellion as Satan.
- e) However, God instituted another test of freewill for mankind - will they choose to return to God through Jesus Christ, or will they choose to continue in sin and rebellion (John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9).
- f) Anyone who chooses to return to God will be saved; anyone who chooses to remain in rebellion to God will be judged in the lake of fire, the same fate as Satan (Matthew 25:41).
- g) Therefore, by the work of Christ on the cross, and man's freewill faith in Christ, God has vindicated His love to save and His justice to judge.

4. The result of the angelic conflict:

- a) Stage 1 - Salvation - by faith, man is saved and made positionally superior to angels (Hebrews 2:6-7)
- b) Stage 2 - Christian Walk - by faith, the believer overcomes Satan (Ephesians 6:10-17)
- c) Stage 3 - Eternity - in Christ, the believer will judge Satan and his fallen angels (Hebrews 2:8, 1Corinthians 6:3)

5. Angels watch the human race (1 Corinthians 4:9, Ephesians 3:10, 1 Timothy 5:21, 1 Peter 1:12). Elect angels rejoice every time someone is saved (Luke 15:10).

6. Adam was made ruler of the world (Genesis 1:27-28). When he sinned, Satan obtained control of the world (2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 2:2, John 16:11). What makes it possible for man to live in Satan's world and not be under his control? By faith and obedience to God and His Word, we can resist and overcome Satan.

7. The angelic conflict answers three basic questions:-

- a) Why did God create man? Jesus Christ, as perfect man in perfect obedience to God, paid the penalty of sin. Jesus Christ is able to save mankind. The key is freewill and obedience to God. It is a matter of freewill choice whether we are saved by God or judged by God. This shows that God's judgment of Satan is totally just.
- b) Why sin? Mankind, through the fall of Adam, was reduced to the same sinful and rebellious condition as Satan and his fallen angels. However, through Jesus Christ, man is able to choose to return to God.
- c) Why does God allow suffering? Suffering, sickness and death is the result of Adam's sin. However, God still uses this for our good because suffering makes people look in faith toward God. God is therefore able to strengthen our faith (1 Peter 5:6-10).

8. Satanic attack:-

- a) In the Garden of Eden, Satan attacked Adam and Eve, resulting in their sin. Satan thought he had destroyed the plan of God, because man had sinned and rebelled against God. However, God promised to send the Messiah to remove sin and defeat Satan (Genesis 3:15).
- b) In the Old Testament, Satan attacked the Jews and Jesus Christ Himself. Satan wanted to prevent and/or destroy the Messiah (Revelation 12:1-5).
- c) Now that Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father, Satan has turned his attack on believers on earth. Satan wants to thwart and/or delay the plan of God, and his own final judgment (Revelation 12:12,17).

HEAVENLIES IN CHRIST JESUS

1. Believers are said to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).
2. The same Greek word is used in (John 3:12) where the word 'things' is mentioned.
3. The heavenlies is the area of the believer's spiritual experience as identified with Christ in various ways:-
 - a) divine nature (2 Peter 1:4)
 - b) life (Col 3:4; 1 John 5:12)
 - c) relationships (John 20:17; Hebrews 2:11)
 - d) inheritance (Romans 6:16,17)
 - e) service (John 17:18; Matthew 28:20)
 - f) suffering (Philippians 1:29; 3:10; Colossians 1:24)
 - g) future glory (Romans 8:18-21; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10).
4. The believer is a heavenly man and a stranger or pilgrim on the earth (Hebrews 3:1, 1 Peter 2:11).
5. The believer is an ambassador from Heaven (2 Corinthians 5:20).

ETERNITY PAST AND ETERNITY FUTURE

1. In eternity past:

- a) The Father, Son and Holy Spirit existed in eternity past (John 1:1 -2; 17:5,24).
- b) God allowed sin to come into the world, to be eliminated forever after human history (Hebrews 9:26).
- c) The Son of God agreed to come to earth as a human being to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8).
- d) It was ordained that Christ would be slain for the ungodly (1 Peter 1:18-20; Hebrews 10:5-10).
- e) The world and stars were created by Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:10; Colossians 1:16).
- f) Believers were chosen in Christ (Ephesians 1:4). Christ is chosen, we share as believers his election.
- g) A book was written containing the names of those who would believe (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 17:8; 20:15).

2. In eternity future:

- a) God reveals to us exceeding riches of His grace (Ephesians 2:7).
- b) God brings many sons into glory (Hebrews 2:10).
- c) Believers enjoy an inheritance (1 Peter 1:4).
- d) It is God's purpose for the church to know the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10).
- e) All former things pass away. There will be no more death, sorrow, pain, crying, sea, night or sun. (Revelation 21:1-5,23)
- f) The curse will be lifted (Revelation 22:3).
- g) All things in heaven and earth will be gathered in Him (Ephesians 1:10).
- h) The present creation will be forgotten (Isaiah 65:17).
- i) A river of water of life will run (Revelation 22:1).
- j) The tree of life will be seen again (Revelation 22:2).
- k) The Son of God will rule eternally (Daniel 2:44; 7:13,14).
- l) He will still be subject to the Father (John 10:29; 1 Corinthians 15:28).
- m) The lake of fire will continue forever (Isaiah 66:24; Revelation 14:11).

PARAPHRASE

"By how much more, he has become superior to the angels, through his work, and this is seen by his name, which is far more excellent than any of theirs. For to which of the angels has God the Father at any time said, 'You are my Son, this

day have I caused you to enter into this sonship'? Also, to which of the angels did the father say, 'I will be to him as a Father and he will be to me as a Son'? Also, when the Lord entered the world in his humanity, he said, 'let the angels of God worship him as their lord'. For the angels were created spiritual beings, made to serve as flames of fire. But as regarding the Son, the Father said, 'your throne, Oh God, is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated evil, therefore God, even your God, has anointed you as king with the oil of gladness, and placed you in a higher position than those who were your companions on earth'."

HEBREWS 1:10-14

" 10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: 11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. 13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

QUOTATIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The number of quotations from the Old Testament is very significant in this passage as seen below

"And Thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou are the same, and thy years shall not fail. (Psalm 102 : 25 - 27) But to which of the angels said he at any time, 'Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?' (Psalm 34:7) Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

KEY WORDS

In the beginning..	kat archas	an echo of Genesis 1:1. At the beginning, in the beginning.
Hast laid	themelioo	aorist, active, indicative; laid the foundation of (the earth).
Heavens	ouranoi	heavens plural, in contrast to earth (ge) singular.
Perish	apollumi	future, middle, indicative; perish, be destroyed, be lost, total loss.
Remainest	diameno	present, active, indicative; keep on continuing, permanent existence.
Wax old	Talaioo	future, passive, indicative; receive aging, and grow old and tired.
Garment	himation	an outer garment.
Vesture	peribolaion	as a cloak, or costly robe (Westcott)
Fold	Elisso	future, active, indicative; fold clothing, as soldiers do before breaking camp, or people do before moving house or travelling.
Changed	Allasso	future, passive, indicative; they will receive changing as we would change clothes.
Same	Autos	the same, plus present active indicative of eimi; you keep on being the same.
Fail	ekleipo + ouk	will not (strong negative) ever fail, stop, cease, die, depart, or leave off.
Any time	Pote	ever!
Said	ereo	Perfect , active, indicative – said/uttered
Sit	kathemai	present, middle, imperative; keep on sitting.
Right hand	ek dexion mou	on my right - the place of authority and heirship and power.
Make	Tithemi	aorist, active, subjunctive; until I set, or place, or put.
Footstool	hupopodiuon	Footstool of the king when seated on his throne. Here the victory throne set up on the battle field where enemy rulers became the footstool.
Ministering	leitourgika	ministering in the temple of God, servants of God's worship.
Sent forth	apostello	present, passive, participle; being sent out with the authority of God.
Minister	diakonia	for practical service, ministry as the Lord directs.
Shall be	mello	present, active, participle; those about to.
Heirs	kleronomeo	present, active, infinitive; to inherit.
Salvation	soterian	salvation, deliverance.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The writer carries on here from the points already made in the previous verses. He quotes more Old Testament verses that back up the superiority of the Lord and demonstrate further that he is God and Lord of all things.

Verse 10. This verse is powerful as it reads as if the Father is calling the Son "Lord", and that certainly is the reading of the LXX (Septuagint) Greek language version that is quoted here by the writer. What does it mean? It can only mean one thing, that the Father recognises the Lord Jesus Christ as an equal in the Godhead, and here is paying tribute

to his pre-incarnate work as creator of the present space-time universe. Note that it is the Lord who is the creator of this world, the world he later enters as a creature to save. It is the Lord who laid the foundation of the universe we see. That foundation is the space/time framework, the structure of matter and energy that we see now, but which the Bible teaches is limited to this universe. All we see is "made" by the Lord Jesus Christ, and as he made it so he will unmake it. Scientists today are starting to see how (they think) the universe is held together and how it will certainly unravel one day. For thousands of years the Bible has taught this principle!

We are in a space-time limited universe, within a framework that was created, and that is made to be unravelled one day when its purpose is completed. This world of space and time and mass-energy will all pass away, but the eternal realities beyond it will last forever, for it is of different "stuff" to the things of this world. If you find this "hard to understand", rejoice, because you are human, and like Peter grapple with things beyond you, but we must learn to stop "grappling" and "faith-rest" upon the holy Character of God. We are in the Lord's hands and are safe there.

These verses are a challenge again to see the temporary nature of the world, and not to have our hearts and minds stuck here in space and time. There was a beginning to this world, (an arche - the words that echo both **Genesis 1:1**, and later the words that John will select to open his Gospel), and there will be an ending, and it will not be a problem, for the Lord made it and he dwells elsewhere, and that place is where our destiny is to be found, and that place, heaven, is where our thoughts must be focused.

Verse 11. The works of the Lord's hands in creation will perish totally (apollumi), but that is because it is part of the plan, not because it is beyond the Lord's power to keep things going. This world is temporary, and all attachment to it must be eliminated from our lives. This is not where the Lord wants us to focus on time, energy, or attention/interest, for this is not where our destiny is, this is simply the place from where we enter into his eternal plan.

There is a strong contrast between the fate of the present heavens and earth and our own destiny. The created worlds will perish, but we will remain (dia-meno); we will keep on continuing in existence, for in Christ we have eternal life. This eternal life we have already, right at this point, is life beyond the limits of space, mass, and time. The created universe will succumb to the "laws" of $E = MC^2$, and will grow old and tired. It's an old tired blanket that is folded up and put away.

The universe, the scientists tell us is running down, it is getting tired. They speak of 100,000,000 years before it unravels and dissolves or implodes upon itself, being swallowed up in its own black holes, but the Bible records this will occur a lot faster than they think, but that it doesn't matter. Revelation 8:12 records that in the Tribulation period on one day, one third of the visible stars will go out! The entire universe will finally be folded up like the old travelling cloak of the Roman Soldier before a march to another place, like the outer garment of a travelling business man packed up ready to go elsewhere. **2 Peter 3:10-18.** It may be the entire present space-time creation at this point will implode to become the "Lake of Fire"? **Revelation 21:8** records that the Lake of Fire alone persists as a glowing "Black hole" containing all the detritus of the old creation into eternity, but with no distress to the saved in the new heavens and earth.

Verse 12. We fold up, or roll up clothing because it is of no further use, or because we are finished with it here and are moving else-where. Both meanings are drawn on by the writer here to underline that we are "moving on" and the universe as we know it will have served its limited purpose by then, and will be "packed away" by God as it has served its purpose and his plan moves on to another place. Just as in verse eleven, there is another strong contrast between the fate of the world and the destiny of the believer. **Psalms 102:25-27, Isaiah 34:4, 51:6, 2 Peter 3:10-13.**

It is folded up like a garment, but we are not "folded away", for we move on. We remain the same as the entire universe is changed, for we belong to God and are made, in our resurrection bodies of the same "stuff" as the Lord. We belong to the new place where the plan of God is going, but this world and universe will be folded away for it does not belong in that new place, it was only for a moment of time, and time itself is abolished! The best is yet to come, and presently it is well beyond our limited space-time words. John does his best in Revelation 21-22, but we all struggle to grasp this.

Verse 13. The writer now abruptly returns to his theme of the superiority of the Lord over the angels. This is designed to shock the hearers and the perfect tense amplifies the impact – who has "said" this before – it has eternal significance! As they think of the end of all they know except their relationship with the Lord, he challenges them again to remember that the Lord is victor of the Angelic Conflict, and He, as the one who has already WON the battle for control of this universe, and for all eternity HE is to be our only focus as we walk through this life!

There is nothing else of significance other than the victorious kingship and majesty of the ruling Lord Jesus Christ, for all else we see here is going to be "gone in a moment", and the angels who are so powerful are either defeated under his feet, or living, praising and serving him, and us (verse 14) for all eternity. To make an enemy your footstool was the sign of absolute victory over them, and that is the Lord's position regarding the fallen angels and their leader Satan. They are defeated and share their leaders fate in the Lake of Fire. They have no destiny in the eternal "world" to come except to portray the eternal judgment for all who failed to accept the truth in the past creation. **Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8, 27.**

Verse 14. The angels are not only the servants of the Lord they are now, because we are "in Him", our servants. Their role is ministering, and they minister to the Lord worship and to us service of many sorts, which we will only see clearly and fully from heaven. We are the inheritors of eternal life, the inheritors of salvation. Do we not already have salvation? This text is a reminder that the gift of salvation is given and received in time, but the full inheritance awaits us in heaven, and only then do we receive in full what the Lord has prepared for us. "The best is yet to come". It is a reminder to us to focus on where our reward is and put our energy here and now into what lasts forever.

APPLICATION**A. PERSONAL**

Have we praised the Lord for his majesty today? Have we praised him for his creation? Have we praised him for his work in holding this present and very temporary universe together? Have we praised him for the fact that he will fold this world up and bring in another that will last forever? Have we forgotten that all that we see is temporary, and have we become attached to it today? Do we love this world or do we love and think always of our Lord? Jesus said, "you cannot love God and mammon". You cannot love this world and the next at the same time, for they are mutually exclusive! **Matthew 6:24, Luke 16:9-13**. Have you seen the earth and its worries as distractions from the real tasks we have in space-time?

What and who do you love with all your heart today? Ask in the quietness of your heart, where none can hear except God, and see what your answer is. Even the most keen and devoted of believers can often be distracted by loved objects and people, distracted away from the service that the Lord is calling you to. The real battle we face as mature believers is not often good versus an obvious evil, for that would be seen and resisted. The really hard battle is the one between a good and a "better". We are challenged to always lift up our eyes and heads and look to Jesus! What is of eternal value?

It is not wrong to love your spouse, your children and your friends and family. It is not wrong to love your country and your spouse, your house, and car, but it is a dangerous thing if these things lead you away from the tasks the Lord has assigned to you, and for which all you have exist! All of these things and people will be taken away by time and death. Only what is eternal through salvation enters eternity, and it is upon these things/people that we need to devote our love and energy.

All we love on this earth will die or decay. Do we reflect on this enough? If we did, and saw all these things God's way, we might appreciate them more, praise God more for them, and not lose sight of the reality of eternity. The reality of eternity means that we value our eternal relationships and spend time with people so that they might be saved and so be with us forever. All contacts with people must be guided by the principle of eternal life; whether they have it, or whether we should be praying for them and speaking to them of it. We are told to love our brethren after the faith, for we will be with them forever. From that it is clear, our focus must be to ensure all we love are indeed our spiritual "brethren".

All things are given to us by God to be used during our time of ministry down here. Let us test ourselves on this matter. Are we using all our resources for the Lord's work, or are we accumulating things to consume for our own lusts? **James 1:14, 15, 4:1-3**. Let us be sure that we do not weep with the merchants of Babylon over the loss of all the "dainties" of this life, rather let us find our company with the saints and glory in the Lord and in things of eternity. **Revelation 18:9-20**. We are on the right side of history, let us live like it daily and not love this world nor anything that is limited by it.

B. PASTORAL

As we examine the praise and worship of the church let us be certain, as the pastor responsible, that there is full praise for who the Lord Jesus Christ is and what he has done. He is to be praised for all things, for his creating work, his saving work and his rulership over all things. Worship should always end by reminding the worshipper of who he is, and where he is now, and what he is doing now, so that each person is grounded in the truth of their great and powerful deliverer, and leaves the service, certain of his power to save, to keep and to bring them through to heaven with rejoicing.

Our security as believers rests upon the person and work of the Lord of Glory. Everything about our faith centres upon him and his power. It is lifting him up that is our task as his heralds (pastors and teachers). If the people see Jesus they have hope and can find the perspective to live life as it should be lived here, but if all they see is us and our opinions they are lost! Only Jesus can save, and only daily occupation with Christ will deliver a person from bondage to the world of space and time, and keep them focused upon the eternal realities that he would have us fix our hearts upon.

DOCTRINES**ETERNAL LIFE**

1. Mankind was created by God to enjoy fellowship with Him forever (2 Peter 3:9).
2. Entry into eternal life is by faith in Christ (John 3:36, 5:24, Acts 13:46, Galatians 6:8, Matthew 25:46).
3. Those who are serious about life and death ask about it (Matthew 13:40-43, 19:16, Mark 10:17, Luke 10:25, 18:18).
4. The Lord provides the answer to questions about life and death (John 6:68, Romans 5:20, 21, Romans 6:22, 23).
5. It is the Lord who gives eternal life (John 5:39, 40, John 12:50).
6. Believers have eternal life now, as a present possession (1 John 5:11-13). This guarantees our salvation.
7. Eternal life is received in full at the rapture/resurrection when we all receive our new bodies from the Lord.

8. We are all urged to live each day with the eternal life perspective in mind, thinking of our place with the Lord forever (Matthew 19:29, 30, Mark 10:29-31, John 12:25, John 4:36, Romans 2:6,7).

HEAVENLIES IN CHRIST JESUS [See page 21 above]

PILGRIM

1. A pilgrim is a sojourner in a strange place; a stranger in a foreign country.
2. The believer is a pilgrim in this world as our real home country is a heavenly one (John 15:19 Ephesians 2:19; 1Peter 2:11).
3. This is illustrated in the lives of the patriarchs (Genesis 47:9; Exodus 6:4; Hebrews 11:8 -10; 13 -16).
4. When the people of Israel were living in the promised land they were, from a spiritual point of view, still pilgrims (Psalm 39:12; 119:54).
5. So too are Christians, even when living in peace and prosperity under a Christian government (Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12:34).
6. The life of a Christian is a pilgrimage. This theme is worked out in great detail in John Bunyan's well-known allegory, "The Pilgrim's Progress".
7. Our heavenly home will not come gradually. The existing system will be destroyed and replaced by God Himself (2Peter 3:12-13; Revelation 3:12; 21:2,10).

PLAN OF GOD

1. In eternity past, God designed a plan for every believer, which takes into account every event and decision in human history.
2. The plan centres around the person of Jesus Christ. (1 John 3:23, Ephesians 1:4-6)
3. Entrance into the plan is based on the principle of grace. (Ephesians 2:8, 9) where the sovereignty of God and the free will of Man meet at the cross. God brings salvation which is complete, Man brings his faith.
4. God's plan was so designed so as to include all events and actions. (1 Peter 1:2)
5. Under his plan God has decreed to do some things directly and some through agencies, Israel, the Church.
6. Without interfering with human free will in any way God has designed a plan so perfect that it includes cause and effect, as well as provision, preservation and function.
7. There are many functions in the Plan of God. They all constitute one whole comprehensive plan which is perfect, eternal and unchangeable.
8. The plan of God is consistent with human freedom and does not limit or coerce human free will. Distinction should be made between what God causes and what God permits. God causes the Cross but permits sin. God is neither the author of sin nor sponsors sin.
9. His plan portrays that man has free will. God never condones sin in the human race. Man started in perfect environment and innocence. Man sinned of his own free will. Man will sin in the perfect environment of the Millennium.
10. Distinction should be made between the divine plans which are related to the plan of God and divine laws which regulate human conduct on the earth. Divine laws occur in time, divine plans occur in eternity.
11. God's plans derive from His foreknowledge. He recognised in eternity past those things which are certain. The foreknowledge of God makes no things certain, but only perceives in eternity past those things that are certain.
12. There is a difference between foreknowledge and fore ordination. Fore ordination establishes certainty but does not provide for the certainty which is established. It is the plan that provides. (Romans 8:29, Acts 2:23, 1 Peter 1:2)
13. Therefore the elect are foreknown and the foreknown are elect. God knew in eternity past what way each free will would go for each particular problem in life. God does not coerce human free will but he does know what way each freewill will choose at any given time. As free will decides so God provides.

14. Since God cannot contradict his own character he plans the best for the believer. God is perfect, his plan and provisions are therefore perfect.

15. The cross was planned in eternity past but the human free will of Christ decided for the cross at Gethsemane. (Matthew 26:39-42) God has provided salvation through the cross and it is a free will decision as to whether one accepts it or not.

16. No plan in itself opposes human freedom but once a choice is made from the free will then the plan limits your human freedom. At the same time it gives you the freedom to love and appreciate God. God lays down the means of living the Christian life.

WORLD

1. World under control of Satan:

- a) ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).
 - b) god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4).
 - c) he deceives the world (Revelation 12:9).
- Satan is filling the world with his propaganda (1 Timothy 4:1).

2. Jesus Christ created earth (Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 45:18). He gave control to original mankind (Genesis 1:28) but man lost it at the fall (Genesis 3:6).

3. Sin and spiritual death are the basis of Satan's rule over this world. Therefore, God so loved the world that He gave a Saviour (John 3:16), hence Christ as a title in this connection. Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5).

4. Therefore Christ is the saviour of the world (John 3:17; 4:42; 1 John 4:14). The Saviour who gave His life for the world (John 6:33); hence Christ has a title in this connection. Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5).

5. Therefore Christ has overcome the world (John 16:33), so that the believer can overcome the world (1 John 5:4,5).

6. Consequently believers in Christ must not love the world (1 John 2:15,16). Nor must believers conform to the world (Romans 12:2). Worldliness is what you think, which may be demonstrated by what you do.

7. World control by Satan will stop at the Second Advent. However, believers will continue forever (1 John 2:17).

8. Also, the Word of God abides forever (1 Peter 1:23,25), and is designed to overcome the ruler of this world (1 John 2:14). Therefore, not conforming to the world and overcoming the world are accomplished through Bible doctrine, by which God has made foolish the wisdom of the world (1 Corinthians 1:20; 3:19).

9. It is therefore of greatest importance that the believer's attitude is based on the Word of God (Philippians 2:5; 2 Timothy 1:7; Isaiah 26:3,4; Philippians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 10:4,5; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 1:5,6,8).

10. Backsliding is characterised as friendship with the world (James 4:4).

WORLDLINESS

1. Worldliness means to follow the beliefs and philosophy of man rather than that of God

2. Worldliness is the opposite to Godliness; it is thinking/doing in opposition to God's revealed word. Titus 2:11-14.

3. All people are faced with the constant choice of following God's way or the world's. Romans 5:12, 3:19, 1 Corinthians 1:21, Ephesians 2:12, James 1:27, 2 Peter 1:4, 2:20.

4. Satan is the "prince of this world", and has power to deceive those who are negative to God's plans. John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11, 1 Corinthians 4:4, 1 Peter 5:8,9.

5. We must not love the world, 1 John 2:15-17.

6. We must hate all the world stands for, in thought and in deed. 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 11:30-32, Galatians 6:14, James 1:27, James 4:4, 2 Peter 1:3,4, 1 Corinthians 3:18, 19.

7. We must not return to our old behaviour patterns, Ephesians 2:1-7.

8. This evil world system and the prince of this world will be condemned. Matthew 18:7, John 12:31, 16:11, 1 Corinthians 6:2, 2 Peter 3:7, 2 Peter 2:1ff.

THE CELEBRITYSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST (after the late R.B. Thieme Jnr – a great Mentor)

1. While there are many spiritual heroes in the history of mankind (Hebrews 11), there is only one celebrity.
2. This is the eternally existent Jesus Christ. John 1:1-4, Philippians 2:6
3. A true celebrity is perfect, therefore, never loses popularity, for his greatness is based in his perfect character, motivation, and the perfect results he achieves by his work.
4. The greatness of this celebrity, was His willingness to be humbled. His sole focus was obedience to the Father's plan; he was not concerned about himself, only his task. Philippians 2:8
5. By lowering Himself to our status, He raised us to His. 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 2:6-8
6. Because of this, He is exalted above every being, earthly or heavenly. Philippians 2:9-10
7. His celebrity ship is such that it will ultimately be proclaimed by every human and angelic being. Philippians 2:10-11 Revelation 5:13

DOCTRINE OF THE FAITHFULNESS OF CHRIST

1. Christ is immutable (includes stability); he is absolutely stable/dependable in his character. Hebrews 13:8
2. Principle of faithfulness if found in Lamentations. 3:21-24.
3. The promises that believers can claim in this life (one day at a time) are based on Christ's faithfulness. Hebrews 10:23
4. Christ is faithful to us in testing, never pushing us too far. 1 Corinthians 10:13
5. Faithfulness of Christ is the basis of human stability; we can be secure because we take our life from Him. 2 Thessalonians 3:3
6. Christ is faithful even when we are unfaithful. 2 Timothy 2:13
7. Christ if faithful to the Father in execution of the Divine Plan.

THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST IS: After C.I Scofield

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. Penal | Galatians 3:13 2 Corinthians 5:21 |
| 2. Substitutional | Leviticus 1:4 Isaiah 53:5-6 2 Corinthians 5:21 1 Peter 2:24 |
| 3. Voluntary | Genesis 22:9 John 10:18 |
| 4. Redemptive | Galatians 3:13 Ephesians 1:7 1 Corinthians 6:20 |
| 5. Propitiatory | Romans 3:25 1 John 2:2 |
| 6. Reconciling | 2 Corinthians 5:18,19 Colossians 1:21,22 |
| 7. Efficacious | John 12:3 20-23 Romans 5:9,10 2 Corinthians 5:21 Ephesians 2:13 Hebrews 9:12 |
| 8. Revelatory | John 3:16 1 John 4:9,10 |

THE ANOINTING OF CHRIST

1. Anointing is (chrios) meaning to anoint, to institute, to establish a function or privilege.
2. From this comes (christos), The Anointed One or the Messiah.
3. The Anointing of Christ must be distinguished as unique from all others.
4. The Eternal Decrees are the basis of this anointing. His function in time was established in Eternity Past. Matthew 25:34 Ephesians 1:4 Hebrews 4:3 Revelation 13:8

5. At the Baptism of Christ by John (Matthew 3:13-17), Christ identified Himself with the message of John and the Plan of God. He was the coming King, John was the Prophet of the day.
6. It was customary in Israel for the Prophet to anoint the King as a symbol of God's will and direction. 1Samuel 16:1,13
7. The anointing of Hebrews 1:9 was the act of the Father of establishing the privileges of the firstborn on the Resurrected Christ.

JESUS CHRIST IN PROPHECY

In mathematical equation, the possibility of Christ fulfilling even 50 prophecies is approximately 1 in 1,125,000,000,000,000. There are over 300 prophecies concerning the First Advent alone. Following are a few:

PROPHECY	FULFILMENT
1. Seed of the woman. Genesis 3:15	Revelation 12:5; Galatians 4:4
2. Human generation. Genesis 12:3; Genesis 13:13	John 1:45; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:8, Isaiah 11:1
3. Time of Advent. Daniel 9:24,25	John 1:41; 4:25,26; Matthew 16:3
4. Virgin birth. Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:3	Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:26-35
5. Descendant of Shem. Genesis 9:26,27	Luke 3:36
6. Descendant of Abraham Genesis 12:3; 18:8	Matthew 1:1,2; Luke 3:34; Acts 3:25
7. Descendant of Isaac. Genesis 17:19; 21:12	Matthew 1:2; Luke 3:34; Romans 9:7
3. Descendant of Jacob. Genesis 28:14; Numbers 24:17	Matthew 1:2; Luke 3:34
9. Tribe of Judah. Genesis 49:10; Micah 5:2	Matthew 1:2; 2:6; Revelation 5:5
10. House of David. Isaiah 9:7; Jeremiah 23:5	Matthew 1:1-6; Luke 3:31
11. Birthplace. Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1-6; Luke 2:4; John 7:42
12. Slaughter of children. Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:17-18
13. Flight to Egypt. Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:15
14. Ministry in Galilee. Isaiah 9:1-2	Matthew 4:15-16
15. Ministry as Prophet. Deuteronomy 13:15	John 1:45; 6:14; Acts 3:22; 7:37
16. Melchisidecan priesthood. Psalm 110:4	Hebrews 5:6; 6:20; 7:17-21
17. Purification of Temple. Psalm 69:9	John 2:17
18. Rejection by Israel. Psalm 2:1; Isaiah 28:11-12	John 1:11; John 6:66; Acts 4:25-26
19. Spiritual graces. Psalm 45:7; Isaiah 11:12	Luke 4:13
20. Triumphant Entry. Isaiah 62:11; Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:1-10; John 12:12-16
21. Betrayal by friend. Psalm 41:9	Matthew 26:15; Mark 14:10,21
22. 30 pieces of silver. Zechariah 11:12,13	Matthew 26:15; Mark 14:10-21
23. Silence in Trial. Psalm 33:13; Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 26:63;27:12-14
24. Substitutionary death. Isaiah 53; Daniel 9:26	Matthew 3:17; Romans 4:24-25; 1Corinthians 5:3, Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 3:18
25. Death with thieves. Isaiah 53:9-12	Matthew 27:38; Luke 23:40-43
26. Piercing of hands and feet. Psalm 22:16	John 20:27, Zechariah 12:10
27. Insults, mockery. Psalm 109:25; 22:6-7	Matthew 27:39; Mark 15:29
28. Gall, vinegar. Psalm 69:21	Matthew 27:34,33; John 19:29
29. Casting lots. Psalm 22:18	Mark 15:24; John 19:24
30. Bones not broken. Exodus 12:46; Psalm 34:20	John 19:36
31. Burial with rich. Psalm 16;9; Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 22:57-60
32. Resurrection. Psalm 16:10; Hosea 6:2	Matthew 27:63; 28:6; Acts 2:27-31
33. Ascension. Psalm 68:18; 110:1	Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9; Ephesians 4:8-10
34. Adored by Wise men. Psalm 72:10	Matthew 2:1-11
35. Anointed. Psalm 45:7; Isaiah 11:2; 61:1-2	Matthew 3:16; Luke4:15-21
36. Forerunner. Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1	Matthew 3:1-3; Luke 1:17

PARAPHRASE

“And you Lord when time was made, laid the foundations for the universe, all the heavens are the works of your hands. They as created things will be totally destroyed, but you remain forever. The created things will all grow old and weary as a garment does, and as an outer piece of clothing they will be folded up, when their task is done, and packed away, and exchanged for another. But you Lord are the stable one, you do not change with the years, nor grow old and weary. For to which of the angels has God the father ever said, ‘ sit at my right hand until I make your enemies the footstool of your feet’. Are not all the angels but ministering spirits, sent out by God to serve those who are the heirs of salvation.”

CHAPTER 2**VERSES 1-4**

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

KEY WORDS

Therefore	dia touto	on account of (because of) this thing; the superiority of Christ.
Ought	dei+ accusative	it is necessary, it is binding on us, it has a natural consequence that follows.
Earnest	perissoteros	More abundantly, more earnestly.
Heed	prosecho	present active infinitive be mindful, pay close attention to, to beware of.
Heard	Akouo	Aorist, passive, participle; heard
Lest	mepote	lest at any point in time.
Slip	pararreo	Aorist, passive, subjunctive to flow by. To find yourself in a fast flowing current and flowing past the point of safety, or the goal.
Steadfast	bebaios	firm, secure, reliable, sure to be true.
Transgression	parabasis	stepping aside from the correct path.
Disobedience	parakoe	rejection of what is told, or going on a parallel path to what is told.
Received	Lambano	Aorist active, indicative; received at that time.
Just	Endikos	that which conforms to what is right and correct, just.
Recompense	misthapodosia	retribution that is equivalent to the offence; full recompense as punishment.
Escape	Ekpheugo	Future, middle, indicative; how shall we flee away, we cannot.
So Great	Telikoutos	so great, so large, so important.
Salvation	Soteria	deliverance.
At the first	arche	at the beginning, when the Lord first spoke(indicating the writer was not there but received these things from those who were eye witnesses)
Confirmed	bebaioo	Aorist, passive, indicative made firm, guaranteed, confirmed in a legal sense. The evidence met all the criteria for a legal case to be made.
Bearing witness	Sunepimartureo	present, active, participle; joined together to witness to an event so that it is legal and clearly true, as confirmed by a number.
Sign	Semeiois	a “sign” act that points to a reality about the character of God.
Wonders	Terasin	an act that makes those who see it “wonder”, stand in awe, know they have seen an act that indicates God is in it.
Divers	poikilos	various, many different sorts of acts of power.
Miracles	dunamis	dynamic signs of power, miracles that are otherwise unexplainable.
Gifts	merismos	dividing, distributions, portions, hence = gifts that are apportioned to people according to the will of the Holy Spirit.
Will	thelesis	Willing, the active exercise of the will, deliberate specific decision making.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Issue of Salvation in the Angelic Conflict (Amplification of 1:13. The implications of the Lord’s victory in the Angelic Conflict).

First Point. The Warning of Judgment - vs. 1- 4. The Danger of Drifting by not being obedient to the clear revelation of God in the Scriptures, and in the person and work of the Christ.

Summary of verses 1 - 4

1. The danger of by-passing reality - vs. 1
 - i. The Unbeliever warned of rejecting the gospel
 - ii. The Believer warned of rejecting doctrine - "reality" = plan of God (the things we have heard)
2. The Historical Analogy of Judgment - vs. 2-3a
 - i. Rejection of previous revelation brought judgment
 - ii. Rejection of greater revelation (Christ) means greater judgment. "neglect" - to disregard, not care for, apathy to work of Christ.
3. The Unique Evangelism prior to 70 AD.- vs 3b - 4 Four Characteristics:
 - i. First communicated by Jesus Christ
 - ii. Verified by those who heard him (apostles)
 - iii. God testified with them with signs and wonders
 - iv. The exercise of miracle gifts

Verse 1. This begins the first of **five clear warnings to all believers hearing the words of this letter**. The danger that the writer warns of is an ever present one; it is the danger of disobedience to the Lord's revelation. The main aspect of this danger is not the deliberate rejection of the Word of God, rather it is the "easy sin" of ignoring the application of the Word to Life! Believers are warned, "exhorted five times to bestir themselves and not drift away through complacency, apathy or neglect." (D Stern, 1992, p 667). The other passages are, 3:6b - 4:16, 5:11 - 6:12, 10:19-39, and 12:1-13:22.

The key point rests on the nature, person, past and present work, and destiny of the Lord Jesus Christ. If he were simply an angel, or less than an angel (a man, even the best man), he would have no greater claim to obedience than any other prophet. The writer has clearly proved in chapter one that he is God of very God, he is Lord of all lords, he is the ruler of and creator of the universe and all that dwells in it. He is the creator of the angels, as he is the creator of the ages (of time-space itself). With this superiority the writer identifies the need to serve him with absolute commitment in every matter he demands of us, and to remember that we are destined for eternity also.

The verse begins with the words that tie the points of chapter one directly into what he now says; "because of this". He makes direct application for our obedient application to our daily life. Given the position of the Lord we have a solemn obligation to take his words and His will for our lives very seriously. Literally he says we are to keep on paying very earnest close attention to his words. Do we see this clearly enough?

The reason is that we might not at any time or point in life fail to apply them. The word chosen to illustrate this is one familiar to all who have ever crossed a river in the wilds. Unless you follow the guide, ensure you place your feet on solid ground under each footfall, and hold onto any rope that is there, you are swept away by the strong current.

Life is thereby pictured as a difficult crossing of a fast river, to get to an objective on the far side, a crossing with danger in it where absolute obedience is required to the guide. This is a good picture for it underlines several points that the writer makes consistently through the letter. Firstly it reminds us that life is a journey to an objective, it is not an end in itself. It reminds us that the journey is dangerous at times and requires constant vigilance lest we slip and fall into troubles. It reminds us that the objective is to be our focus, heaven is that objective on the "other side" of life. Life is simply the river we walk through. In sporting terms it is the "curtain raiser", eternity is the "main game".

The pagans had the myth of the river Styx that surrounded the underworld, and was in effect the "river of death" that all had to swim. The writer here makes all life the river of death for the believer, to be forded with eyes fixed not on any dark underworld, but rather on our wonderful heavenly destiny. The contrast between the pagan's view of their destiny and the believers is starkly underlined by the use of this analogy. If this life is the "styx river" then all its details are to be "forded" as shallow puddles of insignificance, for our heavenly destiny alone is supremely important.

Verse 2. When angels mediated the Word of God to men it was strongly confirmed, established, and was both sure to be true, and disobedience sure to be punished. Given that fact, clearly witnessed to from the past, as recorded in the Old Testament, what significance will the very words of the risen Lord have? It was through the angels that judgement fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah in Abraham's day, and upon Egypt in Moses' day.

If the word of angels was to be taken with absolute seriousness, how much more is the Word of the Living God directly spoken to men in the person of the risen Lord of all? The writer is laying it clearly before us, is he not! Every word of the Lord Jesus Christ is serious to the highest level imaginable, and failure to apply it will bring a higher penalty to the disobedient than we see being applied to the disobedient of some recorded in the Old Testament.

Note the things that brought judgement, according to the writer here, for we are focused on sins of commission (the things we do that are wrong), rather than focused on all disobedience as God sees it. The writer uses two words to explain the serious issues in God's sight.

Every "parabasis", will be judged. This word means, every stepping aside from the true path onto a lesser path. This means that God considers it sinful to do a lesser thing rather than the best thing in every step of life! Pause and reflect on this believer. The Lord wants our best at all times, and anything that causes us to deviate from his plan, even in what we consider a "little matter", is of supreme importance to God. We are to walk HIS path, we are not to stray from it in any matter at all.

This is further emphasised by the second word the writer chooses (parakoe), which means, active rejection of what is told and the selection of another path to walk, which although it may be close to the true path is not that path. The word not found here, is paraptoma, the word for sin, for in the two concepts that the writer selects the concept of sin is to be found, but also much more. We can often resist the temptation to obvious sins, but all too often fall into the disobedience mentioned here, and the writer reminds us, that it is total obedience and application of his Holy Word and Will that the Lord demands of us!

Verse 3. The question asked here is a serious one. We will not escape judgement if we neglect the words of the Lord, for his words are the words of salvation, the words of deliverance from sin and death, and the words of instruction/direction for this life journey. At worst, by our disobedience, we fail to even inherit eternal life (salvation), at best we fail to receive the grace blessings that would otherwise be ours; we will not be delivered (secondary meaning of soteria) from troubles in time, nor will we find victory, unless we obey his words.

The deliverance of the Lord, both salvation (eternal life), and deliverance from troubles in this life, are dependent on our obedience to Him. We must first obey the challenge of the gospel and believe in him, casting our life before Him, then we must day by day express our faith in Him, by believing his word and applying it into all the daily details of our life. Refer also **Galatians 3:10-13**.

The words of the Lord have been recorded by those who heard him, and the writer reminds us, their witness is trustworthy and sure. **John 20:30-31, 21:24-25**. We have no excuse to ignore this “so great” message of deliverance, given to us so clearly through the apostles. Faith and obedience go together. The writer warns against their separation, as had James many years before in **James 1:19-25**.

Verse 4. The Word was confirmed by the solemn legal testimony of the Apostles who saw and heard and recorded the truth concerning the Lord, but also their message was confirmed by many miracles. The two words used cover the subject of “signs and wonders”, which the Lord told the disciples would follow their preaching, and indeed they did. The many miracles performed by the Lord were also matched by the miracles performed in the power of the Holy Spirit by the apostles. As we look through Acts we see many times the Lord in his sovereign power performing a miracle of healing, even the raising of the dead, but always to affirm the Word spoken by the Apostles, and to underline the importance of obedience to what was being said.

The miracles of the Apostolic age and the genuine miracles throughout history have two important aspects to them; **Firstly** they are acts of the Holy Spirit, not acts of powerful men, and as acts of the Holy Spirit they draw attention always to Christ.

Secondly they are acts that always are in accordance with the will of God, not the will of men. They occur for God’s purposes not ours, and are under His sovereign will. Miracles are not to be “claimed” nor demanded by men, for they are under God’s sovereign will, and may be asked for in accordance with His Will. God’s power is not shortened, nor has he stopped miracles, where they accord with His will and His plan, and church history is full of miracles in all ages in all places in the world. They occur always in a context where the Word is drawn attention to, and the Lord Jesus Christ is glorified. Where these two things do not happen, it probably was not an act of God.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

What is our attitude to life? Do we see it as a journey with a clear objective? Do we have the heavenly focus that the early believers had, or have we become too comfortable in this world? To the pagan world death was the enemy and the River Styx, the feared last part of the weary journey of life into a dark world of the “shades”; the ghosts of men past.

The good news of the church was heavenly eternal life, promised and secure to all in Christ Jesus because of his resurrection from the dead. This was the confidence that they had, and it was the good news (the gospel) of the resurrection of the Lord that turned the world upside down. Let us catch the fire again, catch the fire of the gospel of the resurrected Lord. Let us ensure we meditate upon heaven more than we plan to succeed upon the earth, according to how men count success. Let us ensure we store up treasures in heaven rather than treasures upon the earth. **Proverbs 23:4, Matthew 6:19-21, Luke 12:33,34, 1 Timothy 6:5-10, 17-19, James 5:1-3**.

How serious it is to ignore the clear word of the Lord spoken directly by the Lord himself. How careless and casual we are with our Bible reading today, and what a warning this is to us all. We must stand in awe of this passage and test ourselves daily regarding this. Every word of command from the Lord we read must be applied to our life, lest we fall under the judgement of these verses. It is a serious thing to open the living Word of God; as we open it and read it, the Lord expects us to apply it, and will send us, in daily life, opportunities for such application.

If we fail to apply these lessons we suffer loss of blessing in time and eternity, and we fall short of the standard that he has set for us. Most of us are failures in this matter, and we must be fearful of failing in this matter any longer! Let us be obedient servants of our great Saviour. The days are indeed short – let us waste no time that cannot be used for glory.

Are we forgetful hearers of the Word of God, or are we applicers of the Word? Only the latter category of believer will receive deliverance from the Lord, and live a life that is dynamic and blessed. There is no blessing in time or eternity without total obedience to the living God’s revealed path, that all who love Him must walk. We will not escape judgement if we fail to apply the Word of God to life! As the days speed towards the Lord’s Return it also is dangerous not to obey.

Have we been faithful and true in the matter of our requests to the Lord for his intervention in our life? Have we treated the miraculous as if it was ours to demand, or have we been at the other end of the spectrum, and ignored this aspect of God’s character and power? Either extreme is wrong, and places us under judgement, for we are off His path.

Miracles are neither to be ignored as realities, nor demanded as if we know God’s Will in all things. We are to be respectful, but also expectant; we serve an awesome God of power, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and he has the power to meet all situations, naturally and supernaturally. If a miracle is required, we are challenged to have the faith that the Lord can do it, and will if it is in His plan and purpose.

B. PASTORAL

Do God's people hear these things from us? Do they hear the solemn warnings that we read in these verses? Do they see that it is an awful sin and grave danger to step away from the path God directs us to? Do they see that disobedience brings judgement upon the believer now as surely as it did in Old Testament times, even more so, for we are neglecting a more powerful and awesome Word!

The seriousness of opening the Bible must be underlined by us as pastors every time we open the Book! Have we ignored the miraculous, or have we been demanding in things we have no right to be demanding in? Have we encouraged believers to learn about and utilise their Holy Spirit empowered gifts in the church? Both extremes are condemned here. Let us walk God's path and not stray aside into our own opinions, be they conservative or Pentecostal.

DOCTRINES

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD

1. There is a big difference between knowing about something and truly knowing something so that your life is changed by it. The Greek uses two words; gnosis which was simply knowing about, and epignosis which was knowing the facts to the point where your life was transformed by them.
2. Our understanding of the Bible doesn't depend upon our own intellect - it depends on the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-20, 15:26, 16:7-15), and on our willingness to let the Holy Spirit use His word to change us (1 Corinthians 1:19-2:16).
3. Paul's prayers for the churches were that the believers would grow in full knowledge and the application of the word that would bring the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the life (Colossians 1:9-11, Philippians 1:9-11).
4. God has provided everything for the believer so that we might grow in the fullness of the stature of Christ. As we use it we grow and enjoy the life that God intended for us (James 4:6, Ephesians 4:12, 16, 5:16, 18, 6:10, Colossians 4:5).
5. Synonyms for spiritual growth are; putting on the whole armour of God (Ephesians 6:11-13), following the pastor (Hebrews 12:1, 2, Philippians 3:13-17), godliness (1 Timothy 6:3-6, 2 Peter 1:3).

OBEDIENCE

1. Obedience is better than offerings (1 Samuel 15:22; Proverbs 21:3; 28:9). If we are not in God's will, any "worship" we offer is unacceptable.
2. Obedience is something you have to learn. The basic training in obedience has to start in childhood. As it says in (Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16) "Honour your father and your mother. " (Proverbs 4:3,4; 22:6; 29:15-17; Hebrews 5:8)
3. Teaching your child obedience is an act of love (Proverbs 3:12; 19:18; 23:13-14).
4. We have to obey those who are in authority over us (Exodus 20:12; 22:28; Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 5:16; Romans 13:1-5; Ephesians 6:1-5; Colossians 3:18-22; Titus 3:1).
5. Those in authority have been put in that position by God (Romans 13:1).
6. Obedience to those in authority is obedience to God (Proverbs 24:21; Ephesians 6:7; Colossians 3:23-24; Romans 13:5).
7. Disobedience to those in authority is disobedience to God (Romans 1:30; 13:2).
8. But when we are ordered to do something that is against God's Will we have to disobey (Acts 4:19; 5:40-42).
9. The fifth commandment (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16) is the only commandment with a promise (Proverbs 10:17; Ephesians 6:1-3). Social life in a society is only possible when the people in it have learned to obey.
10. If this commandment is ignored, if the authority of the family is denied or not exercised, society will quickly slide into anarchy (Isaiah 3:12; Proverbs 29:21; 30:21-23; Romans 1:30).
11. Jesus Christ was perfect in His obedience (Luke 2:51; Philippians 2:8). Examples of the Lord's perfect obedience to the Father's will:
 - a) The Lord's temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11), where the Lord resisted the temptation in His humanity to use His divine power outside the Father's will (Philippians 2:5-8, Hebrews 10:7)

- b) In the Garden of Gethsemane the Lord resisted all temptation to the contrary but set His face firmly to go through with the horror of the cross (Matthew 26:38-46, Mark 14:34-42, Luke 22:41-44)
- c) During the provocations of the trials the Lord stood firm and resolute. Although He had the power to resist arrest, as shown briefly in (John 18:6), He voluntarily went with the troops, even chiding Peter for his sword play (Luke 22:49-51). Although abused (Matthew 26:67-68), struck (John 18:22), scourged (Matthew 27:26), mocked and beaten (Matthew 27:27-31), and finally crucified the Lord calmly accepted this all as part of the Father's Plan, resisting any temptation to rebel at the injustice, cruelty and callousness of those who perpetrated this evil. Rather He prayed for them, acknowledging to Pilate that all this was part of His role as Saviour (Luke 23:34, John 18:37)
- d) When miracles were demanded by Herod Antipas (Luke 23:8-11) the Lord resisted any temptation to instantly judge that evil man and his court but saying nothing set His face to the cross on which He would bear even the sins of Herod Antipas (1John 2:2)
- e) When He stumbled on the road to the cross He did not call on divine strength but Simon of Cyrene had to be pressed into service to carry the cross (Matthew 27:32, Luke 23:26)
- f) When reviled by the crowds as He hung on the cross, taunted to do things which He could have done, He resisted all temptation to step down from the cross but stayed there to bear the sins of all (Matthew 27:39-44, Mark 15:29-32, Luke 23:35-39).

BLESSING

1. Scripture views blessing as a sense of "peace and happiness".
2. Peace means contentment, tranquility and spiritual prosperity in life. Paul uses this prayer as a greeting in many of his letters (Galatians 1:3). It is similar to the Hebrew greeting, Shalom, which implies peace and prosperity.
3. Blessing comes by giving God and His righteousness first place (Matthew 6:31-34).
4. Having eyes on material possessions is a foolish thing (Matthew 6:21 cf. James 5:1-6).
5. Godliness and contentment are God's will for your life, irrespective of wealth or possessions (1 Timothy 6:6-12).
6. Our intimate relationship with Jesus Christ is our treasure (2 Corinthians 4:6-7).
7. We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ - we share everything that He is (Ephesians 1:3).
8. God often uses material blessings to accompany spiritual blessing (3 John 2). However, we are to be content in all circumstances (Philippians 4:11-13).
9. Blessings from God include such things as:
 - a) Peace (Psalm 29:11)
 - b) Comfort (Matthew 5:4)
 - c) Riches (Proverbs 10:22)
 - d) Rain (Ezekiel 34:26).
10. The believers who enjoy God's blessings are:
 - a) Righteous (Psalm 5:12)
 - b) Just (Proverbs 3:33)
 - c) Faithful (Proverbs 28:20)
 - d) Pure in heart (Psalm 24:4,5).
11. God's blessings are secured by:
 - a) Delighting in His Word (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1 -3)
 - b) Obeying the Word (Deuteronomy 28:1,2; James 1:25)
 - c) Teaching from the Word (Psalm 94:12; Hebrews 12:5-11)
 - d) Kindness to Jews (Genesis 12:3; Psalm 122:6).
 - e) Generosity (Proverbs 11:26; Malachi 3:10)
 - f) Walking in God's way (Psalm 128:1-4)
 - g) Prayer (James 5:16).
12. There are blessings in the book of the Revelation for those who:
 - a) those who heed the words of the book - 1:3, 22:7
 - b) those who die in the Lord - 14:13
 - c) those who are alert in the Tribulation regarding the Second Advent - 16:15
 - d) those who attend the marriage supper of the Lamb - 19:9

- e) those who are part of the first resurrection - 20:6
- f) those who as believers will have eternal blessings in heaven - 22:14.

HEAVENLIES IN CHRIST JESUS [See page 21 above]

MIRACLES OF CHRIST

MIRACLES OF CHRIST: CATEGORIES

1. Healing Miracles of Command

- a) Healing the sick from afar:-
 - i) Nobleman's son at Cana. (John 4:46-54)
 - ii) Centurion's servant. (Matthew 8:5-13)
- b) Healing the sick in person:-
 - i) Man with the withered arm. (Matthew 12:9-13)
 - ii) Man by the pool of Bethesda. (John 5:1-15)
 - iii) The ten lepers. (Luke 17:11-19)
 - iv) Two blind men between the two Jerichos. (Luke 18:35-43)

2. Healing Miracles of Touch

- a) Simple Touch:-
 - i) Peter's mother in law. (Matthew 8:14-15)
 - ii) A leper. (Matthew 8:2-4)
 - iii) Woman with a haemorrhage. (Matthew 9:20-22)
 - iv) Two blind men. (Matthew 20:30-34)
 - v) Crippled woman. (Luke 13:10-13)
 - vi) Dropsy case. (Luke 14:1-6)
 - vii) Malchus' ear. (Luke 22:49-51)
- b) Other Activity in the Touching:-
 - i) Blind man at Bethsaida. (Mark 8:22-26)
 - ii) Man born blind. (John 9:1-41)
 - iii) Deaf and dumb man. (Matthew 15:29-31)

3. Resuscitation Miracles

- a) By Command:-
 - i) Lazarus. (John 11:1-46)
- b) Touch and Command:-
 - i) Widow of Nain's son. (Luke 7:11-17)
 - ii) Jairus' daughter. (Mark 5:21-43)

4. Miracles where Faith was an Issue

- a) Command:-
 - i) Nobleman's son at Cana. (John 4:46-54)
 - ii) Centurion's servant. (Luke 7:1-10)
 - iii) Ten lepers. (Luke 17:11-19)
 - iv) Paralysed man. (Mark 2:1-12)
 - v) Man at pool of Bethesda. (John 5:1-15)
 - vi) Withered arm. (Matthew 12:9-13)
- b) Touch:-
 - i) Two blind men. (Matthew 9:27-31)
 - ii) A leper. (Mark 1:40-45)
 - iii) Woman with a haemorrhage. (Luke 8:43-48)

5. Miracles where Sin was an Issue.

- i) Paralysed man. (Mark 2:1-12)
- ii) Man by pool of Bethesda. (John 5:1-15)

6. Miracles associated with Parables or Teaching.

- i) Withered arm and lost sheep. (Matthew 12:9-13)
- ii) Man born blind and the good shepherd. (John 9, John 10:1-16)
- iii) Casting out of the demon from the dumb man. (Luke 11:14)
- iv) Unclean spirit who returns. (Luke 11:14 cf. Luke 11:21-28)

v) Cursing of the fig tree and the teaching on faith. (Mark 11:20-26)

7. Miracles associated with the Sabbath Controversy.

- i) Healing of the man at Bethesda. (John 5:1-15)
- ii) Healing of the man with a withered arm. (Mark 3:1-6)
- iii) Crippled woman healed. (Luke 13:10-21)
- iv) Case of dropsy healed. (Luke 14:1-6)

MIRACLES OF CHRIST: CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

MIRACLE	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Water made wine - at Cana				2:1-11
Healing the Nobleman's Son				4:46-54
The Drought of Fishes			5:1-11	
The Man with an unclean spirit		1:23-6	4:33-5	
Healing Simon's Mother-in-law	8:14-15	1:30-1	4:38-9	
Healing the leper	8:2-4	1:40-5		
Healing the Paralytic	9:2-7	2:1-12	5:17-26	
The Impotent Man				5:1-15
The Withered Hand	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	
The Centurion's Servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
The Widow's Son at Nain			7:11-17	
The Man Dumb and Blind	12:22			
Stilling the Storm	8:23-7	4:35-41	8:22-5	
The Gadarenes Demoniac	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	
The Daughter of Jairus	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	
The Afflicted Woman	9:20-22	5:25-34	8:43-48	
Two Blind Men, Dumb Demoniac	9:27-34			
Feeding of the Five Thousand	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-15
Syrophenician Woman's Daughter	15:21-28	7:24-30		
Deaf and Dumb Man	15:29-31	7:31-7		
Feeding of the Four Thousand	15:32-8	8:1-9		
The Blind Man near Bethsaida		8:22-6		
The Demoniac Boy	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
The Temple tax tribute money	17:24-7			
The Man born Blind				9:1-41
The Dumb Demoniac			11:14	
The Crippled Woman			13:10-17	
The Man having Dropsy			14:1-6	
The Raising of Lazarus				11:1-46
The Ten Lepers			17:11-19	
The Blind Man near Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
The Withered Fig tree	21:20-22	11:20-25		
Healing the ear of Malchus			22:49-51	
The Draught of Fishes				21:6-11

MIRACLES OF THE APOSTLES

MIRACLES	WHERE	RECORDED IN
Peter heals a lame man	Jerusalem	Acts 3:1-11
Ananias and Sapphira	Jerusalem	Acts 5:1-10
Apostles perform many wonders	Jerusalem	Acts 5:12-16
Peter and John communicate the Holy Spirit	Samaria	Acts 8:14-17
Peter heals Aeneas of a palsy	Lydda	Acts 9:33, 34
Peter raises Tabitha, or Dorcas to life.	Joppa	Acts 9:36-41
Peter delivered out of prison by an angel.	Jerusalem	Acts 12:7-17
God smites Herod, so that he dies.	Jerusalem	Acts 12:21-23
Elymas, the sorcerer, smitten with blindness	Paphos	Acts 13:6-11

Paul converted	Road to Damascus	Acts 9:1-9
Paul heals a cripple	Lystra	Acts 14:8-10
Paul casts out a spirit of divination	Philippi	Acts 16-16-18
Paul and Silas's prison doors open by an earthquake	Philippi	Acts 16:25, 26
Paul communicates the Holy Spirit	Corinth	Acts 19:1-6
Paul heals multitudes	Corinth	Acts 19:11, 12
Paul restores Eutychus to life.	Troas	Acts 20:9-12
Paul shakes off a viper	Melita	Acts 28:3-6
Paul heals the father of Publius and others.	Melita	Acts 28:7-9

MIRACLES: PURPOSE

1. Miracles occurred mainly in three periods of history. Of all the miracles recorded in the Scriptures all but twelve fall into the following three periods.

- a) The Law and Prophets Group:- prepares for the coming of the Lord
 - i) At the Exodus through to the giving of the Law, miracles were performed by Moses, Aaron and later by Joshua.
 - ii) At the period when the great prophets Elijah and Elisha were teaching many miracles were performed.
- b) The Lord and Church Group:- bears witness to His first coming
 - i) The miracles of the Lord.
 - ii) The miracles performed by the apostles.
- c) The Future Miracle Group:- attest to His second coming
 - i) Beginning with the activities of the two witnesses of the Great Tribulation.
 - ii) The universal outburst of miracle activity at the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, when the Lord rules over a restored earth.

2. Their purpose includes the following:

- a) To glorify the nature of God (John 2:11, 11:40)
- b) To accredit certain men as spokesmen for God (Hebrews 2:3-4, Luke 7:18-23)
- c) To provide evidence for belief in Jesus as Messiah (John 6:2,14, 10:37-38, 20:30-31, 1 Corinthians 15:13-20)
- d) To demonstrate the Lord's superiority over the forces of evil (Matthew 9:27-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 4:31-37)
- e) To demonstrate the uniqueness of the Lord Jesus Christ, God with us (John 1:14).

3. Miracles demonstrate the attributes of God.

- a) The Sovereignty of God was illustrated in:-
 - i) the Lord's creative work of turning water into wine at Cana. (John 2:1-11)
 - ii) His power when stilling the storm on Galilee. (Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 8:18)
 - iii) the feeding of the 5000 and the 4000. (Mark 6:33-44; 8:1-9)
 - iv) walking on the water at Galilee. (Mark 6:47-52)
 - v) His arrest in Gethsemane. (John 18:6)
- b) The Righteousness of God was illustrated in:-
 - the Lord's transfiguration before the disciples on the mountain, when they saw the Holiness of God in the Lord displayed. (Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36)
- c) The Justice of God was illustrated in:-
 - the cursing of the fig tree during the last week before the cross as a sign of His coming judgment upon unresponsive Israel. (Matthew 21:18-22; Mark 11:12-14, 20-26)
- d) The Love of God was illustrated in:-
 - all the healing ministries as the Lord's compassion flowed into action, even to the exhaustion of His humanity. While thirty-six specific miracles of the Lord are recorded, many thousands of healing miracles are passed over in a few isolated verses. (e.g. Matthew 9:35-36, 14:14, 15:30-31, 8:16-17 etc.)

- e) The Eternal Life of God was illustrated in:-
the great miracle of the resurrection of Christ.
- f) The Omniscience of God was illustrated in:-
 - i) his knowledge of where unseen shoals of fish were. (Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20, John 21:1-14)
 - ii) where the fish was with just enough money in its mouth to pay the required tax. (Matthew 17:24-27)
 - iii) the knowledge about Nathaniel and the woman at the well at Sychar also shows his omniscience (John 1:45-51;4:5-43).
- g) The Omnipresence of God was illustrated in:-
His ability to appear in various places many kilometres apart demonstrating the truth of His promise to be with believers always. (Matthew 28:20)
- h) The Omnipotence of God was illustrated in:-
the raising of people such as Lazarus from the dead.
- i) The Immutability of God was illustrated in:-
the repetition of the miracle of the draught of fishes both before and after the resurrection showing that His character and power were unchanged.
- j) The Veracity of God was illustrated in:-
the healing of the Centurion's servant and the Nobleman's son. The Lord said they were healed, and at that moment, many kilometres away, they were. (Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10, John 4:46-54)
- k) The Grace of God was illustrated in:-
the healing of Malchus' ear in the garden on the night of the Lord's arrest (Luke 22:50). It was a testimony to His Grace that as he faced the horror of the cross, our Lord could still stoop and heal one of His captors. It is significant that the last recorded miracle performed by the Lord before the cross benefited an enemy, one who had come to arrest him.

HEALING AND MIRACLES

1. The healing ministry of Jesus was not primarily to relieve suffering but to show Himself to the Jews as the Messiah.
2. Jesus Christ's major thrust in his ministry was healing from sin rather than physical healing, as healing from sin has eternal results whilst physical healing has temporal results only.
3. Examples of healing by Jesus Christ:
 - a) The Leper (Matthew 8:1 -4)
The Jew was suffering from an incurable disease - leprosy. It was totally hopeless to expect a cure under normal conditions at that time in history. The cured leper was told to go to the priests, the Levitical priest of those days who had been given by God two chapters in the Old Testament for such cases: Uncleanliness (Leviticus 13), Cleanliness (Leviticus 14). It was unknown to use (Leviticus 14), its use with the cure of the leper should have alerted the Levitical priests that the Messiah was on earth.
 - b) Centurion's Servant (Matthew 8:5-13)
The Centurion was a Gentile believer who had great faith, showing he was a mature believer. His servant was suffering from the palsy (paralysis or polio). The Centurion showed great faith by knowing that he did not need Jesus Christ to enter his house to heal his servant. Using the Centurion's faith, Jesus Christ challenges the Jewish onlookers to trust him also.
 - c) Paralytic Healed (Matthew 9:1-8)
A Jewish believer who lacked assurance of his sins forgiven. His friends, the stretcher bearers, who brought him to Jesus had great faith in the Lord. Jesus cured him to give the paralytic confidence in his sins being forgiven.
 - d) Peter's Mother-in-Law (Matthew 8:14-17)
Jesus cured her so that she could serve the Lord and help sustain Him.
4. There are many examples and means used by God for healing:
 - a) By direct contact. (Matthew 8:3,15; Mark 6:5)
 - b) In response to the faith of friends. (Mark 2:5)
 - c) In response to prayer. (James 5:15,16)
 - d) Through doctors (Colossians 4:14), and medicines - Figs for boils (2 Kings 20:7), Wine for ulcers (1Timothy 5:23)

5. God did not heal many great saints who had diseases or problems.
 - a) Elisha (2 Kings 13:14)
 - b) Paul (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)
 - c) Epaphroditus (Philippians 2-26,27)
 - d) Timothy (1 Timothy 5:23)
 - e) Principle of the sick saint (2 Corinthians 12:9)

6. Sickness is permitted for a number of reasons:
 - a) To bring us back to God's Word. (Psalm 119:6 7)
 - b) To make God's Word manifest. (John 9:1-3)
 - c) To glorify Jesus Christ. (John 11:4)
 - d) So that we can comfort others. (2 Corinthians 1:4)
 - e) To prepare us for future glory. (2 Corinthians 4:17)
 - f) To return us to fellowship. (Hebrews 12:5-10)
 - g) To make, us more fruitful. (John 15:2; Hebrews 12:1)

7. Miraculous healing does occur from time to time. God is able to heal anyone at any time but the Bible shows that it is not normally His purpose to do so. Satan can counterfeit divine healing through so called "divine healers".

HEALING: THERE IS NO HEALING BY RIGHT IN THE ATONEMENT

1. Scripture (Matthew 8:16-17) "When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed by devils and He cast out the spirits with his Word, and healed all that were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esias the prophet saying, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses. "

2. Many misinterpret this passage as indicating that the atoning work of Jesus Christ forgives sin and heals sicknesses.

3. In (Matthew 8:1-17) there are four types of sickness - leprosy, paralysis, fever, demon possession.

4. In (Matthew 8:17) the word "took" means to take them by the hand and lead them away. Alleviation of suffering is in focus rather than the transferring of suffering to Christ. The diseases of these people were not transferred to Christ. He did not receive our leprosy, paralysis or fever. And Jesus was not demon possessed - that's blasphemy. He dealt with them all in his earthly ministry, setting us the example to confront them in the Holy Spirit's power through prayer.

5. Sickness and death are the result of sin. Jesus had power to forgive sin, and therefore to heal sickness. Jesus healed sickness to show that He was Messiah (Mark 2:3-12). Healing may be asked for, but never demanded.

6. In the atonement, Christ bore our SINS in His own body on the tree, never SICKNESS (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus took away their diseases but did not have them transferred to Himself. We are obedient to him, and follow him, and if that means we suffer, as Paul did, we suffer and we do not moan like the Exodus generation did. We enter the "fellowship of his suffering" as we face difficulties and pressures. Colossians 1:24, Philippians 3:10.

7. The purpose of the atonement, therefore, is to pay the penalty of sin, not to provide healing for sicknesses.

SIGNS

1. A sign is something which stands for, or looks forward to something else.
 - a) Things such as - The Temple, Regalia, Stars and Uniforms.
 - b) Festivals such as the Jewish Feasts which spoke of the Plan of God.
 - c) Sacrifices such as Levitical Offerings which spoke of the work of Jesus Christ.
 - d) Customs such as Circumcision.
 - e) Names including the names of People and Places.
 - f) Supernatural Acts such as Miracles.

2. Signs were given by God to individuals as a proof of their authority (Deuteronomy 13:1-4, Judges 6:17, Ezekiel 12:6,11, Hebrews 2:4).

3. Signs were for unbelieving Israel as a warning of coming judgment (Isaiah 20:3, 28:11, Jeremiah 6:1, Ezekiel 4:3).

4. Signs for believers were for reminders of God's Grace (Exodus 13:9), such as the Covenant (Exodus 31:13,17), and His Holiness (Ezekiel 14:8).

5. The life of the Lord was a sign (Matthew 12:38-42, Luke 2:34-35, John 6:30-35).

6. His death and resurrection were also signs (Matthew 12:39, 24:30, John 2:18-22, 3:14-15).

7. The Apostles had temporary sign gifts to prove their authority from God (Acts 14:8-28, 1 Corinthians 1:22, Acts 19:11-12 cf. 1 Timothy 5:23, Philippians 2:25).
8. Asking for signs is not a sign of spirituality (Matthew 12:38-39, John 6:30-35, 12:32-34).
9. Signs of the First Advent in Luke.
 - a) The virgin birth itself, in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy; the visitation of the angels both to Mary and Elizabeth, were all miraculous events. (Luke 1:26-38)
 - b) The attendant birth of John the Baptist is also described with its associated signs, and the recognition by the baby in the womb of Elizabeth was a sign of things to come. (Luke 1:5-25, 43-45 cf. Psalm 110:1)
 - c) Mary's prophecy of her son's role as Saviour and Sacrifice. (Luke 1:54-56)
 - d) The signs associated with John's birth. (Luke 1:65-66)
 - e) The prophetic song of Zachariah. (Luke 1:67-80)
 - f) The angelic visit to the shepherds. (Luke 2:10-11)
 - g) The song of Simeon. (Luke 2:25-35)
 - h) The song of Anna. (Luke 2:36-38)
 - i) The sign of the prophet Isaiah in the preaching of John the Baptist. (Luke 3:3-18)
10. Seven signs in John:
 - a) Wedding at Cana at Galilee. 2:1-11
 - b) Healing of the Nobleman's son. 4:46-54
 - c) The Cripple by the Pool of Siloam. 5:1-16
 - d) The feeding of the Five Thousand. 6:1-14
 - e) The healing of the Blind Man. 9:1-38
 - f) The raising of Lazarus. 11:1-46
 - g) The resurrection of the Lord. 20:20,21

GIFTS: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Three general passages which list spiritual gifts (Ephesians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 12:28-30, Romans 12:3-8).
2. The purpose of spiritual gifts is to serve and build up the church (Ephesians 4:8-13).
3. The gifts are given by the Holy Spirit at the point of salvation (1 Corinthians 12).
4. Some gifts were temporary (1 Corinthians 13:8-10) and others permanent (1 Corinthians 12:28 cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8).
5. A temporary gift was one used before the canon of scripture was completed. The purpose of temporary gifts was to function in the place of a completed canon of scripture. (1 Corinthians 13:8-10)
6. The operation of a spiritual gift depends entirely on the filling of the Holy Spirit to be effective (Acts 2:4).

PARAPHRASE

"For this reason then, it is absolutely necessary that we pay the closest attention to every word from the scriptures that we have ever heard, lest at any time we should be swept away by the details of life, having lost our sure footing through obedience to the Word. For if the words spoken through angels were reliable and secure, and any disobedience, any deviation from its path brought justified condemnation and judgement, then how much more careful do we need to be. How will we escape from such judgement, if we neglect the Word of salvation and deliverance that has been delivered to us. It was given first by our Lord, and then confirmed by the truthful legal testimony of those that heard him. God also bore his own witness to that testimony both with many different sorts of signs and wonders, and also by the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to all who expressed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Both signs and wonders and the gifts were and are still given according to the will, plan and purpose of God."

CHAPTER 2:5-9

“ For unto the angels hath he not put into subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. 6 But one in a certain place testified saying, ‘ what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visiteth him? 7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. 8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.’ (Psalm 8 : 4 - 6). For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. “

KEY WORDS

Subjection	hupotasso	aorist, active, indicative; did he put under authority , or put in subjection.
World	oikoumene	the habitable world of mankind.
To come	mello	present, active, participle; which is coming. A reference to the Messianic age when the Lord will rule upon the earth, but also to the “time” afterwards.
Speak	laleo	present, active, indicative; keep on speaking.
Testified	diamartureo	aorist, middle, indicative; solemnly testify, as before a formal court.
Mindful	mimnesko	present, middle, indicative; keep on remembering.
Visiteth	episkeptomai	present, middle, indicative; kept on looking at, visiting with.
Madest	elatoo	aorist, active, indicative; made him lower, lesser in rank.
Little	brachu	for a little time(missed by the AV translators).
Glory	doxa	glory of a victorious general or a god.
Honour	Time	honour , dignity, status and character of a person.
Crown	Stephanoo	to crown with the victors crown after victory in war of at the Games.
Set	kathistemi	appointed, constituted, ordained.
Subjection	hupotasso	aorist, active, infinitive; putting everything in subjection.
Notput under	Anupotaktos	nothing not subject to him, non-subjected.
Put under	Hupotasso	Perfect , passive, participle; put under responsive subjection to Him
Made a little (also here)	Elatoo	perfect , passive, participle; made a little lower, with results that go on forever!
Suffering	Brachu	for a little while.
	pathema	suffering belonging to death (thanatos). All the suffering that is involved in the reality of death and dying.
Crowned	stephanoo	perfect , passive, participle; victors crown received with everlasting results.
Taste	Geuomai	aorist, middle, subjunctive; to experience something to the full
Everyman	Pantos	Everything (inclusive of all the creation - context of chapter 1 verse 10).

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Victory of Christ in the Angelic Conflict and its implications for us - Verses 5-9

The Lord Jesus Christ through his victory over sin and death achieves, as a man, what the man, Adam, lost in the Garden of Eden, full sovereignty over all created things. As God he has always been king, but now as man he is king of kings, and in this victory we are lifted up to the heavenlies ourselves through our relationship with Him.

Note the following summary of this section:

1. He will rule the world to come - vs. 5
2. The contrast of the 1st Adam and the last Adam - vs. 6-9
 - i. The insignificance of man - vs. 6
 - ii. The exaltation of the man (Christ - the Last Adam) - vs. 7 Compare 1 Cor 15:27.
 - iii. The victory of the Last Adam - vs. 8
 - iv. The mechanics of His victory vs. 9

Verse 5. The Lord’s victory means he has the rulership of all created things, from the angels downwards, and that he has rulership for-ever. With the victory of the Cross and Resurrection, he defeats sin and death; sin speaks of his victory over all moral impediments to man’s eternal fellowship with God, death speaks of his defeat of the limits of space and time for men who were enslaved to death and the limits of this world after the fall. The victory of the Lord thus opens eternity to man, and makes him the ruler of all worlds and all creations, this universe and the next.

Most commentators refer to the Millennial kingdom here when Christ will rule for a thousand years on David’s throne upon the earth, but the words used indicate the writer has a bigger victory in view; that the Lord is king beyond this creation and into the next, the new heavens and new earth that are made “after” this universe is wrapped up and removed. **2 Peter 3:5-13, Revelation 21:1.** Remember the “category mistake” in our language here, for “after” is a Space-time word, and so I smile as I use it. It is the reminder that “the best is yet to come”, and it is well beyond our limited concepts here and now.

Our destiny, as that of our Lord's, is beyond this universe; the victory won through the Cross and Empty Tomb is far bigger than most believers realise. This rulership of eternity was never promised to the angels, it is his alone. All this was done with a plan behind it, and man is an important part of that plan, for it was God's plan from the beginning to lift man up, with the Lord for all eternity. The Lord became a man not an angel, and that difference is what is emphasised in this chapter, for man has an eternal destiny as the creature that the Lord blesses through grace and faith, the angels remain what they were from the beginning, servants of God, but they become the servants of redeemed mankind also.

Verse 6. The writer quotes **Psalm 8:4-6**, from the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament. The question asked by the psalmist is a good one; why should God care about insignificant mankind? When we consider the vastness of this creation, let alone eternity beyond. What is any man or woman asking questions, but a pathetic arrogant creature living in a small galaxy, on the "third rock from a minor sun"? Don't be homino-centric, be Christo-centric in all things!

Yet we have been chosen for a major part in the plan of God in relation to the Angelic Conflict, and it is every saved man and woman that will be the evidence for the prosecution against Satan and his angels! For if insignificant members of inferior mankind can be saved by Grace, through faith, then the fallen angels could also have repented, given that they were much more powerful and intelligent than us.

The fact that they didn't repent of their evil rebellion under Satan, and had set their rebellion in concrete before man and woman was made, shows just how much they hated God, and yet He developed a plan to demonstrate to them that they were wrong, and that He is right in judging them. We are the key part of that plan from eternity past. Our salvation proves that all thinking creatures could have been saved; that if men and women can be saved, any thinking creature could be, if they left their pride and arrogance behind! Refer to the Doctrine of the "Angelic Conflict" in the BTB, and post-grad text in Diploma File. These verses here in Hebrews are an important part of the Biblical revelation of this part of the Plan of God from eternity past that involves us.

Note the words of this verse. See and understand that God, "keeps on remembering us", that there is no time when we are forgotten. We appear insignificant, yet in God's sight we are "in Christ" of supreme value and importance, for we are the lynch pin of his plan to confound and condemn Satan and his army. As believers enter into eternity they must get a firm grasp of this truth, for it tells us why Satan's hatred for Christians is so strong, why he sends his demons to launch attacks upon all believers who stand for God, and why we have elect angels always with us to assist us when attacked by the demon forces.

Note the second key word of this verse - "visiteth". The Lord dwells with us and is ever looking out for us. We have the presence of the Holy Spirit within, the presence of an elect angel around us, and the Lord's fellowship within our heart, and from heaven he sees all that happens to us. We are surrounded by his loving and powerful care and protection.

Verse 7. In his incarnation the Lord was "made" as a man, a little lower than the angels, less powerful than they were so that from this place of inferiority he could prove the power of God in man was greater than the power of angels in themselves.

The Greek word "brachu" pops up again in this verse, reminding us that the time the Lord spent as man and so inferior to the angels, was just a "little time", but it ends with his victory, and through his victory all mankind has the opportunity through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to be superior to the angels. The Lord received a temporary "lowering", so that he might receive an eternal "raising up". He was prepared to receive humiliation, so that he might win the crown of glory for eternity. It is through His total obedience that victory was won, and it is through our total obedience to the Lord that we achieve victory in our called part of the angelic conflict. By faith, through grace we are "born again" into a role in the angelic conflict, and within the plan for us, and walking in Holy Spirit filled power, we are called to trust, obey, and win!

The Lord's victory is spoken of as of the victory of a great general over an enemy army. The concept was well known to the hearers of this letter, for they had all heard of a Roman Triumphal procession, where the victorious Roman general led his army and its captives in triumph through the city of Rome. All the city would turn out to welcome him and be a part of the victory. Just so, all redeemed creation will turn out to welcome the Lord as he takes his throne for all eternity. We are a part of the welcoming rejoicing crowd in heaven; we have our part to play then, and we have our part to play now. Let us play that part in the power that the Lord has placed at our hands, Holy Spirit power!

Verse 8. This is a powerful verse. All things are subjected (perfect tense – from his victory forever) to the Lord, "all things", the writer repeats to emphasise the Lord's victory is total. Even the fallen angels are under His authority and he will judge and condemn them, and they will have no power to resist. This is where the analogy of the Roman Triumph is applied fully. The Lord is the triumphant general of the armies of heaven, and HE will exult over evil in all its forms and condemn it forever to the Lake of Fire. Evil forces have humiliated us all at times, but their day of full and final humiliation-judgment is coming!

The victorious general marched his captured enemy in chains with his army and all the captives were killed together in the field of Mars at the end of the march through the city. They were "triumphed over", their humiliation rejoiced over by the victorious people, and then they were judged by death. Just so will the fallen angels be humiliated and judged at the end of time. The Lord will lead them, but to just and final judgment for their evils. It will be their turn to be humiliated, but for them there will be no lifting up, only the casting down into the lake of fire. **Revelation 20:10 -15.** This has not occurred yet, but it is as certain as the character and plan of God is sure.

Verse 9. This verse is the central verse in this chapter. It summarises his victory. Graciously the Lord, not only took upon himself the humility of the cloak of humanity, but he suffered the penalty for all mankind; he faced total suffering and death. He “took on” the lower position of a man, but the results were eternal, for as a man he defeated sin and death. He has been “crowned” (perfect tense) with results that go on forever for all mankind.

He bore the full penalty for Adam’s sin, and so through his act we are delivered from the fear of death, and the finality of it’s judgement. The angel of death, the haunter of mankind has no power over a Christian, for all he can do is usher us into the Lord’s very presence. He is crowned with glory and honour for he has defeated the great enemies of mankind, sin and death and their author Satan. All this is the manifestation of the grace of the God who has a plan for this universe and you and I, in Christ, are a part of that plan.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Not only is this the “visited planet”, as C S Lewis said, but we are the visited people who have our “visitor” constantly with us, and his elect angels constantly around us. We stand protected in the midst of the fallen angelic forces that oppose us in their unremitting hatred of the saved. Have we praised God for our protection and our position today? Have you praised God for the presence of the Holy Spirit with you today, and for the angel assigned to you as your spiritual body guard?

Walk with the Lord, and be obedient to his path for your life and you need fear no evil, for God is literally with you, and his angels have their guard over you. The only danger we are in, is when we wander off the path of God and put ourselves in the places where the enemy wants us. Only then can he make a fool of us. Walk with the Lord only.

If we deliberately or foolishly walk away from God’s path for our life, we place ourself in peril, for through our sin we grieve and through false plans we quench the Holy Spirit’s power, and with our evil we hinder the very angel sent to protect us. **Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19.** It is only through the believer’s personal and foolish choice of sin and evil that we temporarily lose the active protection of the mighty powers that keep us safe.

The glorious grace of God is such, that even then, we may confess our sins and we are instantly restored, and can have the wounds we gained during our error healed again. It is a dangerous thing to walk away from the plan of God. While we walk in obedience we are safe, but if we move away we are in danger of wounding, and even of the sin unto death. Let us walk with the Lord, and ensure we have our spiritual armour on, and are in full fellowship with the Lord, and so are standing with Holy Spirit and angelic protection. The only thing that stops this is sin and active pursuit of evil! Be holy believer in your daily life, and so be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, and you will stand protected!

The Lord won the victory through his humility and obedience, and this gives us the clue as to the means of victory in our own lives; we are to walk humbly before our God, and are to be obedient in all things. As the old song puts it, “there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey”. Too many desire to be celebrities today, but the way of blessing is the way of humility, the way of obedient service for the Lord, the path of power through the indwelling Holy Spirit, the protected path guarded by our guardian angel. Be holy, be humble; obey and trust the Lord alone, and so be protected!

We serve a risen Saviour, we serve the King, and he is and will be powerful above all the forces of evil. We are on the winning side. Are we living in that place of victory today? Are we living with our eyes fixed on the reality of the Lord’s final and complete destruction of the enemy, or are we living as if this victory is unsure? Do our prayers reflect this reality?

Friends, the victory of the Lord is won already, and all we await is his triumphant parade through the universe. The enemy is still active, but he is a defeated force, and those that stay on the path of the righteousness need not fear his attack, for they are protected by the power of our victorious Saviour God. Let us live as victors upon the earth and proclaim his victory and manifest his power through our life where-ever we go and what ever we do.

B. PASTORAL

Preachers, ask yourself; is this the emphasis that people would get from your preaching in the church? Do all who hear your words get the message of victory? Do the people hear about the triumphant Saviour or do they get the impression that the Angelic Conflict is still a “close run thing” and Satan might win? He will not, he cannot win because the victory has been resoundingly won and he cannot come back from the defeat the Lord delivered to him through the Cross and Resurrection. He will rule over all things, and his kingship must be our message for all to hear, that believers may rejoice, the lost might come to him to be saved, and the determined evil ones might know they are judged. **John 16:8-11.**

DOCTRINES

HOLY SPIRIT: FILLING OF THE SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer. We are commanded to allow Him to fill (or fully control) our lives (Ephesians 5:18).

2. The filling (controlling) of the Spirit can be broken by:

- a) Grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) - sin, doing something you shouldn't.
 - b) Quenching the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) - not doing something you should (like quenching a fire, allowing the flame to go out).
3. The filling (controlling) of the Spirit can be restored by confession of sin and full surrender to do the will of God (1John 1:9)
4. The Spirit produces the very character of the Christ in the believer: (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23, Ephesians 3:16, 17, Philippians 1:20, 21, 2 Corinthians 3:3)
- a) The fruit of the Spirit:
 - i) Galatians 5:22-23 - Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control.
 - ii) Romans 14:17 - Righteousness, Peace, Joy.
 - iii) Colossians 3:12-15 - Compassion, Kindness, Humility, Gentleness, Patience, Forgiveness, Love, Peace, Thankfulness.
 - iv) 1 Thessalonians 1:3 - Faith, Love, Endurance, Hope.
 - b) Rejoicing in Christ (Philippians 3:1, 4:4).
 - c) Loving one another (John 15:12, Romans 12:10, Ephesians 5:2).
 - d) Striving for the faith (Philippians 1:27, Jude 3).
 - e) Putting away all sin (1 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 12:1).
 - f) Abstaining from all appearances of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).
 - g) Submitting to injuries (1 Corinthians 6:7).
 - h) Subduing the temper (Ephesians 4:26, James 1:19).
 - i) Shunning the wicked (2 Thessalonians 3:6).
 - j) Abounding in the works of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58, 1 Thessalonians 4:1).
 - k) Showing a good example (1 Timothy 4:12, 1 Peter 2:12).
 - l) Following after that which is good (Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 6:11).
 - m) Perfecting holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Timothy 3:17).
 - n) Hating defilement (Jude 23).
 - o) Overcoming the world. (1 John 5:4-5)
 - p) Adorning the gospel. (Philippians 1:27, Titus 2:10)
 - q) Forgiving injuries. (Romans 12:20)
 - r) Living peaceably with all. (Romans 12:18, Hebrews 12:14)
 - s) Visiting the afflicted. (James 1:27)
 - t) Sympathising with others. (Romans 12:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:14)
 - u) Honouring others. (Romans 12:10)
 - v) Submitting to authorities. (Romans 13:1-7)
 - w) Being content. (Philippians 4:11, Hebrews 13:5)
 - x) Walking worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12)
 - y) Walking in the newness of life. (Romans 6:4)
 - z) Walking as children of light. (Ephesians 5:8)
 - aa) Glorifies Christ in his body. (Philippians 1:20, 21)
 - bb) Christ is at home in his body. (Ephesians 3:16,17)
 - cc) A lifestyle which honours God in the presence of men. (2 Corinthians 3:3)
5. The filling of the Holy Spirit in every believer only occurs in two dispensations:
- a) Church age Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:22,23
 - b) Millennium - Joel 2:28, 29 (characterized by ecstasies)

CARNALITY

1. The believer possesses an Old Sin Nature after salvation (1John 1:8, Romans 7:14,15).
2. The Old Sin Nature is desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9).
3. The believer under the control of the Old Sin Nature is called carnal (1Corinthians 3:1-3, Romans 7:14).
4. The Old Sin Nature frustrates bona fide production in the life of the believer (Romans 7:15).
5. The Old Sin Nature is acquired at the point of physical birth (Psalm 51:5).
6. We are therefore considered spiritually dead at the point of physical birth (Romans 5:12).

7. The Old Sin Nature has several facets: areas of weakness produces sins, areas of strength produces human good. It has trends towards asceticism or lasciviousness. In many cases asceticism is considered to be spirituality.
8. The Old Sin Nature is not found in the resurrection body.

SPIRITUALITY

1. All Christians have the Holy Spirit indwelling them. When we allow Him to control our lives, we are said to be "filled with the Spirit" or "walking in the Spirit".
2. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be lost by:
 - a) Grieving the Spirit - by sin
 - b) Quenching the Spirit - by not submitting to His leading
 - c) This is called being carnal, or controlled by the flesh, the old sin nature.
3. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be regained by:
 - a) confessing sin (1 John 1:9)
 - b) surrendering your life to God (Romans 12:1-2)
 - c) This is called being spiritual, or controlled by the Holy Spirit.
4. Only the Holy Spirit in us can produce good works acceptable to God - anything in our own strength is unacceptable (Romans 8:8-9, 1 Corinthians 3:10-15).
5. The spiritual believer:
 - a) Imitates God (Ephesians 5:1, 1 John 3:9)
 - b) To glorify Christ (John 7:39, John 16:14)
 - c) Fulfills the Law (Romans 8:2-4, Romans 13:8).

SOLDIER: CHRISTIAN SOLDIER OF EPHESIANS CHAPTER 6

General Scripture Ephesians 6:11-17. This passage relates to the armour which the Roman soldier wore and analogises its use into the spiritual realm.

1. **USE OF THE ARMOUR** Ephesians 6:11 "Put on the whole armour of God. " Ephesians 6:11a. We are instructed to "put on" (ENDUO Gk) - this means "to clothe"- it is a command by God to the Christian soldier. We are to "clothe ourselves" or to "dress ourselves".

"Whole armour" (PANOPLIA Gk) - the complete armour "of God" (THEOS Gk) true source of the armour is God.

The whole armour of God is given in Ephesians 6:14-17. It comprises:-

- a) The Belt of Truth Ephesians 6:14a
- b) Breastplate of Righteousness Ephesians 6:14b
- c) Boots Ephesians 6:15
- d) Shield Ephesians 6:16
- e) Helmet of Salvation Ephesians 6:17a
- f) Sword of the Spirit Ephesians 6:17b

PRINCIPLES:

- i) The Roman soldier wore all his armour for his own safety and protection.
- ii) When the Roman soldier was highly disciplined he ruled the world.
- iii) When the Roman soldier became degenerate the Empire declined and fell.
- iv) The Roman soldier was in the army 7 days a week.

SPIRITUAL ANALOGY

- i) As Christian soldiers we wear our armour for our own safety and protection.
- ii) When we are highly disciplined in the Christian life we are very effective in our warfare.
- iii) If we become degenerate or apostate our Christian witness and effectiveness declines and we become casualties in the spiritual warfare.
- iv) The Christian soldier is in the battle 7 days a week. A part time soldier never amounts to an effective soldier.

That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil". Ephesians 6:11 b. "to stand" (histemi (Gk) - to hold your ground. We are in a spiritual warfare and the purpose of the armour is to hold our ground against the foe. "the wiles (methodeia dia Gk) - tactics, cunning or fraud" "of the devil (diabolos Gk).

We therefore have the whole armour of God to enable us to stand firm against the devil's tactics.

PRINCIPLE: By learning the tactics likely to be employed by your opponent the Christian soldier is able to go on the offensive using the sword of the Spirit - the Word of God. (verse 17).

2. THE ENEMY (Ephesians 6:12)

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

"Wrestle" - "the wrestling" (he pale estin Gk) hand to hand combat not wrestling as a sport. "not against flesh and blood" - not against other members of the human race, but against:-

- a) PRINCIPALITIES (arche Gk) Ruling demons.
- b) POWERS (exousia Gk) - Demons with authority, officers in the demon army.
- c) RULERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD (kosmokrator Gk) - world rulers, demons close to the seats of government such as the demons of (Daniel 10:13, 20).
- d) SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES (pneu matikos poneria Gk) - the demon army.

Quite clearly our right is against a spiritual foe. From Hebrews 2:7 we know that as human beings we are inferior to angels. Therefore in order to have success against superior forces we must have God's armour.

3. BE PREPARED (Ephesians 6:13)

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand. "

Since the resurrection ascension and session of Jesus Christ the attack of Satan has moved from the line of Christ to the individual believer. Our dependence on the whole armour is imperative yet many believers reject part or all of the armour. There are many casualties as a consequence.

We are again exhorted to put on the whole armour of God.

4. THE BELT OF TRUTH (Ephesians 6:14a, Isaiah 11:5)

"Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth

The Roman belt was a wide girdle of leather worn around the waist from which hung the scabbard for the sword and loops for rations and equipment. The leather belt was supported by a cross shoulder strap studded with metal plates with thick leather strips hanging down to protect the lower body. The belt therefore was the basic armour on which the defence of the soldier was based.

PRINCIPLE: Our basic defence is the truth contained within the Word of God. The sword of the Spirit hangs securely to the believer by means of the promises contained within it. The greater our trust in the truth of God the greater our protection against the enemy.

5. THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Ephesians 6:14b, Isaiah 59:17)

"and having on the breastplate of righteousness". The breastplate (thorax Gk) was usually made of leather overlaid with metal strips. Shaped like a sleeveless coat it was in the higher ranks often covered with gold or silver. The belt held the breastplate firmly in place its primary function being to protect every vital area of the soldiers body.

PRINCIPLE: The righteousness of Christ protects us. We stand in his righteousness alone. He gave us his righteousness at the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21). Our continued protection through his righteousness is through the filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) (See topic Holy Spirit: Filling of the Spirit).

6. THE BOOTS (Ephesians 6:15, Isaiah 52:7)

"And your feet shod, with the preparation of the gospel of peace".

The boots (caligae Gk) were made of hobnail studded leather soles 15mm (1/2") thick secured with a leather tie over the instep and round the ankles. Good footwear is essential for the soldier with infantry still being essential even in these days of sophisticated armaments.

PRINCIPLE: In spiritual terms the feet are often analogised to service. The feet take one towards the enemy. The gospel of peace is a direct attack on the enemy. Peace in this context talks of reconciliation between God and man. (Romans 1:1 4-16, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

7. THE SHIELD OF FAITH (Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 5:4)

"Above all taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. "

The Roman shield (thureos Gk) was shaped like a door being made of glued planks wrapped in canvas or calf skin, the top and bottom edges being protected by iron. The shield was the most active of the defensive armour carried by the Roman soldier. Loss of shield often meant death to the soldier.

PRINCIPLE: The Christian soldier's shield is walking actively in the promises and principles set out in the Word of God. If we do not use our faith we can become spiritual casualties. Using the shield of faith we can claim -the 7,000 promises for the Christian walk including Isaiah 41:10; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 John 4:4.

8. THE HELMET OF SALVATION (Ephesians 6:17a; Isaiah 59:17)

"And take the Helmet of salvation.

With the exception of the standard bearer who wore a wolf's head, every Roman soldier wore a metal helmet (perik Gk) usually of bronze over an iron skull cap. This protected the most important part of the soldier - his head.

PRINCIPLE: Before a person can be a soldier for Christ, he has to be born again. He has to wear the helmet of salvation. One of the wiles of the devil is to make the believer feel that he has lost his salvation. If a believer loses his assurance of salvation he takes his helmet of salvation off and is totally vulnerable to the attack of the foe.

9. THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT (Ephesians 6:17b)

"and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

The sword referred to is the machaira or Roman short sword. The sword represents the basic offensive weapon for close combat. It was only effective when out of its sheath.

PRINCIPLE: The sword in its sheath is potentially devastating but it is only effective when it is used to combat and defeat the enemy. We must therefore conquer using principles, promises and doctrines from the Word of God.

HUMILITY

1. Humility is to be sought - Zephaniah 2:3
2. Humility is manifest in restraint - Luke 6:28-29
3. Humility is produced by the Holy Spirit - Galatians 5:22-23
4. Humility is essential in teaching - 2 Timothy 2:25
5. Humility is essential in learning - James 1:21

6. Humility is valuable to God - Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5
7. Humility is the path to promotion - 1 Peter 5:6
8. Humility gives proper self evaluation - Romans 12:3
9. Examples of humility:
 - a) Moses - Numbers 12:3
 - b) David - 2 Samuel 16:11
 - c) Jeremiah - Jeremiah 26:14
 - d) Stephen - Acts 7:60
 - e) Paul - 2 Timothy 4:16
10. Evidences of humility:
 - a) Forbearance to others - Ephesians 4:2,6:9, Colossians 3:13
 - b) Endurance in trials - 1 Corinthians 13:7, James 1:12
 - c) Compassion - 1 Thessalonians 2:7
 - d) Peaceability - James 3:17
11. Humility was the primary characteristic of Christ - Isaiah 53:7, Matthew 11:29, 21:5
12. Promises to the humble - Psalm 22:26, 37:11, 147:6, Isaiah 29:19

OBEDIENCE [See page 32 above]

PARAPHRASE

“For God the Father did not place the created world in subjection to the angels, nor has he given them rulership over the worlds to come. But the Psalmist in his song says, ‘what is man, that You Lord are remembering him, or the son of man that you look out for and visit him? Yet you made the Saviour a little lower than the angels for a short time, to win the Angelic Conflict, and have crowned Him with glory and honour, and appointed him as ruler over all creation. You have put all things under his rulership. Note clearly that all things are under Him, nothing that has been created is not under his rulership! But at this point we do not see everything actually under his rulership, but we will. But right now, we can see Jesus, who was made, for a short time, a little lower than the angels, so that he through his suffering unto death, might win the victory and receive the crown of glory and honour, that he might by the grace of God experience death for every man.”

CHAPTER 2 :10 - 18

“ For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying, ‘I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. (Psalm 22 : 22) 13 And again, ‘I will put my trust in Him’. (Psalm 18:2) And again, ‘behold I and the children which God hath given me’. (Isaiah 8 : 18). 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For that he himself had suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”

KEY WORDS

Became him	Prepei	imperfect, active, indicative; it became him, it was fitting, it was appropriate.
Bringing	Ago	Aorist active participle by bringing in.
Captain	archegos	leader of a society, hero/pioneer who founded a city, the general who led from the front and blazed a trail for his men through the enemy.
Perfect	teleioo	aorist, active, infinitive; to make complete, to fully equip by training in suffering
Sanctifieth	hagiazoo	present, active, participle; who sets himself apart(consecrates himself) for service.
Sanctified	hagiazoo	present, passive, participle; who are set apart for the Lord's service.
Ashamed	epaischunomai	present, middle, indicative; never (ouk = strong negative) ashamed/embarrassed.
Declare	apaggello	future, active, indicative will keep on declaring, announcing
Praise	umneo	future, active, indicative will keep on singing praises.

Trust	peitho	perfect , active, participle be persuaded of the truth , be convinced, with the lasting results that such belief will have as it works out in the life.
Partakers	koinoneo	perfect , act, ind; we are all sharers in, the reality of flesh and blood; all the limits of our space time world.
Likewise	paraplesios	coming near to, resembling.
Took part in	metecho	aoist, active, indicative ;at the point of the incarnation, to share, to have a part in.
Destroy	katargeo	aoist, active, subjunctive; render inoperative, make nothing, nullify, as if it no longer exists, so much is it's power removed.[
Deliver	apallasso	aoist, active, subjunctive ; to change from, to set free, to be released from an obligation to a stress, debt, place of misery, or worry.
Subject	enochos	held in/under the dominance of
Bondage	Douleia	slavery, with no hope of purchasing your freedom.
Verily	depou	certainly, surely not.
Took	epi lambano	present, middle, indicative ;take hold, seize, take to oneself; to help to assist.
Wherefore	Othen	from that point, therefore.
Behoved	opheilo	imperfect, active, indicative; it was morally necessary.
Made like	homoioo	aoist, passive, indicative; to receive the exact likeness, complete identification with man.
Merciful	eleemon	merciful, sympathetic, understanding with love and making allowances for.
Faithful	pistos	full of faith, hope, trust and confidence.
Pertaining to	Pros	towards (God).
Reconciliation	Ilaskomai	present, middle, infinitive; to make atonement.
Suffered	Pascho	perfect , active, indicative; perfect results of his suffering, they go on forever.
Tempted	Peirazo	aoist, passive, participle; tested for assaying the purity of the character.
Succour	Bomtheo	aoist, active, indicative ;able to help those in need.
Tempted	Peirazo	present, passive, participle ;who in daily life in the world, keep on being tested.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

God's heavenly purpose for mankind is made clear here; He intends to "bring many children to glory". God is not willing that any should perish, 2 Peter 3:9, and the only ones who perish are those determined to follow Satan in his rebellion against God. The importance of the humanity of Jesus has been introduced in this chapter so far, in contrast to the angels. The Lord Jesus had to be made a man or he could not do the work of salvation for mankind, nor could he prove God's justice and righteousness to the fallen angels, for only as an inferior being to them could he prove beyond doubt that they were capable of more than man, and that if man could be saved, then they could have been. As we have seen, this is the central reason behind the creation of mankind; a lesser race to prove to a superior one that God was right and just in his judgement of them.

The humanity of the Lord Jesus was vital for the Lord to be able to defeat sin and death, as a man, and so open the victory up for man to receive eternal life. The unique nature of the Lord and the unique nature of his work is the subject of the rest of the letter. The Lord's humanity was real and complete, in the same way he was also fully and completely God during his incarnation. Refer to the BTB for the doctrines of Kenosis and the Hypostatic Union, which are the two crucial theological concepts behind this next part of the letter to the Hebrews.

The late Dr J Vernon McGee, of the Thru the Bible Radio network pointed to the importance of the uniqueness of Christ well in a very simple form. "Christ's humiliation accomplished two things: firstly he got glory and honour for his own person, and secondly he procured man's salvation. He made man's salvation possible. Christ took humanity to heaven. There is a man in the glory!" (McGee, 1980, p 234).

He is God and man perfectly united with no loss or transfer of attributes, fully God and yet also fully man, perfectly combined so that neither nature is overwhelmed by the other, with the purpose of perfect obedience to the father's will in obtaining mankind's salvation. He was not a man in whom God did something. He was not a religious genius who had a great truth to tell. He was not a martyr with a great cause. He was not a good example for man to follow. He was the unique person of the universe; God become man, Emmanuel, God stepping into our world, His creation, in order to accomplish the salvation that no-one else could accomplish. As you read the studies in the Bible Topic Book (BTB) you are confronting a mystery, a very difficult thing to comprehend, that cannot be fully understood by us, limited as we are by space and time, but enough can be known to praise Him with all our hearts, minds and lives.

Summary of this section:

Part 1 - The Fruit of the Work of Christ verses. 10-13

- A. The completion of His body vs. 10
- B. The unity of His body - vs. 11
- C. The O.T. documentation of His work - vs. 12-13

Part 2 - The Mechanics of His victory over the angels in his humanity verses 14-16

- A. The problem of man (flesh and blood) who is enslaved by Satan in the power of sin and death vs. 14a

- B. The solution - Christ became flesh and blood and through the Cross/Resurrection destroyed the power of Satan 14b
 C. The Result - deliverance for mankind - vs. 15
 D. The Reality of the incarnation - vs. 16

Part 3 - The Issue of Suffering verses 17-18

- A. The High Priesthood of Christ and suffering - vs. 17-18a
 B. The sustaining of the believer-priest - vs. 18b

Verse 10. It was appropriate, fitting for Him, as the creator of all things, and for whom all was created, that He should be the one to defeat death. Note that the universe was created by Him and also for Him, for His Glory as the King of this Universe and the eternal creation. All of this present, and temporary creation centres in HIM; and "in Him" we are a part of God's plan, God's purposes, and God's power, and we find our meaning only in Him, and our explanations for anything in this universe only when we ask what the Lord's plan for it and us is!

The purpose in the incarnation is made clear here; it was "to bring many sons to perfection". What does this mean?

Firstly, see and stand in awe of the fact that the Lord came to bring you from the world of space, time, sin, and death into eternal life. Adam lost eternal life through sin, and the Lord by his perfect obedience and sinless life as a man, won eternal life back for those who place their trust in Him. What Adam lost, Christ as Second Adam, gained back, but with immense blessing added forever.

Secondly the word "perfect", in the Greek, teleioo, meaning completion, nothing lacking of what is needed, fully equipped for a journey. It was a word used to describe the fully kitted out and equipped Roman Soldier ready for their long march. The Lord provides everything we need for our long march through life, and beyond into eternity itself. We have all things we need for time and eternity in Him! No matter how "long" a life seems, it is brief; eternity is the main event, and this life the "curtain raiser", where our choices have eternal consequences!

The **third** point raised here relates to the way the Lord re-opened the door to eternal life for us all. He opened it through his suffering. He is the "captain" of our salvation. In the Roman world a general could, after winning a victory from the front of his troops, leading them in battle, be rewarded by the Roman Senate with "Civic Crowns", which involved a gift of great tracts of land and even cities, that were then divided up and given to the soldiers who settled there on their discharge from the army. A Roman Colony was established. This is the concept behind these words in this verse.

The Lord has won a total victory over sin and death, and the reward for this is that we all, in Him, share the spoils of victory, we have a share in eternal life, and in the "land", and within the "cities" of heaven. This is the eternal reality behind Jesus' words in **John 14:1-4**. He has won for us greater blessing and eternal reward than we can even conceive of at this point, but it will be revealed fully to us beyond the limits of space and time, when we follow our "captain" into heaven itself as the beloved members of his great army.

Verse 11. Our union with Christ is in view in this verse. Through faith in His great victory, we are entered into union with Him, becoming his children, members of his body the church. **1 Peter 2:9-10**. The sanctified and the sanctifier are united in God's sight. Refer to the BTB and study the doctrine of Union with Christ (In Christ), so that you see what this involves. The truly marvellous thing is that the Lord is never embarrassed to call us brethren. We fail so often, yet the words of sacred scripture here tell us that he is not ashamed of us. Our sin does not stop his work and our sin does not stop him calling us his brethren, and singing praises for the things done in the power of the Holy Spirit. Praise Him for all this. **2 Timothy 2:11-13**. He is not ashamed of us even when we fail Him, let us be sure to never be ashamed of Him, or a shame to Him!

Verse 12. Psalm 22 is an acknowledged Messianic Psalm, and quoting this reminds the Jewish hearers of this letter of their Saviour's origin and place in Jewish history, and the focal point of Jewish destiny. He is the one worthy of praises, as he is the one who has come as promised to the prophets of old, to fulfil the prophecies and be the proof God's deliverance of his people.

This verse from Psalm 22 records the Lord's praise, in advance, for his deliverance from death. It expresses his faith that he will be delivered and will stand in heaven in the midst of his brethren (the church) and praise the father for the plan that has been completed. Once again the Lord's triumph involves ourselves as the ones with whom He sings praises to the Father. Once again the writer is reminding us that he became man to lift us up, for time and eternity, to make us partakers in the worship of heaven!

Verse 13. Two quotations are made in this verse, firstly from **Psalm 18:2**, then from **Isaiah 8:18**, both with significant perfect tenses in them in the Greek translations that are quoted here.

Psalm 18 is a strong Psalm of worship and praise for the strength and stability of the character of the mighty God. Read the first three verses of this Messianic Psalm that speaks of his death on the cross. The Psalmist says he will love the Lord his God, for He is, his strength, his rock, his fortress, his deliverer, his buckler (shield), the horn of his salvation, his high tower! The Lord can be trusted, for he is the mighty one, and he is the only one that can be rested upon. By his victory through the Cross and Resurrection the Lord becomes the one who all can **put their trust** (perfect tense – with

lasting results) in for salvation, for he alone is the true “horn of salvation”; the source of strength(horn), so that can save all who come to him.

The second quotation comes from **Isaiah 8:18**. Look up this verse and note it’s context, as you did with the Psalm 18 passage, and read on into Isaiah 9. This particular verse indicates that the church is a strong sign to unbelieving Israel for conviction. The Jewish believers who became believers were signs, and the signs and wonders that were worked amongst them were signs to Israel that this indeed was the Messiah who had come amongst them! Note also that the saved ones are referred to as given to the Son by the Father, and that is exactly what we all are; gifts of the Father to the Son through the power of the Holy Spirit, with eternal results. Remember salvation is always God’s work not our own; we are the loved grace gifts of the Father to the Son, and this has eternal consequences for us all. **John 6:36-40**.

The chapter ends with a solemn warning of darkness that will come upon Israel for their rejection of their Messiah, for their failure to heed the signs and wonders that were given to them. We are reminded by both these quotes that the Lord came as a man, and not any man, but a Jew, and not any Jew but as the King of the Jews, but that he was rejected by his people. The writer of Hebrews writes these words close to forty years after the nations rejection of their King, and within that forty year period the nation and the temple will all be destroyed. Forty years is a generation for Israel, and it is the period of Grace that God gave before he judged. By quoting these two Messianic Psalms the writer reminds the people that the time is running out for unrepentant Israel, but that the believers remain secure as the possessions of God.

Verse 14. The fullness of the incarnation is spelt out here; as we have flesh and blood so he took on all the limits of mankind, that he might truly live as a man and die as a man, and so set all mankind free. He took on the full mantle of humanity that he might free us forever from the limits of humanity. He entered space and time as a creature to open the door to eternity and heaven for us all. The result of the work of his incarnation was the destruction of death, it’s complete annulment, but not just the end of the power of death, but the end of the power of the one who is the “angel of death”, Satan himself.

Satan may still be loose today but his real power over the Holy Spirit filled believer is ended! **1 John 4:4**. We serve a risen Saviour, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and our lives are in the Lord’s hands, and like Stephen (**Acts 7:56**) he rises to welcome us to heaven. The angel of death does not come for us, the Lord does, for we are his; we are not part of Satan’s kingdom any more. Any attack he can make is only “by permission” and so it is for “training purposes”, to make us stronger and to enable us to win eternal rewards. Only when off the Lord’s path are we in any danger at all – for the Lord is with us on his path for us at all times. We are “sharers/partakers” (perfect tense – forever) of all the Lord has for us.

Verse 15. The fear of death is the real fear of unsaved mankind, and it is the fear that the gospel of Christ (Cross and Resurrection) answers. man has all sorts of false hopes, from the “passage to another realm” of the grief counsellors, to the “wheel of life” of Hinduism, and Buddhism with it’s mythic reincarnations. The “cycle of life and death” are at the heart of paganism, but modern science with it’s “black holes” and an imploding universe have already sounded the death knell of such philosophies, for science now knows that the universe is not eternal, it has the seeds of it’s death within it and it will be folded up one day.

There is no “cycle or circle of life” (that’s a movie script), no timeless and endless wheel of reincarnation; this eternal time-space universe concept is now seen by all serious scientists as a nonsense, a lie. In 2016 New Zealand scientists discovered the background radiation from the “Big Bang” of the creation – so all speak only of the moment of creation now! Only the Christian gospel makes sense in a world where the end of the universe is becoming accepted by the pagans. (The Bible has always taught this, the astronomers are simply catching up with Revelation 21-22 and 2 Peter!) During the Tribulation period this truth will be at the heart of the massive evangelism of the 144,000 and their converts. Refer to the other “Last Words” commentaries.

The message of the gospel is that there is something beyond this present space-time universe, and that is the realm of God. This realm of heaven, the destination of saved mankind through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, is available to all by grace through faith. Each one of us must make the choice regarding the good news of his “open door” to this next world, for there is only one door that leads there. **John 10:7-10**. Jesus promise is eternal life; the alternative is death.

Verse 16. The Lord did not take the seed of the angels, he took hold of the seed of Abraham. The Lord took hold of, he grasped the task, for the salvation of mankind. He was born into the human race, he did not become an angel. We are the recipients of salvation. He was born of Abraham’s seed, a Jew, to live under the Mosaic Law, to live as man was meant to live and to fulfill all that man was asked to fulfill under that Law, so that he could become the perfect man, able to make the perfect sacrifice to completely deliver man from his sins, and from the death that was sin’s result.

Verse 17. It was morally necessary for him to live according to the whole Mosaic Law, to live in all ways exactly like his Jewish brethren, so that he could be the merciful and faithful representative for all mankind. To represent us he had to know all the troubles and temptations of mankind, to be merciful he had to know how hard it is to be obedient. To be faithful as a High Priest, he had to learn faithfulness as we do, by obedience through time and testing, and not just any testing, but the testing of the Mosaic Law, the full standard of the righteousness of God had to be fully met. He then could be our perfect High Priest, the one who was able to present himself as the final and perfect sacrifice for the sin of mankind. (Atonement, Propitiation, Redemption).

Verse 18. He has suffered himself, but the positive results of that suffering go on forever, to our benefit, for he met and defeated all the sufferings that came to him. He too was tempted to sin, and fall short of the standard of God, just as we are, but he met all testing and it found him pure as gold. He was “assayed” in the fires of testing and found to be without impurity of any sort. The result of His testing/suffering is eternal – so that he keeps on being able to help all who are tested, or tempted in any way.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Every week as we celebrate the Communion service we remember the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, we remember the doctrines of the Lord’s Deity, His Humanity, the Hypostatic Union, His Kenosis, and yet for many they fail to see even a glimpse of the glory of these marvellous things. Have we caught the reality of these things? Do we really understand, not fully, for we cannot this side of glory, but have we seen enough to lift our voices in praise to Almighty God for his great grace in saving us? Have we expressed our appreciation this day that he emptied himself of power, that he might through powerlessness save us in the most powerful way, defeating sin and death through his work for us?

We have all things we need in Him! Have we praised Him today for his provision of all things? Have we seen this with the power that the writer expresses it here? Have we glimpsed the glory of the one who gave His all, that through the suffering of the cross he might open up again the eternal life Adam through sin and disobedience lost? What must be our response to what he has done? Surely we must be on our knees in worship of Him!

We cannot fully even comprehend what the Lord has done for us and what awaits us in heaven, but we can know enough and glimpse enough to lift our voices in praise and honour to the King and the captain of our salvation! Let us do that every day. In verse eleven the Lord calls us brethren, brothers in the defeat of sin, evil, and death. To be called brethren is so marvellous, we are brethren of the creator of the universe! Catch the glory of this believer, catch the glory that you share with Him! Praise His holy name!

He is victor now, and his victory will be fully announced and celebrated in heaven at a later time, yet even now we are to praise Him in advance of this final victory, expressing our faith in it’s complete reality by our praise now. Verse thirteen reminds us of the Lord’s strength and might; that He is indeed mighty to save. Have we praised him for his mighty work of salvation, for his powerful defeat of sin and death? Let us again praise his holy name!

Verse fourteen challenges us to get our attitude towards death really sorted out. The Lord has defeated Satan and with this defeat the power of sin and death are gone for the believer. We are the Lord’s and our death is precious to the Lord and all our days are in his hands, no-one else. Do you live with this knowledge as your daily reality? This is the Christian position, get with it by learning of the Lord’s work and resting upon it, and so let perfect love(His for you) cast out all your fears. **1 John 3:1-3, 13-16, 4:16-19.** Rejoice in His love for you, and praise Him for his gracious provision for all your needs in time and eternity, and so let fear fly far away.

The Lord is our perfect sacrifice for sin, and he is also our perfect high priest, presenting His own work which alone in all history has been acceptable to Almighty God. He is declared perfect to bear our sins because he faces every test known to mankind, and a few more, and passes all the testing situations, coming through the fires of suffering as pure when he comes out as he entered this world.

This means for us we have a perfect High Priest, who both hears and understands all testing, but also who can encourage us for he has met every testing situation and defeated it. What this means to us is that he is merciful and understanding of our trials, but in His power we can stand against all things, for He has already defeated them all and knows how, in his strength, we can also. Let us live in the power and purity of His presence each day and so defeat temptations rather than be overwhelmed by them.

B. PASTORAL

Do we preach about the “good news” of the defeat of sin and death strongly enough? Mankind is in slavery to the fear of death and we have the truth of the deliverance of God from this slavery. Is it being heard today? The Gospel preached in Acts is the gospel of resurrection power, deliverance from the fears of death. This is the message that a fearful and confused world needs to hear.

The alternative religions of the world are being shown by the advancing sciences of physics and astronomy to be wrong in their very basic structures; they have taught for thousands of years that life is eternal and the universe everlasting, yet we now see that all the universe is growing old and one day it will implode on itself. Only the bible has taught this from the beginning. Do those intelligent pagans around us hear about this?

Do the local members of Hindu and Buddhist sects know that we alone have the message of truth, or have we not established dialogue with them so that they might hear the truths of God’s Holy Word? The dialogue will be established in the Tribulation, for then all the compromises are seen for what they are, but right now are we as a church and as individuals entering into every opportunity the Holy Spirit opens up?

The Lord has led the way through the valley of the shadow/fear of death. He is the captain of our salvation, opening up the promised land of heaven to us all through faith in Him. This is the triumphant message of the Word of God, and this is the message the hungry and confused world needs to hear. They may reject it, but they need to hear it, and we are the ones, as the Lord's preachers, that have the responsibility to tell all about it.

What a glorious salvation we have received! WE are one with Christ; the sanctifier and the sanctified are ONE! He is not ashamed to call us "brethren". WE are beloved in the beloved! WE are gifts of the Father to the Son, saved by Grace, and kept by Grace! As we read these things we can only throw ourselves before Him and praise His name. As we read these words, as pastors, we can only be convicted that we do not worship Him enough, or nearly as well as we ought to. Let us lift our voices daily and praise His Holy Name! Praise, Praise, Praise to His Holy Name!!!

DOCTRINES

KENOSIS OF CHRIST

1. Kenosis is an expression which means to "empty oneself" or "to make himself of no reputation."
2. Principle of Kenosis:- (Philippians 2:5-8)
3. Jesus Christ from eternity past always has been God. As such he is all knowing, he is all powerful, has everlasting life and many other absolute qualities. He was not created because he is eternal.
4. Jesus Christ chose to become a little lower than the angels and took on the form of man.
5. Adam the first man aspired to be God, the second Adam who is God divested himself of his deity (Kenosis) and became man in order to save mankind.
6. During his earthly ministry, rather than using his own absolute power he used the power of the Holy Spirit.

HYPOSTATIC UNION

1. Hypostasis means standing together under one essence, two things united under one with no loss or transfer to the other and no change to either.
In the person of Jesus Christ the two natures, divine and human, were inseparably linked with no loss or transfer of properties or attributes, and no mixture or loss of separate identity the union was personal and eternal.
The Lord Jesus Christ is still perfectly human and divine
2. See Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6, John 1:1-14, Romans 1:2-5, Romans 9:5, Philippians 2:5-11, 1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 1:4
3. The incarnate person of the Lord Jesus Christ included undiminished deity; He remained co equal and co eternal with the father while on earth. As a baby in the cradle he was holding the universe together.
4. The Lord Jesus Christ was also true humanity; body, soul and spirit although due to the virgin birth he had no old sin nature (1 Peter 2:22).
5. The two natures were united without transfer of attributes; the Essence of Deity and humanity were unchanged.
6. No aspect of the divine nature was lacking, although certain attributes were not exercised in line with the Father's plan (Matthew 4:1-10).
7. The union was personal and hypostatic; one essence with two natures.
8. Deity did not indwell humanity or possess it. The union was more than sympathy and harmony, it was unique combining the two natures eternally.
9. Christ had two natures in one person, therefore he could be supremely powerful yet weak at the same time.
 - a) Deity cannot be tempted, humanity can (Matthew 4:1-10).
 - b) Deity cannot thirst, humanity can (John 19:28).
 - c) Deity is omniscient, humanity learns (Luke 2:40,52).
10. The necessity of the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ is seen in the following:-
 - a) To be our Saviour he had to be man as God cannot die (Hebrews 2:14,15, Philippians 2:7,8).
 - b) To be our mediator He had to be equal with both God and man (Job 9:2, 32-33, 1 Timothy 2:5-6).
 - c) To be our High Priest He must be a man (Hebrews 7:4,5 14-28; 10:5, 10-14).
 - d) To be a king he must be a man, a Jew in the line of David (Psalm 89:20-37, 2 Samuel 7:8-16).
11. There are three categories of sayings or actions of the Lord:

- a) From his deity alone - John 8:58
- b) From his humanity alone - John 19:28
- c) From his hypostatic union - John 11:25,26

12. The uniqueness of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ is a key doctrine to understand for all believers, for it is on this point that the accurate preaching of the gospel rests (1 Timothy 3:16).

13. The gospel in one word is Immanuel - God with us. John's testimony on this point - John 1:14. In Christ we see God's love and favour towards man. As God revealed himself in the Old Testament, so He perfectly reveals himself in the person of the unique person of the universe, the God man the Lord Jesus Christ.

MEDIATORSHIP

1. Greek word is mesites which has as its root meaning, to have a neutral group/nation to stand between two warring nations to arbitrate and judge between them. The two concepts are judgement and peacemaking.
2. The mediator had to be equal to both parties and acceptable to each.
3. Old Testament usage of this concept is found in Job 9:9, 32, 33. Job calls for an umpire between man and God.
4. The Hypostatic Union of the Lord Jesus Christ qualifies the Lord to be the mediator between man and God as he alone is equal with both parties (1 Timothy 2:5).
5. The Lord's work on the cross forms the basis of his mediatorship as he removes the sin barrier between man and God (Hebrews 9:12 1-5).
6. The Mosaic Law pre-figured the Lord's mediatorship (Hebrews 8:6, 12:24, Galatians 3:19, 20).

TRANSFIGURATION

1. The transfiguration scene is given in Matthew 17:1-9 and is a representation of the second advent and coming kingdom of the Lord - the Millennium.
2. On the mount was the Lord in his resurrection body. (Matthew 17:2)
3. Moses in his resurrection body represents all the saints who have died.
4. Elijah in his resurrection body represents all the saints who have been translated. (1 Corinthians 15:50-53, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
5. Peter, James and John in their natural bodies depict the regenerate of Israel entering into the Millennial Kingdom in their natural bodies to re-populate the earth.
6. The multitude at the base of the mountain represent Gentile believers who also enter into the Millennial Kingdom. (Isaiah 11:10-12)

TRIALS OF CHRIST

1. This shows how one of the two greatest forms of law of the ancient world was perverted to indict Christ.
2. Power of the Sanhedrin - the highest Courts in the land. The Sanhedrin could not pass capital punishment as the power to do so had been removed from them in 6 AD by the Romans.
3. There was a twofold indictment against the Lord:
 - a) Destroying the Temple and building another in three days (Matthew 27:40, Matthew 26:6 1).
 - b) Claiming to be the Son of God (Matthew 27:43).
4. The illegality of the Jewish trial:
 - a) Judge was prejudiced and had previously plotted the death of Jesus (Matthew 26:59).
 - b) The Courts was without jurisdiction to try a capital offence.
 - c) The incompetence of the judges is seen by the cross examination of the judges as its purpose is self incrimination (Matthew 26:57-67).
 - d) The judges portrayed further prejudice by attempting to obtain testimony from false witnesses.
 - e) The trial was by night and therefore illegal.
 - f) They rendered the verdict of guilty without the elapse of a day.
 - g) They held a morning session on the feast day.
 - h) They rendered a verdict without legal evidence.
 - i) Principle - religion destroyed the objectivity of Jewish law.

5. General principles:

- a) Any system of law which is bona-fide recognises a person as innocent until proven guilty.
- b) Guilt must be proved in a fair trial by true laws of evidence.
- c) In the time of Christ, two legal systems existed, Roman and Jewish law.
- d) Jewish law was distorted by the infiltration of manmade religion.
- e) Roman law was distorted by political expediency.
- f) In His trials Jesus was subject to the two greatest systems of law in the ancient world, but both had been distorted by man.

VIRGIN BIRTH

1. Jesus Christ had to be born of a virgin to fulfill prophecy (Isaiah 7:1 4).
2. Jesus had to be born of a virgin to confirm the curse of Coniah (Jeremiah 22:28-30).
 - a) Coniah was a believer but an evil king at the time of the Babylonian captivity.
 - b) Coniah is also in the direct line of Christ in Joseph's lineage from David (Matthew 1:6, 1:11, 1:16) through Solomon. This is the Kingly line.
 - c) Mary was also in the direct line of Christ from David (Luke 3:23, Luke 3:31) through Nathan. In Luke 3:23 Joseph is the son-in-law of Heli, Mary's father.
 - d) Both lines, Solomon's and Nathan's meet in the person of Jesus Christ but by the virgin birth Coniah's line is cut off as Joseph is the legal but not natural father of Jesus Christ.
3. Jesus had to be born of a virgin to not have the sin nature of Adam. The sin nature of man comes down through the male (1 Timothy 2:14).
 - a) Adam, as the head, was responsible for his wife.
 - b) Eve was deceived and sinned.
 - c) Adam made deliberate choice.
4. In order to be the God-Man Jesus had to be conceived of the Holy Spirit to Mary.
5. The virgin birth is therefore critical especially in the doctrine of Redemption, Imputation and Propitiation. NO virgin birth - NO salvation.

CHRIST FORMED IN YOU

1. SCRIPTURE (Galatians 4:19) "My little children of whom I travail in birth until Christ be formed in you."
2. Evaluation:
My little children – the Galatians were brought to the Lord through Paul's ministry "travail in birth". Paul is in much anguish and pain over the attitude of the Galatians. "until" – future – this has not happened yet, "Christ be formed in you" (Ephesians 3:16,17; Philippians 1:20). Here we are talking about the character of Christ being formed in the believer.
3. Principle of Christ being formed in you:
 - a) Christ fulfilled the Law (Matthew 5:17).
 - b) Christ is the end of the law to them that believe (Romans 10:4, Galatians 5:18, 23).
 - c) We have however a higher law, the law of spirituality (Romans 8:2-4).
 - d) This new law is accompanied by a commandment to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).
 - e) The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is to produce the character of Christ and to glorify Christ (Galatians 4:19).
 - f) The Holy Spirit is the person who glorifies Christ in the Christian walk (John 16:14, 7:39).
 - g) The glorification of Christ takes place within the believer (1Corinthians 3:16, 6: 19,20).

CHRIST: DEITY

1. Jesus Christ is both God and man. The two natures are inseparably united without mixture or loss of separate identity, the union being personal and eternal. (Philippians 2:5-11, John 1:1-14, Romans 1:4, Romans 9:5, 1 Timothy 3:16)
2. Jesus Christ is undiminished deity. This includes all the divine characteristics:

- a) Sovereignty (Genesis 1, Revelation 1:5, 6,17:14,19:16)
 - b) Eternal Life (Isaiah 9:6, Micah 5:2, John 1:1-2, 8:58, Colossians 1:16-17, Ephesians 1:4, Revelation 1:8)
 - c) Holiness (Luke 1:35, Acts 3:14, Hebrews 7:26)
 - d) Love (John 13:1, 34, 1 John 3:16)
 - e) Unchangeable (Hebrews 13:8)
 - f) All Knowing (Matthew 9:4, John 2:25, John 18:4, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Colossians 2:3, Revelation 2:23)
 - g) All Powerful (Matthew 24:30, 28:18, 1 Corinthians 15:28, Philippians 3:2 1, Hebrews 1:3, Revelation 1:8)
 - h) Everywhere (Matthew 28:20, Ephesians 1:23, Colossians 1:27)
 - i) Truth (John 14:6, Revelation 3:7)
3. Christ is the Son of God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 13:14, 1 Peter 1:2)
4. Proofs of the deity of Christ:
- a) He is the Creator of all. (John 1:3,10, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:10)
 - b) He is the Preserver of all things. (Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:3)
 - c) He pardons sin. (Luke 5:21,24)
 - d) He raises the dead. (John 5:21,28-29, 11:42-43)
 - e) He will reward the saints. (2 Corinthians 5:10)
 - f) He will judge the world in the Last Day. (John 5:22)
 - g) He receives worship (Hebrews 1:6)
5. Jesus Christ is so identified with the Divine plan as to be God. (Psalm 22:1-6, Psalm 40, Psalm 110)
6. The Christophony of Christ indicates his pre-existence therefore His eternity.
- a) Angel of Jehovah identified as Jehovah. (Genesis 16:7-13, 22:11-18, 31:11-13, 48:15-16, Exodus 3 with Acts 7:30-35, Exodus 13:21, 14:19, Judges 6:11-23, 13:9-20)
 - b) Angel of Jehovah distinguished from Jehovah. (Genesis 24:7, 24:40, Exodus 23:20, 32:34, 1 Chronicles 21:15-18, Isaiah 63:9, Zechariah 1:12, 13)
 - c) Angel of Jehovah is Second Person of Trinity, visible God. After his birth the Angel of Jehovah no longer appears. (John 1:18, 6:46, 1 Timothy 6:15, 16, 1 John 4:12)
7. Jesus Christ is Jehovah.
- a) Jesus is God. (Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1; John 20:28; 2 Peter 1:1; Titus 2:13). Jehovah is God. (Jeremiah 32:18; Isaiah 43:10; Isaiah 45:22; Philippians 2:10).
 - b) Jesus is I AM (John 8:24; 8:58; 13:19; 18:5). Jehovah is I AM (Isaiah 43:10; Exodus 3:13-14; Deuteronomy 32:39).
 - c) Jesus is the First and the Last (Revelation 1:17; 2:8; 22:13). Jehovah is the First and the Last (Isaiah 44:6; 48:12; 41:4).
 - d) Jesus is the Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4; Isaiah 8:14; 1 Peter 2:6; Matthew 16:18). Jehovah is the Rock (Exodus 17:6; Isaiah 17:10; 2 Samuel 22-32; Deuteronomy 32:4).
 - e) Jesus is Saviour (Acts 2:21; 4:12; Romans 10:9; Jude 25). Jehovah is Saviour (Psalm 106:21; Hosea 13:4; Isaiah 45:21; 43:3,11).
 - f) Jesus is Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:16; 1 Timothy 6:14-16). Jehovah is Lord of lords (Psalm 136:1-3; Deuteronomy 10:17).
 - g) Jesus is Creator (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:10). Jehovah is Creator (Job 33:4; Isaiah 40:28; Genesis 1:1).
 - h) Jesus is Light (John 8:12; John 1:9; Luke 2:32). Jehovah is Light (Micah 7-8; Isaiah 60:20; Psalm 27:1).
 - i) Jesus is Judge (2 Timothy 4:1; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10). Jehovah is Judge (Genesis 18:25; Joel 3:12).
 - j) It is quite clear that Jesus is God (1 John 5:5).
8. Jesus lived on earth in total dependence upon God the Father. He never used His own divine attributes in contradiction to the will of the Father. (Matthew 4:1-11, 27:42-43)
9. At the birth of Christ no change occurred in the deity of Jesus Christ. During His earthly life, some attributes were unused but they were never deleted or destroyed. To remove any attribute from His deity would be to destroy deity.

10. Jesus Christ is true humanity. This includes attributes such as thirst, hunger, weariness. (John 19:28)
11. Jesus Christ had a body, soul and spirit, but no old sin nature. He did not receive an old sin nature because of the virgin birth.
12. God became flesh, it is not a case of God merely possessing humanity.

IN CHRIST

1. At the point of salvation, every believer in the Church Age is entered into the Body of Christ, and is therefore united with Christ. Our position is now, "in Christ".
2. The baptism of the Spirit is how we are united with Christ. (Acts 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:5) The Holy Spirit places the believer in union with Christ.
3. Positional truth belongs to the carnal as well as the spiritual believer, to the apostate believer as well as to the mature believer. (1 Corinthians 1:2,30)
4. Positional truth protects the believer from divine judgment in eternity. (Romans 8:1)
5. Positional truth qualifies the believer to live with God forever.
 - a) Eternal life (1 John 5:11,12)
 - b) Imputation of God's righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21).
6. Positional truth is the key to both election and predestination (Ephesians 1:3-6).
7. Positional truth creates a new creature. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10) based on who and what Christ is, therefore what grace accomplishes - not what changes we make - at salvation or thereafter.
8. Positional truth guarantees the eternal security of the believer (Romans 8:38,39).
9. Positional truth has two aspects:
 - a) Past - identification with Christ in His death (Romans 6; Colossians 2:12; 3:3)
 - b) Present (and Future) - identification with Christ in His "new resurrection life".
10. Current positional truth implies that the believer shares certain things in union with Christ.
 - a) Eternal life (1 John 5:11,12)
 - b) Righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - c) Election (Ephesians 1:4)
 - d) Destiny (Ephesians 1:5)
 - e) Sonship (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1,2)
 - f) Heirship (Romans 8:16,17)
 - g) Sanctification (1 Corinthians 1:2,30)
 - h) Kingdom (2 Peter 1:11)
 - i) Priesthood (Hebrews 10:10-14; 1 Peter 2:5,9).
11. Our new position in Christ means we are and must be separated from the world (Ephesians 2:6).
12. As new creatures in Christ, we have a new ministry as ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-21, 1 Corinthians 3:6, 6:4).
13. In Christ, we are never alone, (Colossians 3:4, John 17) we have communion with Him, and with His body (other Christians).
14. We are united with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit forever- we are in the Father, He is in us - Ephesians 4:6, we are in Christ, He is in us - John 14:20, Colossians 1:26, we are in the Spirit, He is in us - Romans 8:9.
15. We are members of His body, branches of His vine, living stones of His building, sheep of His fold, part of his Bride, priests in his kingdom, saints set apart for his glory.
16. The characteristics of positional truth are six-fold:
 - a) It is not an experience - neither emotional nor ecstatic.
 - b) It is not progressive - cannot be improved in time or eternity.

- c) It is not related to human merit, ability, or human good. Here are the implications of retroactive positional truth. There is no place in the plan of God for human good.
- d) It is eternal in nature, it cannot be changed by God, angels or mankind.
- e) It is known only through the Word of God.
- f) It is obtained in total at the point of salvation.

CHRIST: PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING

JESUS THE PROPHET

1. Moses predicted the coming of a perfect prophet, fulfilled in Jesus (Deuteronomy 18:15-19, Acts 3:20-23)
2. Jesus claimed he was a prophet. (John 7:16, 8:28, 12:49-50)
3. Fulfilled predictions:
 - a) His death and resurrection (Matthew 16:21, John 2:19)
 - b) The destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:1-2, Luke 19:41-44)
 - c) The Gentile domination of Israel (Luke 21:20-24)
 - d) The Jewish dispersion (Matthew 24:34)
 - e) That the scriptures would survive (Matthew 24:35).

JESUS THE PRIEST

1. A priest is a man who represents other men before God, so that sinful man can have relationship with a holy God (Hebrews 5:1). The priest made propitiation for the sins of the people, (Hebrews 2:17, Hebrews 10:12) and also made intercession for the people
2. As a high priest, Christ offered a perfect sacrifice to God to remove sin for all time - His own body (Hebrews 9:26).
3. He also offers intercessory prayer for us (Hebrews 7:23-25) at the right hand of the Father.
4. Characteristics:-
 - a) He was divinely appointed (Hebrews 5:4-10)
 - b) He is perfect (Hebrews 7:26-28)
 - c) He is merciful and faithful (Hebrews 2:17)
 - d) He is sympathetic (Hebrews 4:14-16)
 - e) He is everlasting (Hebrews 7:23-25)
 - f) He is our advocate (1 John 2:1)
5. Because of our union in the Body of Christ, every believer is a priest (1 Peter 2:9). We have direct access to God the Father (Matthew 27:51, Hebrews 4:16). Therefore, our lives are to be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1) of praise (Hebrews 13:15), giving (Hebrews 13:16) and obedience (Hebrews 13:17).

JESUS THE KING

1. At the Second Advent Jesus Christ will come as King, as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (1 Timothy 6:15).
 - a) His Kingdom - On earth (Jeremiah 23:5, Revelation 19:11-16). His kingdom is called the kingdom of heaven, because of its heavenly character, but it is clearly on earth.
 - b) His Capital - Jerusalem (Psalm 2:6)
 - c) Its Extent - The whole world. (Psalm 72:6-11, Isaiah 2:2-3, Daniel 7:13-14, Zechariah 8:20-23)
 - d) When - He will regather believing Israel after the Great Tribulation and will reign on earth for 1,000 years. (Revelation 19:11-16, Zechariah 14:1-4,9. Revelation 20:4-6)
2. Characteristics of the Kingdom:
 - a) Universal Peace (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:2-3)
 - b) Universal Prosperity (Micah 4:4-7)
 - c) Righteous and Just rule (Psalm 72:2-7, Isaiah 11:9)
 - d) Worldwide in extent (Psalm 72:6-8)
 - e) Glorious (Psalm 72:17-19)
 - f) Everlasting (Daniel 7:13-14, Luke 1:32-33, Revelation 11:15)
 - g) Uplifting of the under privileged (Psalm 72:2-4, 12-14)

3. Christ's rule on earth will terminate with the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). He delivers the kingdom to the Father (1Corinthians 15:24), thus commencing the eternal rule of Christ (1Corinthians 15:28).

PRIESTS

1. A priest is a man who represents himself or other men before God.
2. There are three categories of priesthood in human history:
 - a) Family priest - from Adam until Levi
 - b) Levitical priesthood. - appointed under the Law of Moses
 - c) Royal priesthood:
 - i) Melchizedek - king of Jerusalem, but also priest of the Most High (Genesis 14:18)
 - ii) Jesus Christ - King of Kings and the Great High Priest (Hebrews 10:17)
 - iii) Church Age believer - we share Christ's priesthood, since we are united with Him (1 Peter 2:9)
3. Until the Law was given the head of each family was the priest for that family. (Genesis 8:20, 26:25, 31:54)
4. When the Law was proposed the whole nation of Israel was to be "a kingdom of priests unto God". The nation of Israel however failed in unbelief.
5. God appointed Aaron and his family in the tribe of Levi as a specialised priesthood (Exodus 28:1)
6. All believers in the Church Age have become a kingdom of priests in Christ (1 Peter 2:9, Revelation 1:6)
7. The chief privilege of being a priest is to be able to approach God directly. (Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19-22)
8. In their role as a priest the believer offers:
 - a) Their own body (Romans 12:1, Philippians 2:17)
 - b) Praise to God (Hebrews 13:15-16)
 - c) Their possessions (Romans 12:13, Galatians 6:6)
 - d) Intercession on behalf of others (Colossians 4:12, 1 Timothy 2:1).
9. The priest must be a partaker of the nature of the people he represents. Jesus Christ had to be a human too. (Hebrews 5:1, 7:4, 5, 7:14-28, 10:5, 10:10-14)
10. Comparison of the priesthoods:
 - a) The Melchizedek priesthood was a picture of the priesthood of Christ (Hebrews 5:6,10, 6:20, 7:1-21).
 - b) The Levitical Priesthood:
 - i) Was based on the Law, which could not save
 - ii) Was based on physical birth into the family of Aaron
 - iii) Was available only to the family of Aaron
 - iv) The priests came from the tribe of Levi. The kings came from the tribe of Judah. No person could be a priest and a king.
 - v) Was based on mere men, with their own weaknesses and sin
 - vi) Ended when the priest died.
 - c) The Royal Priesthood of Christ:
 - i) Is based on Christ's sacrifice, which took away all sin for all time
 - ii) Is based on spiritual birth, being born again into the family of God
 - iii) Is universal to all believers in the Church Age
 - iv) It is a royal priesthood - because of the Kingship and Priestly office of Jesus Christ
 - v) Is based on the perfect person of Christ
 - vi) Is eternal, since Christ lives forever.

PROPITIATION

1. The Mercy Seat (the top of the Ark of the Covenant) in the Tabernacle was the place of propitiation.
2. The concept of the Mercy Seat must be understood in the light of the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:10-22, 37:1-9).

3. The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden box (45" x 27" x 27") constructed of acacia wood (the humanity of Christ) overlaid with gold (the Deity of Christ).
4. Contents of the Ark: the golden pot of manna, the tablets of stone and Aaron's rod that budded (Hebrews 9:4). The tablets of stone represented man's transgressions against God's perfect standard, the rod that budded stood for man's rebellion against established authority, the pot of manna showed man's rejection of divine provision.
5. The content of the Ark is a picture of Christ bearing our sins in His body on the tree (2 Corinthians 5:21).
6. The Mercy Seat was a solid gold lid which fitted over the ark and bore two golden cherubs, one on each end representing God's holiness (Hebrews 9:5).
7. Once every year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered twice into the Holy of Holies with a bowl of blood (once for his own sins and once for the sins of the people) (Hebrews 9:7). He sprinkled the blood on the Mercy Seat. God's righteousness and justice were satisfied.
8. Because of propitiation, or satisfaction of His holy character, God is free to love the believer.
9. The Mercy Seat represented propitiation with emphasis on the person of Jesus Christ, our own great High Priest.
10. "Mercy Seat" in Hebrews 9:5 has the same concept as the word propitiation (Gk. hilasterion) in Romans 3:25.
11. Propitiation is used to express the true and perfect love of God for all believers regardless of their status (1John 4:10).
12. Propitiation is used to relate the person of Christ and the "covering" of God's character (Romans 3:25).

REDEMPTION

1. The purchase of a slave from the slave market of sin and the act of setting him free.
2. The principle of redemption is found in (John 8:31-36).
3. Christ paid the ransom for sin on the cross. In other words, He purchased our redemption (Psalm 34:22; Galatians 3:13; 1Timothy 2:6; 1 Peter 1:18,19).
4. Redemption is a doctrine which the believer can apply in times of pressure and catastrophe (Job 19:25,26), thereby finding both blessing and happiness.
5. Redemption results in adoption (Galatians 4:4-6).
6. Redemption provides the basis for the believer's eternal inheritance (Hebrews 9:15).
7. The blood of Christ is the ransom money or the purchase price of redemption (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1Peter 1:13,19; 1John 1:7).
8. Redemption includes forgiveness of sin (Hebrews 9:22).
9. Redemption provides the basis of justification and immediate cleansing at salvation (Romans 3:24).
10. Redemption is the basis of our cleansing from sin during our Christian walk (Leviticus 4:5; 6:1-6; 1John 1:7,9).

SALVATION

1. Salvation is the gift of God by grace through faith.
2. We cannot work for salvation - we must receive it as a gift (Ephesians 2:8, 9, Romans 4:4-5).
3. The only means of salvation is by trusting that Jesus Christ died for your sins, was buried and raised from the dead. He therefore paid the penalty for sin, and conquered death (Acts 16:30-31, John 3:16, 14:6, 1Corinthians 15:3-4).
4. We are saved so that we can serve God. (Ephesians 2:8-10) Our good works show that we have been saved.
5. Salvation includes many other doctrines such as Imputation, Justification, Redemption, Propitiation, Reconciliation and Sanctification.

ATONEMENT: UNLIMITED ATONEMENT

1. Definition:

- a) The totally effective work of Christ on the cross to pay the penalty of sin on behalf of mankind.
- b) Atonement as a noun means reconciliation after enmity and includes reparation made for wrong or injury.
- c) The verb has several related meanings such as to be at one, to be in accordance, to make reparation or amends, to make up for errors or deficiencies, to reconcile.
- d) In the Old Testament, the true meaning of atonement is related to the Hebrew verb "to pass over, to cover" - it is also the word for 'pitch' used to seal Noah's Ark.

2. In Old Testament times, animal sacrifices were used to cover sin.

- a) God forgave and restored where sin was covered by the blood of animal sacrifices.
- b) However, the true basis for atonement was not found in these animal sacrifices. This is why the sacrifices needed to be repeated time and time again.
- c) Animal sacrifices were used as a cover for sin until the true sacrifice, Jesus Christ, could be offered on the cross.
- d) Atonement in the Old Testament refers to the use of animal sacrifices to picture the saving work of Christ.
- e) The two concepts of atonement (Old and New Testament) are brought together in Romans 3:23-26.

3. Atonement is unlimited.

- a) When Jesus Christ was judged on the cross for sins he paid for the sins of the entire human race, not just the elect. (Romans 5:6, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 1 Timothy 2:6, 4:10, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 2:2)
- b) "Limited Atonement", the concept that Christ died for believers only is incorrect.
- c) God is not willing that any should perish (2Peter 3:9).

4. Unlimited Atonement eliminates sin in the unbelievers' indictment at the Last Judgment.

- a) When Christ died on the cross, He was judged for all sins of the human race.
- b) Therefore the issue in salvation is not sin, but faith in Christ. People choose either to accept the work of Christ (John 3:18,36), or their own "good" works to gain the approval of God.
- c) Therefore, human good will be the basis of the unbelievers' indictment at the Last Judgment (Revelation 20:12).

RECONCILIATION

1. Reconciliation is the removal of the barrier between God and man, or peace between God and man. While redemption is sinward and propitiation is Godward, reconciliation is manward. (2 Corinthians 5:18, Ephesians 2:16, Colossians 1:20, 21)

2. Reconciliation and the blood of Christ.

- a) The blood of Christ is a synonym for the saving work of Christ on the Cross and the basis for reconciliation (Colossians 1:20).
- b) Hence the work of the Cross is associated with reconciliation (Ephesians 2:16).

3. Reconciliation and Mankind: mankind is regarded as the enemy of God, and needs to be reconciled to God (Romans 5:10, Colossians 1:2 1).

4. Peace, a synonym for reconciliation, reconciliation finds man the enemy of God, but the saving work of Christ on the Cross gives peace between God and man (Ephesians 2:14 cf. 2:16 cf. Colossians 1:20).

5. Reconciliation portrayed in the Levitical Offerings: the peace offering of Leviticus 3 depicts reconciliation or Christ's removing the barrier between God and man. (Leviticus 7:11-38, 8:15)
6. Application of reconciliation to the Church Age believer: every member of the Body of Christ is an ambassador representing Christ on earth. Therefore each member of the Body of Christ has the ministry of reconciliation (2Corinthians 5:18-20).
7. The prophecy of reconciliation (Isaiah 57:19).
8. The means of reconciliation - the removal of the barrier:
 - a) Sin removed by unlimited atonement (2Corinthians 5:14, 15, 18, 1Timothy 2:6, 4:10, Titus 2:11, Hebrews 2:9, 1John 2:2).
 - b) Penalty of Sin removed by expiation (Psalm 22:1-6, Colossians 2:14).
 - c) Problem of physical birth removed by regeneration (John 3:1-18, Titus 3:5, 1 Peter 1:23).
 - d) Relative righteousness removed by imputation (Romans 3:22, 9:30, 10:10, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 3:9, Hebrews 10:14), and justification (Romans 4:1-5, 4:25, 5:1, 8:29, 30, Galatians 2:16, Titus 3:7).
9. The barrier of God's perfect character removed by propitiation (Romans 3:22-26, 1John 2:1, 2).
10. Problem of position in Adam removed by positional sanctification (1 Corinthians 15:22, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 1:3-6).

PARAPHRASE

“For it was appropriate and necessary for Him, for whom all things exist, and who made all things, that in the process of bringing many children into glory, He should become the perfectly complete leader and provider of our salvation through his earthly sufferings. For through His work, both He who set himself apart for the work of purification of mankind, and those of us who are purified, are now in perfect unity; we are one having unity with Christ. For which reason, He was not ashamed to call us his brethren, as the Psalmist says, ‘I will declare your name to my brethren, in the midst of the church I will sing praises to you.’ In an earlier Psalm he says also, ‘I will put my trust in Him’. And again in Isaiah he says, ‘Behold, I and the children that God the father has given to me’. Since therefore the children of men are sharers in the reality of ‘flesh and blood’ and all the limitations inherent in the human condition, just so He took upon himself the full human condition, that through death he might destroy the one who brought death into the world, the devil. Through this sacrifice he opens the door of deliverance to all who have been kept under the bondage of the fear of death all their lives. The truth is, He did not take on the nature of the angels, but he took on the nature of mankind, and not any man, but a son of Abraham, a Jew obliged to live according to God’s holy Law. As was necessary he lived as a Jew, just like all his Jewish brethren, but He in perfect obedience to the Mosaic Law, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in all things pertaining to God, and he made reconciliation for the sins of the people of earth. For in that He has suffered and been tested, He is able to help those in need when they are suffering or being tested.”

ADDITIONAL DOCTRINES TO THOSE APPEARING IN THE BIBLE TOPIC BOOK

THE SEVEN VICTORIES OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

1. As King of Kings: Vs. 5 Jesus Christ will rule the Millennial earth. Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-9
 - A. Time: After the Second Advent 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10
 - B. Description: Revelation 19:11 - 20:3
2. As the Last Adam: Vs. 6-8 As by one man (1st Adam) came condemnation, even so by one man (Last Adam) came justification. Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 45-49
3. As the Lamb of God: Vs. 9 - The Incarnation made possible the substitutionary death of Christ, providing Unlimited Atonement. 2 Corinthians 5:21; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 2:2
4. As the Captain-Leader of Salvation: Vs. 10 He becomes the victorious "Author" - (archegos), a leader, ruler, prince, originator, founder; one who begins something by going first and supplying the incentive and stimulus to others to follow. Hebrews 12:1-4, 1 Peter 4:1-6, 12-19, Colossians 3:1-4, Romans 6:4-10, Philippians 2:5-8

5. As the Firstborn of many Brethren, he has victory over the divisions that Satan caused: Vs. 11-13 - The unity of the Royal Family that he bought with his blood sacrifice. Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:18 The two sides of the victory are seen in:
 - A. The positive volition of Christ to go to the cross. Matthew 26:39,42; Psalm 22:22
 - B. The positive volition of the believer to accept Christ. Vs.13; Isaiah 3:17
6. As the Seed of the Woman he has victory: Vs. 14-16 - Genesis 3:15-21 (Conqueror over Satan and Death). 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; This section gives the specifics of victory over death itself.
7. The Merciful and Faithful High-Priest: Vs. 17-18 Hebrews 4:14-16 To make possible the above victories, it was necessary for Christ to go through the Incarnation, Humiliation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension and Exaltation; as described in Philippians. 2:5-10. As always in grace, God does all the work, the believer receives all the benefits.

SATAN'S ROLE IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

1. In Eternity Past, Satan maligned the character of God, saying God was not perfect nor just. Isaiah 14:12-17, Ezekiel 28:11-18
2. Under his direction, 1/3 of the angels revolted against God. Revelation 12:4
3. Satan and the fallen angels lost the initial phase of their rebellion and were all sentenced to the Lake of Fire. All this occurred in Eternity Past. Matthew 25:41
4. However, the Justice and Righteousness of God demand that overwhelming evidence of the fairness of this sentence be presented so that the angels would see the truth, not just be told it.
5. Therefore, God created an inferior creature to resolve the conflict and vindicate the sentence. That inferior creature is mankind. Phase two of the Angelic conflict begins with the creation of man. Hebrews 2:7 Isaiah 43:7
6. Man is given free-will (volition) and 2 tests whereby the angels will see what we do with our volition.
 - a. In the garden (perfect state) - the tree of the knowledge of good/evil Genesis 2:16-17
 - b. After the fall - the cross
7. The Question for the angels in all this is : Will man, inferior to angels, choose the plan of God (grace) or the policy of Satan (good/evil)? The Book of Job is an early explanation of this issue.
8. When Adam fell, Satan assumed he had won - and became the god of this world, determined to undermine man's free will and therefore prove to God that all free volition can only ever rebel. If he was proved right in this then he would be justified in his rebellion, for after all, he argued, if I was given free will by you the creator, you cannot complain when I exercise that free will as all created beings will, by rebellion and independence! 2 Corinthians 4:4
9. However, God invaded Satan's kingdom with the promise of the woman's seed, Genesis 3:15 and demonstration of substitutionary death, Genesis 3:21. By this Grace offer to all men, God demonstrated that he was ready to forgive, and there was a means for man to exercise positive volition. Man did not have to rebel!
10. From the time of the promise, Satan has made every effort to nullify it, by attacking the line through which the Saviour would come. Through the Old Testament he did all he could to prevent the birth of Christ . Had he been able to do this it would indicate God couldn't keep His word, and therefore man was justified in his rebellion, as Satan hoped to justify himself.
 - a. The murder of Abel. Genesis 4 (the first man born with an OSN to freely believe)
 - b. The infiltration of the human race . Genesis 6 (if mankind could be totally corrupted, Christ couldn't come as a man).
 - c. The many attacks on Israel. (If Israel destroyed - you can't have the seed of Abraham. Galatians 3:16).
 - d. The attack on Christ by Herod. Matthew 2 Revelation 12:1-5
11. Jesus Christ became man by virgin birth and as the last Adam(born as Adam was created) resolved the Angelic Conflict. Hebrews 2:8- 9
12. Everyone who believes in Him is snatched out of Satan's kingdom of spiritual death, and proves to Satan and his team of angels(demons) that they were wrong and are rightly judged and condemned. Colossians 1:13 Hebrews 2:14-15

13. When Christ ascended to the 3rd Heaven, He demonstrated the Superiority of His glorified human body over all the Satanic host. Ephesians 4:8 Colossians 2:15

14. Upon entrance into heaven, Christ was seated at God's right hand, signifying His finished work, and the acceptability of His glorified humanity, and perfect sacrifice. With this acceptance man is assured of acceptance through faith in (Position in) Christ. Psalm 110:1 Hebrews 1:13

15. Positional truth (BTB "In Christ") raises the Church Age believer higher than angels. Ephesians 1:3 Colossians 3:1

16. Since Christ is ascended, the object of Satan's attack becomes the Written Word, and all who believe in it.

- a. Satan substitutes false doctrine for truth. Genesis 3:4 I Chronicles 21:1 I Timothy 4:1
- b. Satan always Attempts to keep believers from learning the Word. I Timothy 4:1; I Corinthians 10:19-20, 2Corinthians 11:3-4. 13-15
- c. Satan uses false teachers. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
- d. Promotes psuedo-spirituality. Colossians 2:20-23, Galatians
- e. Promotes good and evil (social action, social gospel – neglect of Divine institutions). Colossians 2:8
- f. Encourages believer to worry and fear. I Peter 5:7-9; Hebrews 2:4; Psalm 23:4
- g. Blinds the Non believer to the gospel. 2 Corinthians 4:4

17. Therefore, mean's response to the promises and other truths of the Word of God is the object of intense Angelic observation. Luke 15:7; Ephesians 3:10; I Timothy 5:21; I Peter 1:12; I Corinthians 4:9; 6:3; 11:10

18. This is why the Word of God is more important than anything any man can ever produce. Satan hates this book and all who stand for it's truth.

19. The provisions of grace through Jesus Christ and thenon-meritorious response of faith removes any question of the fairness of God. Philippians 2:5-11

20. Satan continues to blaspheme the name and character of our gracious God. It is Satan who says a "loving" God can't send His creatures to the Lake of Fire, and thereby makes God seem weak or unfair.

21. In reality, every creature makes their own decision, and this is why all are held accountable, and why in the end, "every knee will bow, every tongue shall confess". Philippians 2:9-11

22. At the conclusion of human history, the evidence of God's fairness will be overwhelmingly established.

23. The daily victories of the mature believer over temptations to go against the faith/grace standard in time (in the Devils world) demonstrates the sufficiency of God's grace provision for his own, and proves for all eternity that Satan did not need to fall, had he depended on God's character and provision of grace. Hebrews 10, 11, 12

DOCTRINE OF FEAR

1. Spiritual death is one way of describing Satan's kingdom. Hebrews 2:14

2. Spiritual death is the place of the source of fear. Hebrews 2:15

3. In spiritual death, Adam was afraid. Genesis 3:10

4. This fear motivated Adam to produce religious activity (fig leaves) and lies. Genesis 3:7

5. Salvation removes the basis of fear, which is condemnation from the Justice of God (spiritual death).

6. Spiritual maturity removes the function of fear. 2 Timothy 1:7; Hebrews 13:6

7. Maturity or Occupation with Christ, is freedom from fear.

- A. 1 John 4:18 - "fear is not in the sphere of the Love (O/W/C); but the perfect love (Cat. 1 in maturity) keeps casting out the fear (result of carnality) because the fear has discipline, and the fearful one (believer in rebellion) has not attained to maturity in the love ."

B. 1 Corinthians 13:5 b "The love does not think the evil" (schism of Chapter. 12 resulting from carnality). Satan's Policy is to Enslave to Fear

8. Carnality or any form of religious activity that leads us away from Grace and daily obedience to the Word enslaves the believer to Satan through fear. Galatians 5:1; Romans 8:15

9. The mature believer is commanded to fear nothing he may suffer in life, for by means of God's grace provision all we ever may need is provided for us. Revelation 2:10

10. The baby believer is sustained by the so called Faith-Rest technique; we believe God's Word, obey his commands hour by hour to daily life, and rest upon his promises. Hebrews 4

11. As we become mature believers we continue with this "faith-rest" daily but in addition to this we are sustained by our understanding / application of entire categories of God's Word - we have then moved beyond the promises to confidence in the very character of God.

12. Illustration: A woman who asks every hour, "Do you love me?" needs assurance through many promises, and many actions backing the promises up. Once she gets to truly know her husband, and her love is fully established in him through his faithfulness to her, she has absolute assurance, and doesn't need constant reminders of his love by specific words. She is full of confidence through knowledge of her husband's character.

13. Chapter's. 3-6 of Hebrews deal with the falling away from growth and confidence by these believers. The spiritual principle of "Faith-Rest" (Chapter. 4) is the means of getting them back on target .

14. In Hebrews 13:6, we see the objective of the writer, freedom from fear by their daily, moment by moment living the awareness of the love of Christ for them, and the power of Christ available to them.

15. The writers of scripture identify correctly that when the believer is fearful, he imitates the unbeliever ("cowardly" – Revelation 21:8), and that is not right given our great position. Hebrews 11:27 "By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is unseen." This is our standard!

16. Fear is a mental attitude sin that shows our mind has moved away from thinking of the Lord. 1 Samuel 17:11,24

17. Fear is a sign of falling back into domination by the "prince of this world". 1 Samuel 18:12,29 21:12 28:20

18. Absence of fear is a big part of maintaining a dynamic mental attitude. Hebrews 13:6 11:27

19. There is only one legitimate fear ; it is the fear of failure to enter spiritual maturity. Hebrews 4:1

20. Love demands absence of fear. 1 John 4:18 They are two opposing mental attitudes.

21. Fear is not part of the Divine Plan for the Believer. 2 Timothy 1:7 Exodus 14:13-14 Joshua 8:1 Isaiah 41:10 2 Samuel 1:7

22. Courage and lack of fear is a sign of mature spiritual status. Psalm 3:6 Psalm, 56:3 Hebrews 11:27

23. Fear is the power by which the Evil of Satan rules among mankind. Hebrews 2:14-15 Genesis 19:30 (Lot) 1 Kings 18:9-14 (Obadiah), both Lot and Obadiah show how the failing believer lives in constant fear.

24. Fear is the word used to mean "Occupation with Christ" when related to the attitude of the mature Believer toward Christ. 2 Samuel 23:3 Nehemiah 5:9,15 Ephesians 5:21 Job 28:28 Psalm 19:9 34:10 Proverbs 1:7 9:10 Proverbs 10:27, 1 Peter 2:17

NOTES

CHAPTER 3

SECTION 3 - CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES (CHAPTER 3 :1 - 4 : 2)

CHAPTER 3 VERSES:1 - 6

“ 1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2 who was faithful to him that appointed him, as Moses was faithful in all his house. 3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he that builded the house hath more honour than the house. 4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that buildeth all things is God. 5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, as a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 6 but Christ, as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

KEY WORDS

Partakers	Metochoi	one who shares, an equal partner.
Heavenly	epouraonios	in the heavens.
Calling	Klesis	calling, the position of one who was invited to join in a (heavenly) banquet.
Consider	katanoeo	aorist, active, imperative; fix your mind on Him, continue to concentrate.
Profession	homologia	agreement, confession of faith.
Faithful	pistos	absolutely dependable, faithful in all things.
Appointed	poieo	aorist, active, participle appointed (by God) to a specific role and responsibility.
Counted worthy	axioo	perfect , passive, indicative; consider worthy. Perfect tense = results go on forever, and passive voice = he receives this assessment, indicative mood = reality/truth of it greater than.
More glory	Pleion	
Buildeth	kataskueuazo	aorist, active, participle; to supply all that is needed and to build and furnish ready for the new occupiers to move in.
Builded	kataskueuazo	present, passive, indicative; every house is built by someone = this is “normal” true.
Built	kataskueuazo	aorist, active, participle ; at the point of time when it is built,(it is built by God).
Servant	Therapon	a willing respected servant in all personal matters, a person respected in the house, not the Doulos (bond slave).
Spoken	Laleo	future, passive, participle; things that were going to be spoken later.
Hold fast	katecho	aorist, active, subjunctive; to hold firmly, so that no-one can wrestle it away from us.
Confidence	parresia	boldness, confidence, that makes a person stand up to any enemy.
Rejoicing	kauchema	boasting, ground of boasting.
Hope	Elpis	our confidence, sure belief of a reality.
Firm	Bebaios	firmly, with strength, stability, unshakable.
To the end	Mechri telous	until the completion, the end of the plan.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Lord is superior to Moses, and then it follows that the revelation he gives is superior to the Law delivered through the hands of Moses.

This was earth shaking to those who heard it first, for it meant they were to advance beyond the Law of Moses; that there was a superior position to that of the Mosaic Law, and that was revolutionary in itself.

1. He is superior to Moses - both in person and work. Verses 1-4.
2. He is superior in his eternal position. Verses 5-6.
3. The Second Warning passage. Verses 3:7 - 4:2.

If the people were judged by ignoring Moses, then how much more will this generation be judged for ignoring the Lord Jesus Christ? The passage ends with the warning that we had better “mix the word with our faith application” of it into daily life, or else our fate will be that of the Exodus Generation – rebellious throughout, and a failure in the end.

Verse 1. Note the titles of the believer and the Lord in this first verse, and note the Lord’s attitude towards us. As believers we are, holy, partakers of blessing, called, invited by the Lord to be members attending his banquet. Also note the Lord is referred to as the apostle and high priest of our profession. What does all this signify?

The writer is underlining the great blessings we have in Christ, and that from the Lord’s perspective, the Lord is inviting us daily to partake of the banquet of his provisions, and then worship and serve Him in holiness until joining him forever in heaven. The writer identifies that we have such a superior position to the Old Testament saints, that to ignore it is to court disaster for ourselves. It is a marvellous thing to belong to the Lord, but it is also an awesome and serious thing.

We must keep up with his demands upon our life, and they are not harsh or unreasonable. He demands of us the same dedication he has always demanded of his people, and that is a total separation (holiness) from the evil of this world, and our daily dedication to His will being worked out through our daily worship and work. We are left here to serve Him!

We are equal partners in blessing with our Lord through his lifting us up and placing us into union with Himself. We are His companions and fellow workers in the great Eternal Plan of God. We are “holy”, (set aside as royal-priests for his work, not for our own purposes). We are not here to be sidetracked by nonsense goals of no eternal significance. We are to be as focused as the pagan priest was serving her/his god, or the temple priesthood getting every detail right, ensuring we get everything right in grace, and making no mistakes in the daily details of Spirit filled living. We have received a heavenly calling, elected by God to join Him forever, and so each day is to be illuminated by the reality of heaven, and all decisions are to be made on the basis of whether they advance heaven’s plan or they do not.

Only the things that are of heaven matter, and only the things that advance His kingdom are important to achieve. We have been invited to a heavenly banquet, and the reality of this future event must enliven us every day. We have the daily reality of his banquet of divine provisions within his plan to rejoice in every moment also, that helps keep our focus always forward to our eternal destiny, never around us to the distractions of space and time. The glory of our eternal calling can keep us protected from sin and evil, for it’s bright reality in our heart is always able to keep the darkness from looking attractive, for the comparison of what “this present world” offers is truly pathetic when compared with the glory we can glimpse now, and that we are sure to inherit when we leave this world. We will leave – so where do we look?

The command in verse one, “consider”, is a powerful one. We are to really concentrate all our energies on the Lord, to closely examine everything that is revealed about Him and his work. From this close observation we will see all we need to see to keep us safe from temptations here and now, and will give us the divine perspective on any decision we face. Walking closely with Jesus, fellowshiping in the Word daily, and in prayer hourly we saturate time with eternity, and that is the level of relationship that the writer calls us to.

Jesus the Lord and King is our High Priest and the general commanding, the apostle of apostles. He is our leader and he is the one who makes the acceptable sacrifice for our sins. We need no-one else to lead and guide us. He came to earth as the apostle to mankind, and he returned to heaven as the victorious High Priest carrying the acceptable sacrifice, once for all, for all mankind. The work to defeat sin and death is done, and we are to live in the power and plan he gives.

Verse 2. The Lord’s character is associated with one word here, “faithfulness”. In all he had placed before him to do, he took the challenge and performed exactly what the Father asked of him. He was appointed to a specific role and responsibility and he was focused on achieving that and he did. He is our mentor in our own unique assigned tasks.

Like Moses he was faithful, yet, unlike Moses he did not fail his heavenly Father in any matter. This contrast is a telling one for the Jewish hearers of this letter. Moses failed to follow God completely and he was denied entry into the promised land because of that failure. This is going to be the writer’s point through this chapter; unless we are more faithful than Moses we too may miss out on the “promised land” of blessing the Lord has for us. Moses let his hurt pride, his anger at the people, his self, get in the way of his total obedience to God. I love Moses, and I am weaker than him, but the writer here challenges me and you to set our hearts to obey the Lord, even though we buckle at the knees at times. **Deuteronomy 28:1-9, Matthew 5:1-12.**

Moses struck the rock in anger, rather than speaking to it as God commanded, and the Lord God judged him with loss of blessing. Our daily danger remains the same; we get our self and our selfish concerns between the Lord’s will for us and ourselves! Let us learn from Moses, our brother and mentor of better things than this incident. Let us guard our temper and protect our thinking against any tendency to slide downhill. The Holy Spirit’s power alone can keep us safe.

Verse 3. Stephen, in **Acts 6:11**, is accused of lowering Moses to a position inferior to Jesus, and of saying that the Temple will be destroyed. He realised that both accusations were true and both were in fact biblical, **Daniel 9:26-27**, and so in Acts 7 his “defence” is recorded, in which he preaches directly to the Council members who condemned the Lord, knowing that they will condemn him also, for he follows the Lord in the truth. **John 15:18ff.** For many in the early Jewish church this was the sticking point with their new faith. They thought Stephen had been wrong, but he was right, and he was possibly the first to see that a final split was coming between all who walked with the true Messiah, and all who held to the past without seeing where it was going, and had gone, through Jesus person and completed work!

Moses and The Law was the central foundation of Jewishness, yet the whole Law pointed to the sacrifice of the Christ, so once he had come all would be changed! The logic of that was seen by Stephen and he died at the hands of those who hated the logical conclusion. For people steeped in the Mosaic Law any changes were earth moving issues, and most Hebrew Christians were also hesitant to leave their traditional practises, and Temple sacrifices, and the City of Jerusalem. What Stephen saw and died for, most still avoided and tried to live a double life; as a Jew in Judaism and as a believer in Yeshua. Stephen saw they couldn’t continue to do both, and Hebrews is the trumpet call to leave Judaism.

They side stepped the issue of the clear superiority of the Lord over Moses, and so the writer to the Hebrews underlines the issue and demands a logical and biblical response. For their spiritual growth, and physical deliverance from the disaster that will fall upon the nation for it’s unbelief in 70 AD, they must choose between Moses and the Lord; they must “come out” from under the Mosaic Law and live only for their Lord, who was Lord of Moses also.

A very good and full discussion of the charges against Stephen and their significance for Jews then and now is found in David Stern’s, “Jewish New Testament Commentary”, pp 240 - 243.

As the creator is greater than the creature, as the builder is greater than the building, just so is the Lord Jesus Christ greater than Moses. Moses played his part in the Plan of God, and it was a central part of the plan, to lead to and point to the coming Messiah, but that very role indicates Moses was inferior to the one he points to, for a servant points to his lord, not the other way around. Jesus, as the visible member of the Godhead was the One who spoke with Moses, and Moses followed His directives! Jesus was "counted worthy" of more glory than Moses (perfect tense – eternal results).

Verse 4. Moses played his part in the great plan as a servant, but the Lord is the Son expected, the Lord, the Messiah, the King. This is so superior a position that there is no further argument about Moses being more important. The Jewish people then and now look to Moses as the real founder of Judaism (with Ezra in there also for some), yet in saying this, they miss Moses' role and responsibility, and miss the reason why he was judged and did not enter the promised land.

He was judged because he failed to correctly follow out the Lord's command to speak to the rock and instead he struck the rock, thus spoiling the picture of the Lord as the source of the water of life. It was such a serious thing to God that He denied Moses the right to enter the land, but there was forgiveness for Moses and he saw the land from afar and he was happy with that, for like us, he sought a better land than Canaan; he sought an eternal one.

This tells us immediately that Moses role was to witness to the reality of **the One** who would come later, indeed the whole Law, and all the events during the Exodus point to the coming Messiah, and Saviour; the true lamb of God who will take away the sins of the world. The Lord is the one who all the sacrifices speak of; Jesus is Moses' Lord!

Verses 5 - 6. Moses was faithful in his life, excepting this one great sin that cost him his blessing, but overall, he was a man of great faithfulness to his lord. (He returns with Elijah in the last days – **Revelation 11:3ff.**) He had an honoured place as a "ministering servant", a valued member of the household of God with real status in the house, but still a servant. He gave testimony to the things that would follow after him, the things that would be spoken later, revealed by the Lord and the disciples. Moses was a servant in the house of God, but we are in the house as children/heirs, and if we hold fast our confidence in the Lord we have in effect a better position in Christ than even Moses had. **1 Peter 2:9-12.**

In Christ we have been lifted up to the heights, and should be boasting/rejoicing of this position with bold confidence in what the Lord has done for us. Once again the writer urges the believers to look UP to their positions in the Lord, and look to Him, rather than looking BACK to Moses. Moses was a crucial part of the plan leading to the Lord's arrival. He prepared the way, but as the herald is inferior to the king he announces, just so Moses is inferior to the Lord he prepared for.

Moses was pleased to be the Lord's servant, we are to be pleased, excited and totally attentive to being the Lord's sons and daughters, members of His household, serving Him with Love and total obedience. We are to be faithful as Moses was, but the standard is higher; we are not to fall short of entering the Lord's promised land of blessing by any disobedience on our parts.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

When we consider the words used in verse one to describe the believer, we each need to ask ourselves a question. Is this the reality in the light of which we live each day? If the reality of our eternal life, the significance of the wedding feast of the Lamb; if these things are always before our eyes then the temptations of time are all the more easily dealt with. An eternal life perspective keeps us safe from the enemy, for we value our eternal rewards ahead of all the things the enemy can offer us in time.

As the Lord was faithful so are we to be faithful in all things. Moses sets a great example of what to do, and also what not to do. He was a faithful and valued servant in the house of God, but he remained a servant, we have the honour and dignity of being the children of the house, of being the house itself. We are to be as faithful as the Lord was to the plan of God, and that means we are to be more faithful than Moses was! We can be in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord was Moses' superior, and through our service to the Lord, and due to our position in Him, we are inheritors of a superior position to Moses. Do we live this way? Do we see today the greatness of the place the Lord has lifted us up to? We must praise Him and serve Him with even more focus and strength than the great Moses had, and we can for we have greater assets than Moses had, and the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit with us to achieve the things God wants us to achieve.

B. PASTORAL

"In Christ Jesus", is a phrase that occurs many times in the New Testament, and it is a vital one for all pastors to teach thoroughly to the people of God who they lead. The greatness of our position as believers is that we are the members of the household of God, with a position and dignity greater than all who have gone before the church age. Do the people of God fully know these things? If they do not they cannot possibly live in the manner appropriate to their position. This is our responsibility as the Lord's pastors, as the Lord's under-shepherds of His flock – that God's flock might truly know the greatness of their position, the amazing grace of God's provisions for them, and the great responsibility they have to live in His Power for His Glory until the day we all meet Him face to face.

The Lord is superior to all who pointed to Him, to all who served under the old covenant.

DOCTRINES

MOSES – THE LAW

1. SCRIPTURE - Exodus - Deuteronomy; Acts 7:18-44.

2. BIOGRAPHY - Moses, whose name means "drawn from the water" was born into the family of Amram in the tribe of Levi (Exodus 6:16ff.). With Pharaoh's policy of killing male Israelite children, Moses was placed in an ark on the Nile where he was discovered by Pharaoh's daughter who brought him up in the Egyptian court. He learnt much in the court (Acts 7:22) but fled to Midian after he killed an Egyptian taskmaster who was mistreating an Israelite. He was then 40 years of age. He married Jethro's daughter Zipporah who bore him two sons (Acts 7:29). Having spent 40 years in Midian he saw the burning bush (Acts 7:30) on Mount Horeb (Exodus 3:1). God called out of the bush, instructing him to return to Egypt to confront Pharaoh (Exodus 3:2 - 4:17). Travelling towards Egypt, Zipporah circumcised her son in accordance with Genesis 17:13,14, (cf. Exodus 4:24-31). With confrontation God brought ten plagues upon the Egyptians (see Pharaoh, Topic 37), culminating in the Passover (Exodus 7:7 - 12:36). Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, carrying with him the bones of Joseph (Exodus 13:19, cf. Genesis 50:26). Led by a pillar of fire and cloud the Israelites wandered for 40 years in the wilderness. This last period in the life of Moses involved among many other incidents, his rejection by the Israelites, the commandments, the apostasy of the golden calf and the provision of the tabernacle. Moses disobeyed God by striking the rock and was thereby barred from entering the promised land. He died still powerful and alert at 120 years of age at Mount Nebo (Deuteronomy 34:1-7), being without peer as a prophet of the Lord (Deuteronomy 34:10).

3. EVALUATION

- a) God gave the commandments (Exodus 20:1).
- b) They were given to Israel only.
- c) God is the source of freedom (Exodus 20:2).
- d) First Commandment: God is to be first in our lives which demonstrates true orientation by the freewill of man (Exodus 20:3).
- e) Second Commandment: You shall not worship any idols which enslave the individual (Exodus 20:4-6). We are born in slavery (Romans 5:12) but are born again to freedom (John 8:36).
- f) Third Commandment: You shall tell the truth. It is your responsibility. Do not use God to coerce others. This contributes to human freedom (Exodus 20:7).
- g) Fourth Commandment: There will be a day of rest on which the grace of God can be considered. The grace of God is the basis of human freedom (Exodus 20:8-11).
- h) Fifth Commandment: Requires respect for authority in the family by children. Respect for authority creates freedom and happiness in the life of a believer (Exodus 20:12).
- i) Sixth Commandment: You shall not murder (Ratscach, Heb.). This protects the freedom of the individual to exercise his freewill (Exodus 20:13).
- j) Seventh Commandment: You shall not commit adultery which protects the family not only in marriage but prior to marriage (Exodus 20:14).
- k) Eighth Commandment: You shall not steal protects the freedom to own private property (Exodus 20:15).
- l) Ninth Commandment: You shall not commit perjury which protects the freedom of a person appearing in court (Exodus 20:16).
- m) Tenth Commandment: You shall not covet (Exodus 20:17). This was Paul's way of finding out that a sinful nature existed (Romans 7:7). This commandment controls the lust of the sinful nature.

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) The law is holy, just and good (Romans 7:16).
- b) Freedom demands responsibility (Galatians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 6:12).

- c) Human freedom gives opportunities for relationship with God (Revelation 22:17).
- d) All sin, known and unknown, involves action of the free will (cf. Romans 7:19-23).
- e) Free will is the issue in salvation (John 3:36).
- f) Human freedom is protected by the Ten Commandments (Mark 12:31).
- g) God is the source of freedom and truth (John 8:32).
- h) Anarchy will destroy a nation (Judges 21:25).
- i) The law condemns man as a sinner (Romans 7:7).

LAW OF MOSES

1. The whole of the Mosaic Law is given in the Pentateuch.
2. The Law of Moses was given in three stages:
 - a) The first stage was when Moses spoke directly to the people having received instruction from God at Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:3-8).
 - i) The commandments, with no provision for sacrifice or failure. (Exodus 20:1-17)
 - ii) The relationship within the nation of Israel. (Exodus 21:1-23:13)
 - iii) Directions for keeping three annual feasts. (Exodus 23:14-19)
 - iv) Instructions as to the conquest of Canaan. (Exodus 23:20-33)
 - b) The second stage was when Moses was called up to receive the tables of stone from God (Exodus 24:12-18).
 - i) During this stage Moses also receives instruction regarding the priesthood, tabernacle and sacrifice. (Exodus 25-31)
 - ii) On his return however he finds that the nation has broken the first commandment with the manufacture of a golden calf and Moses breaks the stones containing the law (Exodus 32:16-19).
 - c) In the third stage the second set of tablets were provided by God (Exodus 34:1, 28-29).
3. Three sections of the Mosaic Law:
 - a) Moral code or Commandments, also known as the Decalogue (Exodus 20:1-17).
 - b) Spiritual code or Ordinance. This is a complete Christology and Soteriology (Hebrews 10:1). It includes the Tabernacle, Feasts, Holy Days, Levitical offerings, dress and operation of the Levitical priesthood.
 - c) Social Code or Judgments. Includes diet, sanitation, quarantine, soil conservation, taxation, military service, marriage, divorce etc. Punishments for non-observance were stated.
4. Recipients of the Mosaic Law:
 - a) Given to Israel ONLY (Exodus 19:3; Leviticus 26:46; Romans 3:19; 9:4)
 - b) The Law was NEVER given to the Gentiles (Deuteronomy 4:8; Romans 9:4).
5. The present purpose of the Law:
 - a) To convince, by divine standard, that the unbeliever is a sinner and needs a Saviour (Romans 3:20,28; Galatians 3:23,24; 1 Timothy 1:9,10)
 - b) To communicate God's grace, both in salvation and confession.
 - c) To provide for a nation to function under God's blessing.
 - d) Therefore, keeping the Law is not the way of salvation but the way of human freedom and prosperity under God (Galatians 2:16).
6. The Church in relation to the Law:
 - a) The Church is specifically NOT under the Law (Acts 15:5-11; Romans 6:14; Galatians 2:19)

- b) Christ is the end of the Law for believers (Romans 10:4)
 - c) Believers in the Church Age are under a higher law of spirituality (Romans 8:2-4; Galatians 5:18,22,23; 1Corinthians 13).
7. The Limitations of the Mosaic Law:
- a) Cannot justify (Acts 13:39; Romans 3:20,28; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9)
 - b) Cannot provide Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:21)
 - c) Cannot give eternal life (Galatians 3:2)
 - d) Cannot provide miracles (Galatians 3:5)
 - e) Cannot solve the problem of the sinful nature (Romans 8:7).
8. The designation of the Mosaic Law as the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 24:7-8; 34:27,28; Deuteronomy 4:13-16,23,31; 8:18; 9:9,11,15).
- a) This book of the covenant is the subject of (Jeremiah 11) but is not to be confused with the New Covenant of (Jeremiah 31:31-33).
 - b) The prophecy of breaking the Covenant (Deuteronomy 31:16-20; Jeremiah 22:7-9).
 - c) National disintegration results when the Covenant is broken.
9. Christ and the Law of Moses:
- a) Christ was born during and under the law (Galatians 4:4)
 - b) He was sinless and led a perfect life under the law (John 8:46, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - c) He taught the law (Luke 10:25-37)
 - d) All Old Testament types were fulfilled by him in his crucifixion (Hebrews 9:11-26) including the Levitical Offerings.
 - e) He redeemed us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13,14)
 - f) He mediated the better covenant of grace (Hebrews 8:6-13)
 - g) Through him we have the law of Christ (John 13:34, Galatians 6:2)
 - h) Christ fulfilled the law (Matthew 5:17)
 - i) He fulfilled the moral requirement by living a perfect life on earth during the incarnation.
 - ii) He fulfilled the substitutionary requirement by His death, burial and resurrection, ascension and session.
 - iii) He fulfilled the ethical requirement by living according to the social code.

HEIRSHIP

- 1. Believers are heirs of God and based on sonship and union with Christ (Romans 8:17).
- 2. Heirship demands and guarantees eternal life (Titus 3:7).
- 3. The Christian's inheritance is:
 - a) in Christ (Ephesians 1:11)
 - b) in light (Colossians 1:12)
 - c) guaranteed by the Spirit (Ephesians 1:13,14)
 - d) in heaven (1 Peter 1:4)
 - e) incorruptible (1 Peter 1:4)
 - f) everlasting (1 Peter 1:4)
 - g) pure (1 Peter 1:4)
 - h) for believers only (1 Peter 1:5)
 - i) kept safe for us (1 Peter 1:5).

PARAPHRASE

“For these reasons, holy brethren, those who share equally in the heavenly calling that is ours in Christ Jesus, give all your attention to the apostle and high priest of our confession of faith, for the Lord Jesus Christ was faithful in all things to the one who set him apart for his role as Saviour, as Moses was faithful in his role and responsibility. But the Lord was counted worthy of more honour and glory than Moses, in as much as the builder of the house receives more honour than the house. For all houses are built by men, but the builder of all things is God. And Moses was faithful in his responsibilities, as a valued servant, and fulfilled his role giving testimony of the one to come, and pointing towards the things that would later be revealed. But Christ, as a Son over his own house, is as superior to Moses as a master and owner of a house is over the servants of his house. We are of the house of the Lord, and will receive the honour and glory coming from this position, if we hold steadfastly with absolute stability to our confidence in the surety of his revelation and do not let anyone wrestle it away from us until the end of our part in the plan of God on earth.”

HEBREWS CHAPTER 3 VERSES 7 - 13

“ 7 Wherefore, as the Holy Spirit saith, ‘To-day if ye will hear his voice, 8 harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, they do always err in their heart: and they have not known my ways. 11 So I swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest’. (Psalm 95 : 7-11) 12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called, ‘today’; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

KEY WORDS

Wherefore	Dio	For these reasons the following things follow as logical conclusions.
Hear	Akouo	aoist, active, subjunctive; if you will hear, maybe you will maybe you wont!
Harden	Sklerono	present, active, subjunctive; dry out, harden; lose life, moisture, flexibility.
Provocation	Parapikrasmos	the rebellion, the time of embitterness, the conflict at Meribah is referred to.
Temptation	Peirasmos	tempting, temptation, trial of a thing to prove if it's genuine, to assay it.
Tempted	Peirazo	aoist, active, indicative; tested me to see what I was made of, to find out if what I said was really true.
Proved	Dokimazo	aoist, active indicative; they tested me and found out I was genuine in all things.
Grieved	Prosochthizo	aoist, active indicative; disgusted with, loathed them, was grieved to the point of exhaustion, indignant that they had done this thing.
Err	Planao	present, passive, indicative; wander astray, are easily led away from the right path.
Heart	Kardia	the seat of the emotions, especially of loving affection, and respect.
Known	Ginosko	aoist, active, indicative have not learned and understood - they are responsible!
Ways	Odous	the ways of God, His leading, and direction for life; the way the Lord thinks.
Swear	Omnumi	aoist, active, indicative; swore and oath, made the most solemn of pronouncements.
Wrath	Orge	hot burning anger that comes when there is a violation of a clear principle.
Enter	Eiserchomai	future, middle, indicative; at no point in their future life will they enter into.
Rest	Katapausis	a resting place, a Sabbath rest of refreshment, for sailors a place of calm winds.
Take heed	Blepo	present, active, imperative; LOOK!!! and keep on looking out so you don't miss this!
Evil heart	Poneros	evil, wicked, of bad nature, or of the enemy, opposed to the Lord.
Unbelief	Apistias	the unbelief in good that characterises the heart that has gone away after evil.
Departing	Aphistami	aoist, active infinitive; to fall away, to step aside from the path.
Exhort	Parakaleo	present, active, imperative; keep on encouraging and exhorting the others.
Hardened	Skleruno	aoist, passive, subjunctive; lest you might receive hardening, or allow yourself to be led astray and so receive this hardening, you are responsible, it doesn't have to be.
Deceitfulness	Apate	the ability of sin to deceive you into thinking it is OK, that it really isn't that bad.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The writer now quotes **Psalm 95 : 7 - 11**, a passage on Messiah, and a passage that identified the crucial and required response of those who claim they seek him. If we claim to seek the Lord of glory then we must follow through and hear his words and obey them. To claim you want the Word of God and then ignore the opportunity to hear His Word, or ignore what you hear, or even fail to apply what you hear; all these three responses tell us that you don't really want to meet and get to know Messiah. If you are serious then be attentive to His Word, but if you are not attentive, then don't kid yourself you are serious!

Verse 7. Note first that the Holy Spirit is the true author of all scripture. David may have written the Psalm but the Holy Spirit is the source and this is why it is such a serious thing to ignore God's Word. The verse starts with the word, "wherefore", reminding us that the logical conclusions flowing from the previous verses are now to be spelt out.

The Lord Jesus Christ is superior in position and work to the great servant of God, Moses. How much more then should the Lord's words be heeded; even more seriously than the Mosaic Law had been followed! The verb for "hear" is in the subjunctive mood, the way in the Greek language, a potential situation where choice is involved, was introduced. The writer is saying, maybe you will hear and maybe you won't, but the choice is yours to be made, and it must be made!

The warning is given, firstly underlining the vital seriousness of the words of the Lord, "TODAY HEAR!" "Not tomorrow, for this is not to be put off, and you need to hear him today", the writer says. The consequence of rejection is clear, the results will be felt in this life as it becomes more hardened in false beliefs and practises, and in eternity with loss of rewards. Many people wonder why they have gone cold in their faith. They say they love the Lord but they are never there when his words are to be heard and obeyed. The further away from the fire you sit the colder you will become.

The writer reminds his Jewish hearers that there is the sobering record in the Law itself of the results of rejection. At Kadesh Barnea (Numbers 13, 14, Deuteronomy 1) the people rejected the clear instruction of the Lord to go in and possess the land. They had rejected before and had expressed their lack of faith many times but this time they went too far and the results for them were loss of blessings. That generation of people robbed themselves of the promised land by their lack of faith in the promises of God. They literally robbed themselves! Do not let any slackness rob you!

There is a limit to the patience of God with his children when they persist in disobedience. The day arrives when it is too late to recover your spiritual momentum and the Lord says, "enough", and you will enter heaven through the "sin unto death", having lost your joy in time and lost potential rewards in eternity. **1 John 5:14-21.**

Verse 8. The rebellion at Kadesh Barnea is spoken of with the use of two words; provocation (parapikrasmos), and temptation (peirasmos). Note the meanings of both words. The people longed for an easy way through to the blessing of Canaan. They wanted things to be as easy as we often do! They had come to a false conclusion, that God was being too hard on them, and they tested the Lord's Holy Character and patience to see if He really would make them do what they considered to be the hard things.

The message of Scripture is clear on this matter. The Lord's path may appear hard, but it is infinitely "easier" than the alternative, for the Lord knows all the options and has, in advance of time, chosen for us, as a part of His Plan, the best possible path for our eternal blessing. **Matthew 7:12-14.** Our motto must be, "God's Word says it, I believe it, that settled it!" Any other approach is the path of death and despair, "for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey".

Verse 9. To refuse to obey the clear instruction of God's word is to openly challenge the Lord to judge you. If you disobey and so test the Lord to see what He is made of, you WILL find out! Lot did, as he lost everything, and the Exodus generation did as they died in the desert rather than lived in Canaan. They saw what God was capable of in the forty years they got to wander in the desert. They saw Him feed them every day, and every day they saw Him take another disobedient person home, until all were dead at the end of the forty years.

What a tragedy, to see the power of God to deliver you in a desert, when you could have seen the same power bless you in the land of promise. God's power will be exercised over our life if we are His, it is over to us how and where this occurs! Will we see the power of God unto blessing and service, or unto judgement and to early death?

Verse 10. The Lord was "grieved" with that Exodus generation; He was "sick to the point of loathing and exhaustion", with them. This is a strong word for anger and sadness mixed together, and it is the word that best sums up God's approach to judgement. The reason then for God's "grief" is the same as it is today. It is that the person or group has "erred in their hearts". They have gone away from the right path to one that is not where God would have them.

We are to be absolute in our obedience to the Lord, not going to left or right, but staying on His path for our life. The Lord's instructions to Joshua were very clear and strong; he was not to err as the rest of the Exodus generation had done. **Joshua 1: 6-9.**

The error of their thinking was that they had gone cold towards God and so took His Word less seriously than total love and obedience would have led them to. They had become cold, thinking that God was able to be debated with, disagreed with, rather than really seeing who he was, their Creator and Saviour.

Is this not the error and danger still for mankind today; we stop hearing His Word and so lose our perspective, no longer seeing God as the creator, saviour and king! The result is we wander away from the path we would have seen clearly **IF** we had heard the Word consistently, and applied it to our lives thoroughly. **Revelation 2:4-6, 14-16, 20, 21, 3:1-3.**

To grow cold, and no longer open ourselves to the teaching and correction of God's Word means we slowly forget what we know and move steadily further from the narrow path we are to walk in this life. We are meant to walk in accordance with the thinking of God, with each step in life seen from God's viewpoint, not man's. Any-thing short of this way of living is not the true Christian way of life, and will eventually lead us into gross error and sin, even if in the beginning it appears to be a minor thing to stop hearing the Word daily! Distraction is Satan's main tool, and it is moving into high gear today.

Verse 11. The Lord's response to our sin of ignoring His Word is swift and consistent. He operates totally on the basis of His perfect character, and demands nothing short of perfect (complete) obedience, for nothing other than that will lead to victorious living in time and blessing in eternity. It is God's "oath" to us that He will judge the sin of

disobedience. In Hebrew life the oath was the serious method of underlining the seriousness of a promise or threat of consequences, and was a part of every legal procedure. The writer underlines two points here; judgement will come, for this is not something that God can overlook, but also the form that judgement in time will take is given.

The judgement upon believers who fall short of the standard that God sets is they lose out on the blessing that the Lord had for them; they end up in life with an inferior and less satisfying life than they could have had. Loss of "rest" means loss of "shalom", loss of all that is good, refreshing, true, blessed, and healthy. It is the loss of the very reason and purpose you were left here for. It is loss of the very meaning and purpose for your existence as a believer. We are left here on earth after salvation to serve the Lord and bring glory to His Name. Our dedication to godly service in time opens the door to blessing in time and eternal rewards in eternity – it is double blessing. The alternative is double loss.

There is a task to be done by each of us, that is why we do not gloriously leave the earth for heaven immediately after we are saved! The Lord has work for each of us to do, and there are great eternal rewards attached to the completion of these tasks, as well as real satisfaction in time through this service. All this is lost to the believer who wanders off the path that the Lord has for them. There is no entering into the sphere of blessing in life and rewards in eternity if the individual is not obedient to the revealed will of God.

Verse 12. "LOOK!!!" "Open your eyes so you don't fall into any of this foolishness", the writer urges all the hearers of this letter. Note the tense of the verb here. The writer puts the verb in the present continuous tense, with the meaning, "keep on being very careful, keep on paying attention, keep on walking through life with your eyes wide open!" Note also that he describes an unbelieving heart as a "wicked" heart. **Romans 8:9.**

We down-grade unbelief and disobedience to a minor sin, yet in God's sight it is "wickedness". Not taking God's instructions carefully and obeying fully is an evil that leads to all other sins and evil. It is the walking away from the "living God", and when you do this you can only be heading in one direction, and that is towards the evil one. To wander from God and ignore God's Word is to wander away from blessing and all that is good for you in your life, and for eternity. It is a truly foolish thing for time and for eternity! **Deuteronomy 27:1 – 28:12.**

Verse 13. Instead of wandering away, we ought to be in a mutual support group, and encourage each other to stay on the path. The **church is meant to be a mutually supporting group of encouraging people**, each person urging the others to stand fast in the truth of the Word of Life, and hold the true path. Don't let yourself or others be led astray by the "deceitfulness" of sin or evil. Don't let deceit lead you astray, for Satan's lie regarding sin has always been, from the beginning, "this isn't all that bad". **Genesis 3:1-7.** Don't believe Satan's lie, rather obey God's Word.

Is it not strange that God's people are willing to believe and run their lives by satanic lies, yet they fail to obey the words of their Lord and king! It ought not to be so! Notice also the word, "hardening" again, reminding us that the longer we walk away from the Lord the harder it is to come back, the more cold and bitter we become. The process of hardening takes time, and we must strengthen ourselves against this temptation, and also form the (formal and informal) support and encouragement groups within the local church to urge all our brethren to hold fast to the truth and walk in it totally. The longer we walk away from the Lord, the longer we refuse to hear or apply the Word, the harder and more negative will our thinking become. Let us not let a brother or sister fall away without the urging of all their brethren to return to the place of blessing. **Jude 21-25.**

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Hardness of the soul afflicts so many today and the reasons today are the same as they have always been; the people involved have neither heard nor obeyed the living Word of God, and so are left with the waters of death. They are left with their own and other men's views on things, and so they drift further away from God's viewpoint, which is the only one that will keep their hearts and minds stabilised in this world. Don't harden your heart against the "hard things" that the Lord instructs you on, for if you reject his "hard things" you yourself will become hard and bitter, and you will have robbed yourself of your hope and blessing. The best views are in the mountains, but you have to struggle up those mountains to see the awesome view! We are called to live in the high places of God's will, not walk the valleys of plenty. Remember the Exodus generation, remember Lot, for both chose what they thought were the easy options, the ways with money and blessing, but they ended up with the desert, or the Dead Sea! **Genesis 13, 19:28, 29.**

Have we lost our first love? Have we "erred in our hearts"? Every minute of "wandering" away from God's real plan for us is a segment of time that we will not have again, it is a segment of time wasted, in which we will not have blessing, not receive reward, and not fulfil our purpose. We are to be fearful of only one thing as believers, really scared of this, and that is, that we miss out on what the Lord has for us. That we miss out on the challenges He wanted us to "knock over", the joys of walking in the power of the Holy Spirit in difficult places, the thrill of seeing God work through us in power, the love that surrounds us as we walk closely in fellowship with our beloved. Let us be careful lest we fall short of anything in God's plan for us!

To hear, believe and apply the satanic lie that sin isn't all that bad, and then to fail to apply the words of the living God, is truly an astonishing and stupid thing! Yet all of us have done this! Every time we have erred in our hearts, minds and behaviours we have done this. We have ignored God and believed the satanic lies! This is not where we are to live; this is not the path to "rest" for our souls and blessing in time and eternity. God's discipline is upon those of his children who

follow after the lies of His sworn enemy. Let us walk in the paths of blessing and “rest” rather than the rough path of judgement. **Matthew 7:12-23!** Hear Jesus words believers! Hear, believe, and obey and be blessed now and forever!

In the old children’s story of Pinocchio, the boy follows his foolish friends to the place called “pleasure Island”, the place with no rules and no consequences for your actions, the only trouble is, after time there the boys all turn into donkeys. The old story has a strong truth in it. Satan makes a donkey or ass out of us all if we believe his lies.

Let us see disobedience as it truly is, as an act of evil, as a “wicked” thing, not a small thing. The Lord has a plan for us and too many times we miss out on the best God has for us. Every day, while we have that day of life, let us live that day for God. Ephesians 5:14-18. Let us see that it is so important, that we must encourage others to be faithful and true also, for their happiness in time and eternity is at stake in these matters. We have no knowing how long we are here on this earth, and every day must be taken alone, and lived to the full for God, for that is the only day we can depend on!

The writer is very strong here, and he urges us to be fearful of missing the path and falling away from blessing, for it is not only blessing that we lose, but life, meaning, purpose, happiness and opportunity for service to, and fellowship with the living God. We are also reminded that we are our brother’s keepers, and have a solemn obligation to warn and encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ that they might walk in obedience and blessing, rather than judgement.

B. PASTORAL

God’s judgement is not a theme we spend much time upon in churches today. Have we taught our people about Divine Discipline, loss of eternal rewards, and the Sin Unto Death? Do we have the people trained in discernment through our systematic teaching of the Word of God?

Does the church have mutual support or encouragement groups, be they formal (Cell or Prayer groups), or informal friendship circles? Is the mutual encouragement and support of others encouraged or do we preach the non-gospel of western individualism? Often the modern concepts of the freedom of the individual and the privacy of the individual are taken as if they are Biblical! In this matter of sin and disobedience they are NOT! We are to violate the privacy of the believer if we see them falling away, and we are to urge them to repent and walk again with the Lord. **Galatians 6:1**.

Grieving the Holy Spirit is a serious matter and we are to warn all believers about the dangers of walking through life in a manner that brings them even close to the grieving or quenching of the Holy Spirit. We are to always be talking about the importance of the Filling of the Holy Spirit, and the individual believer’s resistance of sin and evil, so that each new believer gets the idea very clearly about their responsibilities within the angelic conflict.

The grief of God as He judges the disobedient, is also an important doctrine of the Word of God that we often ignore, or overlook. Judgement is God’s “strange work”, **Isaiah 28:21**; it is not the thing God intends or desires to do, but our rebellion forces His hand. This is the point in this section. God takes no pleasure in judgement, for there is no joy or cause of rejoicing in it at all, it is the sign that time and blessing has been wasted. Let us see the grief, that through our sin, we cause God, who gave all for us, and so be guided in life by our love for Him, rather than our temporary and pathetic lusts.

“Take Heed!” It is a strong, continuous command that must be on our lips as pastors most days we speak, and every day we live. Survival in the “devil’s world” depends on alertness and discernment. Our role and responsibility as pastors of God’s flock is to ensure that we preach the whole counsel of God’s Word to all of God’s people we can reach, that none have excuse for their foolishness if they chose to walk away from God’s path for life.

Let us keep testing ourselves and the people the Lord has given us on these matters. Unbelief and all it’s variations are a sign of evil, or a heart that has gone cold towards the Lord who gave his all. Such coldness ought not to occur amongst God’s people. As pastors we are constantly to be stirring up the fire of the Lord through our preaching of His Word.

DOCTRINES

SIN UNTO DEATH

1. There is a sin unto death (1John 5:16, 17, 1Corinthians 11:31, 32).
2. The sin unto death is the physical death of a believer, where ultimate discipline is administered to the Christian due to habitual unconfessed sin or rebellion against God (1 John 5:16, 17, 1Corinthians 11:31, 32).
3. Confession of sin under the concept of 1John 1:9 is the way to forgiveness.
4. Examples of sin unto death:
 - a) The Corinthian Pervert (1 Corinthians 5)
 - b) The Corinthians who habitually came to the Lord’s table in an unworthy manner (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)
 - c) Moses (Deuteronomy 32:48-52)
 - d) Achan (Joshua 7:16-26)
 - e) Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1 -11).

5. Whilst there is a sin unto death there is no condemnation to them in Christ Jesus – all believers (Romans 8:1).
6. The effect of the sin unto death is to reduce the time which a believer can spend on earth accumulating good of eternal worth – the gold, silver and precious stones of 1Corinthians 3:11-15.

DISCIPLINE OF BELIEVERS

1. Divine discipline is the result of a believer disobeying the will of God.
2. God disciplines all true children. Those who are not true children do not know discipline (Hebrews 12:8; 1Peter 5:9-10).
3. God's discipline of believers is shown in:
 - a) Old Testament (Proverbs 3:11,12)
 - b) New Testament (Hebrews 12:3-13; Revelation 3:19).
4. Attitudes towards God's discipline: (Hebrews 12:3-15)
 - a) Think lightly of it (verse 5)
 - b) Faint or become disheartened (verse 5)
 - c) Endure discipline (verse 7)
 - d) Learn and benefit from discipline (verse 11).
5. The effect of God's discipline:
 - a) Discipline blesses the believer (Psalm 94:12)
 - b) Lives are changed (Hebrews 12:11)
 - c) It is for a limited time (1 Peter 1:6,7)
 - d) It is for the believer's benefit (Hebrews 12:10).
6. The believer who refuses to repent may be disciplined to the extent of death (1 Corinthians 11:30-31, 1 John 5:16).
7. Divine discipline never implies a loss of salvation (Galatians 3:26, 2 Timothy 2:11-13).

REWARDS AND CROWNS

1. Rewards and Salvation are carefully separated in the Scriptures. Salvation is a free gift from God, rewards are for meritorious service in the power of the Spirit.
2. Salvation - a free gift to the lost (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 6:23, John 4:10) - an everlasting possession (John 3:36, John 5:24, John 6:47).
3. Rewards - to the saved who faithfully work for the Lord (1 Corinthians 9:24, 25, Revelation 22:12) - distributed at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:10).
4. Rewards as Crowns:
 - a) The incorruptible crown - for faithfulness in exercising self-control (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).
 - b) The crown of glory - for faithfulness in suffering (1 Peter 5:4).
 - c) The crown of life - for faithfulness under trial (James 1:12, Revelation 2:10).
 - d) The crown of righteousness - for faithful testimony (2 Timothy 4:8).
 - e) The crown of rejoicing - for faithful service (1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20, Philippians 4:1).

CONSCIENCE

1. Conscience is awareness of what is right and what is wrong, the ability to discern between good and evil (Hebrews 5:14).
2. Conscience is imperfect, since it is based on human knowledge and ability.
3. Conscience is found in both saved and unsaved.

4. In the believer:
- a) it testifies (2 Corinthians 1:12)
 - b) it bears witness in the Holy Spirit (Romans 9:1)
 - c) it should be good (1 Timothy 1:5)
 - d) it leads to submission (1 Peter 2:19)
 - e) it is pure (1 Timothy 3:9).
5. In the unbeliever:
- a) it justified Paul's actions (Acts 23:1)
 - b) it convicted the scribes (John 8:9)
 - c) it bears witness (Romans 2:15)
 - d) it may be defiled (Titus 1:15)
 - e) it can be seared (1 Timothy 4:2).
6. A believer with a weak conscience has no right to evaluate any other believer (1 Corinthians 10:27-30).
7. The conscience in (1 Corinthians 8:1,13) causes Christians to act in a compassionate and thoughtful way in relation to weaker brothers.
8. The conscience works in conjunction with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God: (Romans 9:1)
- a) People who refuse to heed the conviction of God in the conscience "harden their hearts" and their conscience becomes less receptive (Ephesians 4:17-19, 1 Timothy 4:2).
 - b) When the conscience is completely blinded, God delivers people over to their own delusions (Romans 1:18-32, Revelation 17:8, 1 Timothy 4:1,2).

PARAPHRASE

"For these reasons the following principles flow as logical conclusions. The Holy Spirit through the Psalmist has said all this beforehand in Psalm 95:7-11. Today, right now, if you express your positive volition towards God, do it by hearing His Word, and do not harden your hearts, as did the Exodus generation in the deserts around Kadesh Barnea. They tested the Lord, as if trying to find out whether what He said He would do! They tested the Lord to see if he was genuine, and they found out He was! They saw the judgement work of God on them for forty years! It was for this reason that the Lord was angered, saddened, and grieved with that generation. He said of the, 'they are always wandering astray from the path of life, and letting their love for me grow cold, and by ignoring my word they have stopped knowing my ways. The result of this was that I swore a solemn oath in my righteous anger towards their disobedience, that they would be denied the rest of blessing, that I had there for them.' Keep on being alert, keep on looking to yourselves brethren, lest you to harbour an evil heart of unbelief, like them. Be careful lest you to wander away, and so fall away from the path of safety, the way of the living God. Keep on encouraging each other every new day, to be alert in this matter, lest any of you become hardened by the deceitfulness of nature of sin."

CHAPTER 3 VERSES 14 - 19, CHAPTER 4 VERSES 1 - 2.

"14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; 15 while it is said, 'Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation.' (Psalm 95 :7, 8). 16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. 17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

KEY WORDS

Made	ginomai	perfect , active, indicative; we have become, with permanent results.
Partakers	metochos	equal partners, sharers.
Hold	katecho	aoist, active, subjunctive; really hold firm grip on. Hold fast.
Confidence	hupostasis	confidence, assurance, the firm ground beneath the things we hold to.
Steadfast	bebaios	firm.
Hear	akouo	aoist, active, subjunctive conditional clause, maybe you will hear and maybe you wont, but when He speaks you are required to hear Him
Harden	skleruno	aoist, active subjunctive; just as for the verb to hear, each is responsible to ensure this does not happen.
Heard	akouo	aoist, active participle; although they had heard the words of God.

Provoke	parepikraino	aorist, active indicative; they exasperated, and provoked the anger of holy God.
Grieved	prosochthizo	aorist, active indicative burdened down with a load of grief, so sad you are sick, and also filled with loathing for the way they die. Their death saddens and disgusts.
Sinned	hamartano	aorist, active participle; who missed the mark, did not measure up at that time.
Carcasses	Kolon	corpses, dead bodies. Very harsh word indicating they died under judgement.
Fell	pipto	aorist, active indicative; they fell in death suddenly. Judgement = sin unto death.
Sware	Omnumi	aorist, active indicative; solemnly swore an oath; serious and irrevocable judgement.
Enter	eis-erchomai	future, middle, infinitive; they will not go in an out of this place or enter this state/place.
Rest	Katapausis	a resting place, a place of calm after storm, a place of refreshment and blessing.
Believed	Apeitheo	aorist, active part; disobeyed. They refused to be persuaded, rejected all evidence and stayed in unbelief as they did not want to believe; as a result =
not		
Could not	Dunamai	aorist, passive, indicative did not have the strength power or capacity to enter in.
Enter	eis-erchomai	aorist, active infinitive; could not enter in to dwell there.
Unbelief	apistian	lack of faith.
Fear	phobeomai	aorist, passive, subjunctive let us then receive this spirit of fear, we should fear this!
Promise	epaggelia	promise, an announcement of good news.
Left	Kataleipomai	present, passive, participle; keeps on being left behind rather than being picked up and being used.
Seem	dokeo	present, active, subjunctive; appear to, seem to, be found in this state.
Come short	Ustereo	perfect , active, infinitive; fall short, be late arriving, falling behind of the group, not keep up with what is required = the results of this are permanent!
Preached	euaggelizomai	perfect , passive, participle; we received the gospel message(results go on forever).
Profit	Opheleo	aorist, active indicative; was not of any gain to them, there was no profit/benefit from their hearing of the good news.
Mixed	sugkerannumi	perfect , passive, participle; mixed together, blended, united with to form an organic whole.
Faith	pistis	the act of belief, application of the Word to life.
Heard	akouo	aorist, active participle; they heard this! They are without excuse.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Before studying this section re-read through **Numbers 14:26-35**. Note the commentary that has and is being given on this section by the writer to the Hebrews. As we enter this section that repeats much of what has gone before, let us pause and reflect on the writer's reasons for this. He is underlining the importance of the principles here, and in the Rabbinic manner is drawing out the applications points in depth, making new points as he advances his argument.

Verse 14. Note the perfect tense of the verb to start with here. It reminds us that we are "made" into sons and daughters of God through our relationship with Christ. It reminds us further that such a transformation is perfect, the results last forever, for we are inheritors of eternal life. **John 3:16-36**.

There is however an area in our inheritance that is conditional on our on-going obedience, and that has been the writer's subject and will be through this letter. Blessings in time and eternal rewards are both conditional on obedience. We have the option to receive either the blessing or the discipline of children! Blessing is ours if we express our faith in life through daily obedience to the clear commands of our Lord, acting always through our love for Him and desire to please Him in all things. Equally certainly the discipline of the Lord is over His own when they rebel against Him.

The question posed by verse fourteen is, are we to be full partakers (equal partners in blessing and service) of Christ or are we not? By position we have a share in the Lord's inheritance, but by our actions in time we determine what form that share will take. In three words in this verse the writer underlines the concept of firmly holding to the truth of God and applying it.

Three variations of the concept of holding a firm grip, are used. The point being made is clear, yet many miss it, that we are to firmly hold to the truth of God's revelation and apply it to our life (not let it slip), or we will not be **full partakers** (sharers) with our Lord in the blessings he has for us. We must keep a firm grip on our assurance, the truths of our faith, and we must keep just such a firm hold until the very end of our particular race in life.

The end means the end. A race is won or lost at every step right through until the end, for at the very end if a runner falls and does not get up, even if they were ahead for ten miles they still lose if she/he does not cross the line ahead of the rest! So it is with us. Tenacity is required, sheer grit and determination to be the best we can be in the power of the Holy Spirit to serve our Holy God. The Christian life is not a sprint, but a marathon, with each running our own race, to win our own prizes/rewards. Each person's race is specially chosen by the Lord, as "our race", to be run in the Spirit's strength.

Verse 15. Whenever there is repetition in the Word of God, stop, look, and listen, for the principle is a vital one. This verse of warning from Psalm 95 reminds us again that none are exempt from falling into sin and falling short of the standard of God, and so losing their blessings. Do not repeat the errors of the Exodus generation. Do not hear the Word of God and look for a loophole to avoid it's implications for you. Be really fearful of missing what God has for you. Be scared to death of even the appearance of evil, or even the hint of disobedience to the revealed instruction from God's Word.

Verse 16. Even though they had heard the very words from God some went ahead and rebelled against what they were told. Not all fell into this sin, but most did. The writer reminds the hearers of the letter of a sobering fact, that we often also forget. Only two men from the entire Exodus generation of the nation got into the land of promise; Caleb and Joshua. In days when “numbers” of converts and church members are lifted up as the sign of success this is a sobering reminder that in God’s economy it is not quantity but quality that He uses, and that the consistent quality of our faith is what God values. Judges Chapters 6-7 also illustrate this principle. Neither Joshua nor Caleb were men without sin, but they expressed their faith in God and obeyed Him.

God expects that we will sin at times, that is why He has provided confession of sin, but He does expect us to use his provision for repentance, and He does demand of us that we express our faith in Him through daily obedience, and that we grow spiritually, and build resistance to temptation through time. Two men only (Caleb and Joshua) out of over 10,000+ got with the truth and obeyed, and God worked His deliverance through them. That is the Lord’s message to us. Do not look for the majority way, look for the obedient way; even if no-one else seems to be walking with you, keep faithful and true to the Lord.

Verse 17. Who was God grieved, indignantly angry, and sad with? He was angry with those who rebelled and all of them died, right down to the last person, before the rest crossed over into the land. Jewish tradition records that for most they did not even receive proper burial, but their bodies were left along side the way as the people walked. Remember the nature of their sin. It was not adultery, murder, theft, lying, and yet it was all these things, for they called God a liar, they were spiritually adulterous and joined the enemy, and grieved and killed the Holy Spirit’s witness with them! Unbelief is a grievous sin brothers and sisters; it will kill you in the deserts of this life faster than anything else. We walk through this life in faith and the power of God or we starve and die under the enemy’s attack. There is only victory in Christ, or defeat in our Old Sin Nature, there is no third path of happy, clappy earthly retirement! No deck chair here on the earth is to be our permanent position, we are to “march”, “stand”, “fight” as God’s soldiers to the very end.

Verse 18. God’s judgement upon his own disobedient people was solemn and severe, and the character of the Lord our God has not changed. He will continue to judge us in these matters if we fall short of his holy standards. When we reject the truth of God’s Word and will not hear the evidence we place ourselves away from blessing. Unbelief is fatal to spiritual life; and remember that means not just not believing intellectually, but failing to apply the truth to life, for it is this last step that proves belief is real. Faith must always be put, as Dr J Vernon McGee used to say, “into shoe leather”; we must **walk with God** in the truth of his Word.

Verse 19. Unbelief robs us of our eternal rewards and our opportunities for service and blessing in time. It is a thief of all that matters, it is the robber of the very meaning and purpose for our lives. There is NO blessing in time or eternity without faith applied to life. Nothing else will work against us as thoroughly, as lack of faith will! **Romans 14:22-23.** Remember as we read the scriptures to never stop at the chapter divisions, for they were only inserted as a part of the printing process in the fifteenth century. Many times they are helpful, but at times they are not, as here, for the thought of chapter three goes right into the first verses of chapter four.

Chapter 4 Verse 1. Be fearful believer, be really fearful of falling short of the blessings that the Lord has for you. The only reason you are on this temporary planet is to fulfil His destiny for you, and so to fall short of that is to miss everything that matters in this life. No joys that man can know will measure up against the loss of everything of real value. All that the world offers by way of pleasure is, “wood, hay, stubble”, and the fires of life, let alone the judgement of eternity will blow it all away. **1 Corinthians 3:1-17.** Nothing matters other than doing the will of the one who placed us here. Let us catch the “holy fear” of failure that the writer urges us to see here. Note Paul’s earlier thoughts on this subject in the bolded texts, from earlier decades in his life, also James below.

Verse 2. The Exodus Generation heard the message of salvation, they heard their “Gospel”, for the good news of deliverance was preached to them by Moses, but they rejected it’s commands. Their sin was that they heard, and they recognised the truth, but they failed to mix the words heard with their faith and apply it into the fabric of their daily lives. They rebelled against Moses fourteen times! Sadly for them, their rebellion wasn’t against their pastor, it was against their Lord and God. The perfect tenses in this verse are the author’s way of underlining the eternal consequences of wrongful choices in this matter – **we must hear, believe and apply the Word into the very fabric of our daily life!**

The application point is the vital one. Unless the Word is mixed with faith it remains barren and unfruitful; it cannot work out in life for service to the Lord and therefore it cannot lead to your blessing. **James 2:18-26.** The Promised Land was there across the river, but they never got there. So close yet so far; the gap was simply applied faith! They had everything and lost it all because they failed to use what they were given. This remains our danger today. Whatever is not of faith is sin! **Romans 8:9, 14:23.** Whatever is not applied into life is not faith, it is hypocrisy (play acting), and hypocrisy is spiritually always fatal unless confessed as sin and forsaken for a walk with the truth.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Hold firm the truth of God until the very end! It is the entire “race of life” that matters, and the Lord intends us to run fast and straight our course until the end of our life. We are to keep the faith, and serve our Lord until the very end. Only if we hold fast to our faith do we truly remain the equal partners with the Lord Jesus Christ. To fall short of the standard of faith is to fall short of equal partnership in blessing.

All too many believers rob themselves of blessing. We must not rob ourself of eternal rewards for obedience and application of God's instructions to us; we must not harden our hearts against the clear teaching of the Word of God. The Lord's instruction may appear harsh and hard to follow at times but it is far more pleasant in its application than the alternative.

Unbelief is a grievous sin, and it is an evil that will kill our body and soul. There is only one fear that is legitimate for the Christian life – that is the fear of missing the best that God has for us in this life and for eternity! Let us be in fear of falling short of the blessing of God. Let us be concerned daily lest we insult the Lord and provoke Him to anger because of our slackness in application of His Word.

Let us not be seduced by numbers, thinking that the majority must be right in all things, for only two from the entire adult Exodus generation entered the promised land. The Lord is not limited by human considerations; He does not need numbers, only the obedient are useful to Him. It is the obedience of the faithful few that He will use! A couple of Holy Spirit filled, godly, and passionate believers can achieve things that stagger the world! God has never worked with the "majority"; it has always been the remnant according to grace that he powerfully uses for glory, and they share that glory!

There is no profit in the Christian life without application of the Word to experience. Only the faithful application of God's Holy Word to our lives will transform our ordinary boring lives into powerful, exciting lives that bring blessing to others and glory to the Lord. We are meant to have lives that are different, that are powerful, that have an impact upon our world for God. If we are bored or boring it is only because we have never taken the Word and applied it into daily life; we have not **mixed the Word with faith**. Let us do this daily, or else we waste the precious time the Lord has given us here!

B. PASTORAL

Tenacity and determination are the virtues of the Christian life. How well do we teach/mentor these things? In days when the Gospel message is being emotionally spiced up and yet also at the same time, watered down, we must stand for the Biblical truths contained here. God does not need numbers, and we must not get sidetracked into depending on numbers. Lots of people get what "lots of people" can do, but godly individuals totally committed to the Lord and his Word get what God can do! Are we ready to stand alone? The majority have never been obedient, but we are called to be!

The serious principles of these verses must be heard every week from our pulpits. Words of warning here must be burned into the hearts and minds of all who would serve the Lord in truth. God's people must walk in holy fear, the fear of falling short of what God wants them to achieve in their life. We are here for such a short time, and we are to use every moment to serve the Lord who gave His life for us on the Cross. Are we as passionate as we need to be?

The Lord's people must be warned against the pious hypocrisy of modern Pharisaism; the empty knowledge of God's Word, well quoted but never applied to the life. The people of Joshua's day had heard Moses, they knew the Law, yet they did not truly know God, for they did not apply the Word into the daily fabric of their lives.

We can pretend to know God, and quote His Word often, yet if we fail to apply the Word to life, we will grow cold towards the Lord and fall away from the best He has for us. Our people are God's people, and the Lord is clear – His people must hear this truth. They must walk in holy fear of falling short and missing the blessings the Lord has for them. The doctrine of Eternal Security is clearly taught by scripture, but equally clear is this truth, that we lose opportunity for service and eternal reward if we fail to apply the Word to the very fabric of our life every day.

DOCTRINES

ETERNAL SECURITY

1. When a person truly trusts Jesus Christ for salvation, he is saved forever. He cannot lose his salvation.
2. POSITIONAL APPROACH (Romans 8:38-39)
We are united with Christ ("in Christ"). Absolutely nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ.
3. LOGICAL APPROACH (Romans 8:32, Romans 5)
As unbelievers we are enemies of God (Romans 5), as believers we are his children. If he did the most for his enemies what will he do for his children? This excludes loss of salvation for he saved us while we were his enemies.
4. GOD'S HANDS APPROACH (John 10:28, Psalm 37:24)
Neither shall anyone seize them out of my hand. God is all-powerful.
5. EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH (2 Timothy 2:12-13)
If we deny Christ He is going to deny us rewards (context=suffering and rewards). If we renounce Him, HE REMAINS FAITHFUL. The believer is in Christ and Christ indwells the believer. He cannot deny Himself.
6. THE FAMILY APPROACH (Galatians 3:26, John 1:12)
When you believe in Christ you are born again as a child of God. You cannot be unborn, once a child always a child.

7. THE INHERITANCE APPROACH (1 Peter 1:4-5)

We have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God. Perfect tense - it will always be reserved, since it is kept by God, not us.

8. THE SOVEREIGNTY APPROACH (2 Peter 3:9, Jude 24)

He is not willing that any should perish - refers to the whole human race (2 Peter 3:9) Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling (from perishing). Once you are saved, it is His will that you don't perish.

9. THE BODY APPROACH (1 Corinthians 12:21, Colossians 1:18)

Christ is the head, we are the members of the body. If any are lost, the body of Christ is incomplete.

10. THE GREEK TENSE APPROACH (Ephesians 2:8-9)

"For by Grace are ye saved." Perfect tense of the verb "sozo". For by Grace have you been saved in the past so that you go on being saved forever.

11. THE SEALING MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT APPROACH (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30)

In the ancient world the seal was a guarantee for protection. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit guarantees our security.

OBEDIENCE [See page 32 above]

JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

1. There are three types of judgement for believers in the Church Age:

a) Judgement of Sins:- The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross substituted the payment of all man's sins. The penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23). There is therefore no judgement for those in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). The substitutionary death is given in 2 Corinthians 5:19-21, Galatians 3:13.

b) Judgement of Self:- We are told that if we judge ourselves we shall not be judged. Failure to do so brings discipline. (1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 11:31, 32, 2 Corinthians 2:5-7, Hebrews 12:7, 1 John 1:9)

c) Judgement Seat of Christ:- This is the evaluation of the production of believers for the purpose of reward (2Corinthians 5:10).

2. The Judgement Seat of Christ is a time of reward. Our human works (wood, hay, stubble) will be burned, our works in the power of the Spirit (gold, silver, precious stones) will be rewarded (1 Corinthians 3:11-16).

3. At the Judgement Seat of Christ the believer can be denied reward but can never lose his salvation (2 Timothy 2:12-13).

4. Backslidden believers have no reward at the Judgement Seat of Christ (Hebrews 6:7-12).

5. The Judgement Seat of Christ is illustrated by the famous athletic games in the ancient world (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

6. Rewards at the Judgement Seat of Christ is based on grace (James 2:12, 13).

7. Since we will be judged by Christ, we are not to judge each other (Matthew 7:1-2).

PARAPHRASE

"For we have permanently become equal partners in blessing, of the Lord Jesus Christ, but only if we hold fast the assurance of our faith firmly right until the end of our lives. This is why the Psalmist says, 'Today, every day, if you will hear the Lord's voice, do not harden your heart as the Exodus generation did, or like them you will fall short of the blessing that should be yours as an equal partner with Christ. For some of that generation, when they heard God's Word provoked God to anger, by their disobedience and ignoring of His clear instruction. Not all that generation were disobedient however,(two out of more than a million were faithful!). Who were the ones that God was grieved at? Was it not the ones who sinned by ignoring God's clear instruction? Was it not clear who they were, for their bodies were the ones dead by the wayside? To whom did God swear that they would not enter into His Prepared rest? Was it not to the ones who did not believe Him? They could not enter into God's prepared rest because they failed to apply what He told them, and there is no blessing for those who do not believe God's words! Let us therefore be in constant fear, so that we do not make the mistake they did. Let us be fearful of failing to apply the Word of God to our daily life; let us be fearful of falling short of the blessings that God has for us in Christ. They were just like us, for the good news from God was preached to them just as it has been to ourselves, but the Word preached to them did not profit them for they did not mix it together with their faith and apply it to their lives!"

HEBREWS: CHAPTER THREE TO FOUR - SUMMARY

The alternatives for the believer are in stark contrast.

- 1) Either you will advance to spiritual maturity, as Moses and Joshua and Caleb did, vs. 1-6
- 2) Or - You will live under discipline and die in failure, as did the majority of the Exodus generation. vs. 7-19

We are to focus on the Lord Jesus Christ as the object of our faith. We are to concentrate with the whole mind and heart upon loving and hearing Him. This is the objective of the Christian life; being like Him. (**2 Peter 3:18**) Christ is worthy of more honour than Moses, just as the builder ought to have more honour than the house.

This section demonstrates that while there are many heroes of the faith, (See: Hebrews 11), there is only one celebrity for the believer, the Lord Jesus Christ! We are to live Christ centred and Christ obedient lives. He is to be our centre and our meaning. His “well done” is to be our sole focus in life. **2 Timothy 1:7, 4:6-8, 2 Peter 3:9-18.**

This section quotes **Psalm 95:8-11** in regard to the Meribah Revolution of **Exodus 17:1-7**. It is a sobering reminder of the fickleness of human beings who easily wander away from the truth, and such wandering is fatal for spiritual life, heart felt worship, earthly service, and it kills both our witness and our eternal rewards.

In summary, Chapter Three stresses the absolute necessity of focusing on Christ through obedience to His Holy Word. To neglect the daily hearing and applying of the bread of life is to neglect Christ and incur the wrath and discipline of God.

CHAPTER 4 - CHRIST (Y’Shua – Joshua) IS SUPERIOR TO JOSHUA (CHAPTER 4 : 3 - 13)

HEBREWS CHAPTER 4 VERSES 3 - 8

“3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For he spake in the certain place of the seventh day, in this wise. And God did rest the seventh day from all His works. 5 And in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest. 6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was preached entered not in because of unbelief: 7 Again, He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, today, after so long a time, as it is said, today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus (Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day.”

KEY WORDS

Enter	eiserchomai	present, middle, indicative; we are already in a process of entering.
Believed	pisteuo	aorist, active, participle; we have expressed our faith in action at each opportunity.
Rest	katapausis	a resting place.
Said	ereo	perfect , active, indicative; as he has said, with results going on forever.
Enter	eiserchomai	future, middle, indicative; if they will enter in the future into.
Foundation	katabole	the laying down of the foundation (of the creation itself).
Finished	Ginomai	aorist, passive, participle; have received completion, are finished.
Rested	Katapauo	aorist, active, indicative; has rested, because the job is completed.
Remaineth	apoleipo	present, passive, indicative; it remains over, has been left over, left behind.
Preached	euaggelizo	aorist, passive, participle; they had received the good news.
Unbelief	apeitheia	their act of unbelief, act of disobedience.
Limiteth	Orizo	present, active, indicative; he keeps on setting up a boundary marker, designating.
Saying	proereo	Perfect , passive, indicative; saying before.
Harden	skeruno	aorist, active, subjunctive with the negative, do not(your choice) harden your heart.
Spoken	Laleo	imperfect, active, indicative; he would not be speaking of.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Challenge here is to enter daily into the way of living that is characterised by faith rather than disobedience. This has been called by some “the Faith-Rest Life”, in that we are to express FAITH in God’s Word, and we are to REST upon His promises in all troubles. There three perfect tenses of this section all reflect the truth that what is “said”, “spoken”, “spoken before” of by prophets or teachers of the Word is to be taken seriously. “It is Written”, it is God’s policy, and it is settled, and what is written in the Word will judge us if we ignore it! **John 6:63-68, 12:47-48.** Hearing God’s Word and obeying it has temporal and eternal consequences for the believer – and they are awesome!

The writer to the Hebrews has issued three strong and inter-related challenges to the believer so far in the letter:

1. The challenge to be Biblically centred in our thinking, to take our study seriously. **Hebrews 2:1**
2. The challenge to be Christ centred in our thinking. **Hebrews 3:1**
3. The challenge to apply all things we hear off/from the Lord by faith into daily life. **Hebrews 4:1**

Adding power to these challenges, the author reminds us of the failure of the Exodus Generation; a generation equally blessed in revelation to his own, but who failed to apply what they were told. Compare Exodus 17, Psalm 95, and Hebrews 3. Pause and reflect on the numbers, 2:30,000+! Two got it, the rest missed out on temporal/eternal rewards.

It must be remembered that the unbelief in view in Heb 3 and 4 is not rejection of the gospel, for they were saved, but a refusal to trust the Word of God in the trials of daily life and live victoriously. It is disobedience as "children of God" that is the issue here. (Read again **Hebrews 3:1-11** and compare then **Hebrews 3:12,18,19** - the unbelief is the disobedience of believers in refusing to apply into life Biblical doctrines). Remember, the word for disobedience (3:18) is "apeitho" = obstinate refusal to accept God's evidence and take the Word seriously and apply it into daily life.

The writer now moves on in this section to explain the biblical principle of "Faith-Rest", and challenge application of all that has been heard to date. We have been reminded that there is one fear that we should have, it is the fear of the failure to enter the "faith-rest" life of worship and work in time and blessing in eternity. The faith-rest principle involves a believer "mixing" the teaching of God's Word with faith application into life, resulting in ability to confront testing situations, and both apply the truth to themselves, and also to rest mentally secure in the midst of the trial.

Verse 3. The believer who consistently believes and applies the living words of scripture, finds that they enter into "God's rest" for them, they can relax and confidently depend upon the power of God rather than anything they have as human beings. The aorist participle of "believe" reminds us that we must believe first, then we enter in the "rest of God". These verses, as also the previous ones, remind us that belief is "active not passive"; it involves application.

Biblical "belief" is never just mental assent, it always involves saying "amen" in shoe leather, and walking the way God has called us to in daily life. Concerning the disobedient He says, "I am not God, if they shall enter my rest". The Lord swears on the basis of His own character, that there is no rest for the wicked, **Isaiah 55:7, 57:20 - 21**. The "wickedness" in view is again unbelief, and the life it leads to, for we are on a path in life and the way of faith-rest diverges from the path of unbelief, each having totally different paths and destinations. The blessing of the "rest" (shalom) of God is only on the path of obedience.

The nature of this "rest" is described here. It is nothing short of the actual "rest" of God, that God had after the creation itself. What can this mean? The phrases that express this in Genesis chapter one indicate strongly that God was "pleased" with His work, and that he rested, not due to tiredness, but because he had finished the work, and there was nothing more to be done. It means to rest in a completed action and apply its benefits with joy and satisfaction.

The "rest of God" described here is of the same nature; it is not the rest of tiredness and exhaustion, it is the rest of completion, based on the recognition that God has done all that is required for man's life here on earth. It is an expression of faith, resting in God's perfect provision for our life in time. Everything required for our lives has been ready since the foundation of the world were laid by God; there is no shortage of power or provision for us. The Lord has given all instruction necessary, and all power required to live and perform all that He requires of us. Our job is to relax, and rest in His provisions, with obedience to His demands, for He has given us the Holy Spirit's power to perform all He asks.

Verse 4. The Sabbath of God (**Genesis 2:1- 3**) illustrates the principle of faith-rest. It is the Sabbath rest of God in the heart and mind – absolute relaxed mental attitude. God rested because nothing could be added to His perfect provision. The believer must realise he/she can add nothing to the plan of God, except his/her total obedience, claiming God's provisions from within His plan. God has "said" the truth, (perfect tense), and so the results go on forever!

God's oath (Verses 3-5 from **Psalm 95:11**) declares the impossibility of the disobedient believer ever entering the rest of God. The writer repeats himself for effect here; he underlines this principle for it is at the heart of our success or failure as believers. God does not want us straining to obey Him, He wants us to rest on his provision of power and be filled with the Holy Spirit, and so apply every principle of scripture we hear into the details of daily life. Trust, apply, and receive power as you obey!

Verse 5. The "if" in this verse is conditional on faith being expressed in life decisions and actions. Over many believers could be written, "if only", for they never apply the faith they have to daily life, and so never really achieve what they were here on the planet to do! The Lord our God seeks application of His Holy Word into the very fabric of our daily life. **James 2:18-26**. When challenging athletes coaches always say, "Do not look back and say, 'if only I had trained harder', train harder now to 100%, and have no regrets. Don't let any doubt/fear hinder your performance." How much more should we exert all our effort for eternal rewards? **1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Matthew 6:19-20**.

Verse 6. The failure of past generations, or even of the majority in our own generation, doesn't hinder the believer who is active in applying Biblical doctrines! Even though the majority fail and fall short of entering God's provision of faith-rest, those who express their faith in action are both saved from trials and receive the peace of God within their hearts. Just because one generation fails, it does not mean God withdraws His promises, for they are ever active, and able to be claimed through faith, by all who would seek to please Him in their life.

The promises remain, they are always there, and they are to be applied by all who would live lives pleasing to God. The potential for entering God's rest of faith remained in David's day (**Psalm 95:7-8**) over 400 years after the failure of the Exodus generation, followed by the failure of Joshua's generation and the failures of the generations of the Judges. Our

failures do not stop the Plan of God; it continues with other people being used and blessed, but we have missed the blessing because we have “missed” the acts of obedience required to fulfil our part in the Plan.

Verse 7. The things we must do to gain entrance into the service and associated blessing of God’s plan have remained the same from the beginning of time; it is always by means of faith application at the point of hearing the Word of God. God keeps on setting up his boundary markers, and they remain in the same area; we must have faith and apply His Word to life! God has “said this before” (perfect tense - and the principle doesn’t change) and the results are eternal for all who hear the words given to all the early scripture authors.

The warning rings clearly out again, “do not harden your heart”! To reject the clear instruction of God is a serious thing. The only place for blessing in time is the place of total obedience to what the Lord says: complete application of the Word, no matter how hard it seems to be. God’s message hasn’t changed in this matter, it is always obedience to the Word He seeks. Whether its Moses, David, Ezra or Malachi, the people they spoke to had to hear, believe and apply the Word to save their souls, and at times save their lives!

Verse 8. Joshua’s generation entered Canaan but failed to claim all of Canaan by military victory, for they left the enemy amongst them in the land. The result was the generation that entered the land did not fully possess it, for they failed to fully apply the Word of God. The result for them was on-going warfare for the next three hundred years with the descendents of the evil people they left in the land, and the new invaders the Philistines. The only exception was Caleb, See **Joshua 14:6-15**. Once again we see that it’s a small number who “get it” through history.

What does this failure mean for us? It means that there is still the opportunity to be “that generation” that fully applies the Word of God, and really receives the blessing God has. God is still waiting for those who will give themselves over to service for Him. They alone truly know what the Lord has for mankind. Will we be in the winning group, or unbelieving?

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Let us be the people God intends us to be: let us be the people of God, proved such by our taking in, and applying His Word with the seriousness of application that it demands. The failure of past generations do not hinder us, only our lack of faith application right now hinders us. Each generation stands or falls on it’s attitude to the living Word of God.

The Lord stands waiting, asking of each of us, will we apply His Word, or will we be like our spiritual ancestors and say “amen” in the church, but “no” in daily life? We are judged by the Lord for our performance in daily life, not our singing in the church. Genuine faith isn’t ritualistic performance of any sort, it is life lived as God intends it to be.

B. PASTORAL

Do the Lord’s people under our care get the clear message that God has finished His work, and that His provisions are perfect and complete, and that the Lord demands of us all, that we use His provisions? Do we give the right message relating to the requirement for faith application of God’s Word? Do we teach this clearly?

The oath of God is clear, “without faith it is impossible to please God”, and every opportunity for expression of faith is to be seen as an opportunity to serve the Lord , praise His holy name, and bring glory to Him. The result is that through faith application we achieve the blessing in time and eternity He desires for us. The Lord’s people need this warning to be given as powerfully as the writer of Hebrews gives it. Our responsibility as Pastors is to give it every time we speak.

DOCTRINES

PEACE

1. Peace on Earth:- The unlimited peace when Jesus Christ establishes his millennial reign on the earth (Isaiah 9:6, 7, Isaiah 11:1-12, Luke 2:14).
2. Peace with God:- Which comes when a believer is born again as a result of justification by faith (2 Peter 1:1,2, Ephesians 2:14-17, Philippians 4:9) - Reconciliation.
3. Peace of God:- Which is the peace of believers in their soul and spirit who have cast all their cares on the Lord (1 Peter 5.7, Philippians 4:6,7) - The Spirit filled life.

FAITH

1. The Christian life can be divided into three sections or stages:
 - a) Stage 1 - Salvation
 - b) Stage 2 - The Christian Walk

- c) Stage 3 - The Christian in Heaven.
2. Man has three means of obtaining knowledge:
- a) Faith - to believe or trust that something is true
 - b) Reasoning - using human logic to deduce that something is true
 - c) Experimentation - to test and prove something to satisfy yourself that it is true.
3. The only acceptable method of gaining grace is by faith, since this means depending upon God without our human merit.
- a) Stage 1 - Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved - salvation (Acts 16:31).
 - b) Stage 2 - Trusting in the promises and principles of the Word of God - the Christian walk.
 - c) Stage 3 - Trusting in God's provision - Heaven.
4. Salvation faith is the complete trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for your sins and rose from the dead to give you eternal life (Romans 4:20-25).
5. Anything added to becomes works, and therefore nullifies faith (Romans 4:4).
6. Faith is shown outwardly by confession with the mouth (Romans 10:9-10).
7. Since faith does not depend on our own abilities, anybody can believe. Even little children (Matthew 18:2-4).
8. Assurance is by faith (Hebrews 10:22).
9. Overcoming by faith:
- a) The heroes of faith are illustrated for our encouragement in Hebrews 11:1-39
 - b) By faith learn to accept conditions as God's will for life and be thankful - Romans 8:28, 1Thessalonians 3:3; 5:18
 - c) By faith maintain fellowship with God, walking in the light - 1 John 1:7
 - d) By faith consistently day by day examine your conduct, confessing all known sins - 1Corinthians 11:28, 31, 1John 1:9
 - e) By faith receive the Word of God daily - Matthew 4:4; 5:6, 2 Peter 3:18
 - f) By faith pray, casting every care on Him - Hebrews 4:15,16; 1 Peter 5:7
 - g) By faith resist the attempts of Satan and he will flee from you - Ephesians 6:10-13, 1 Peter 5:8
 - h) By faith meditate on spiritual values and priorities - Philippians 4:6-9
 - i) Walk by faith and not by sight - 2 Corinthians 5:7.

BLESSING [See page 33 above]

PARAPHRASE

“For we, who have applied by faith His Word into our lives, enter into the rest of God. For the Lord has sworn a solemn oath of great seriousness, making it clear that His provisions have been established since the day He made the worlds, and that if we wish to enter into his rest, we must utilise His provisions. Through the writers of scripture the Lord has said of the seventh day of creation, ‘and God rested on the seventh day from all His works’. He invites us to enter into that rest. Seeing therefore that the promise of God remains active, some must be able to enter into it! Those to whom it was first preached did not enter in because of their unbelief. In David’s day the Lord set up His boundary marker again, after so many years had passed since the Exodus generation failed, making it clear that the same principles still applied to the people, saying, ‘today, if you will hear my Word do not harden your hearts’. Now if Joshua had given the people the rest of God, he would not have spoken of another day.”

CHAPTER 4 VERSES 9-13

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. **10** For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. **11** Let us therefore labour to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. **12** For the Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. **13** Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

KEY WORDS

Remaineth	apoleipo	present, passive, indicative; there keeps on being left behind (to us).
Therefore	ara	so then!
Rest	Sabbatismos	a Sabbath rest.
Ceased	Katapauo	aoist, active, indicative; has rested, ceased from his work.
Labour	Spoudazo	aoist, active, subjunctive; let us be urgent, and concentrate all our energies on.
Example	hupogeigma	example, a figure, a copy and sign or symbol (of warning) of a thing.
Fall	pipto	aoist, active, subjunctive; lest you fall to destruction.
Word	logos	the revelation, the mind behind the words (rema)
Quick	zao	present, active, participle keeps on being alive.
Powerful	energes	energetic, active, productive; activity which produces the intended result.
Sharper	Tomoteros	sharper as a cutting blade.
Sword	Machaira	the short, two edged sword of the Roman Army.
Piercing	diikneomai	present, middle, participle; passing through, penetrating, dividing.
Dividing	Merismos	to the dividing.
Joints/Marrow		words that indicate the core of a person's being.
Discerner	Kritikos	the critic who sees through things to the heart of the matter.
Thoughts	enthumesis	the capacity to think and make decisions in a legal sense(as a judge).
Intents	ennoia	all that involves feelings, and the will of man.
Manifest	aphanes	hidden, not clearly visible and understandable.
Opened	trachelizo	perfect , passive, participle; (military)opened up for the final stroke, left completely without defence, ready to be killed.
Have to do	pros on umin o logos	with whom (is) our account; with whom our final reckoning must be made; with whom is our final assessment.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The conclusion to the verses so far is now spelt out, and it is explained by the use of a word that occurs only once in the New Testament; the Greek word, sabbatismos, meaning to keep a Sabbath rest. The rest of God at the completion of the creation is the sign of what believer's appropriate response to God's completed work should be; both of creation and salvation. We are to daily have a "Sabbath rest" in our hearts and minds, resting completely in the provisions of the Lord for us, and applying them into the daily details of our lives on the exact path we are called to walk by God.

Verse 9. The Sabbath-Rest (moment by moment faith-rest) remains for the people of God. It remains every day to be claimed by living in the sphere of "faith-rest" – in the Word and in worship and work for the Lord's glory. Remember that every Sabbath in the Old Testament was a picture of resting in God's gracious provision, indicating belief in His ongoing gracious provision for the believer. The curse upon the land, (**Genesis 3:17 - 24**), had meant the man and woman had to work with the sweat of their brows to live upon the earth, but the weekly Sabbath was the reminder that God would look after those who trusted in Him and were obedient in the daily details that were important.

God is the God that turns cursing into blessing, by grace through faith. They didn't need to work seven days a week to beat the curse! The curse could not be overcome by working harder, rather by working spiritually smarter! By taking a day off every week to remember God's grace and mercy and His accepting them as children they knew rest and peace. The people were reminded by the weekly Sabbath, that God provided both salvation and daily deliverance from the curse upon the world due to sin and evil. See **Exodus 20:8-11; Exodus 16:22-23, Exodus 23:10-11; Leviticus 23:3-12.**

Refer to the Bible Topic Book (BTB), for the doctrinal Bible study on the "Sabbath and the Lord's Day". Even though we no longer keep the Sabbath as such on a weekly basis, the writer is going to argue that every day should be lived as a spiritual Sabbath. Every day for the believers in Yeshua the Messiah is to be a reminder of God's gracious provision, and to be a time for joy and thanksgiving for His great mercy received in the Saviour.

In a Jewish context, this means every day is to be a Sabbath rest for the soul. We are still to work hard to earn our living, and so not be a burden to others, but we are in the midst of our toil to remember that we trust the Lord for His provision of work and money to live, we do not trust our own "hard work" or in "luck". The believer's attitude to everything is therefore transformed by this teaching, for all things are to be seen in terms of the "Sabbath rest" of the soul of the believer. We are grace centred people, totally focused on what the Lord has done, and expressing that in our daily work and in our weekly rest, but even more in our daily prayers. We walk with the Lord, not in our own strength alone.

The result of seeing things God's way is that everything in life is transformed, and we are free to serve Him in love and thankfulness, rather than from any sense of human effort and strain. The writer has hit the crucial point between the two "theological camps" of the early church; between the "Grace" and "Human Works" views of the Christian life. He is clear that Grace is the only way that works! The sole motivation to serve the Lord is thankfulness for what He has done. We are keeping a daily Sabbath in our soul, to remember that all we have, and are, and do, is dependent upon His provision for us.

Verse 10. The one who has entered His rest (God's rest) has ceased to produce human good (rested from his own works). Remember that religion (Refer BTB) is people trying by their own efforts to reach God, where-as Christianity is relationship with God directly received by His grace provision, through faith in The Saviour. In a true sense Christianity is not a religion at all, for it has nothing to do with people working to impress God, it is all about what God has done to impress us! It is about our total dedication to what the Creator-Saviour-King orders us to do, right here and now.

Religion is the "way of Cain" (Refer BTB); it is man trying to be holy before God in his own strength and works. Man's works are as "filthy rags" in God's sight, only the blood of Christ saves, and only the power of the Holy Spirit daily delivers from troubles. We are called to live a super-natural life, and the concept of "Sabbath rest" is a central image of this. **Colossians 2:16,17.** God has finished His works, His provision for us is complete for time and eternity, and our role is simply by faith to take this provision and apply it into daily life in the Spirit's power. As we enter into this truth we will find peace in our soul, but note that we must enter into it first! Also refer **Romans 3:19 - 4:25.**

Verse 11. Entrance to a peace filled life of "faith-rest" results from diligence. Now has the writer contradicted himself here? Is this human works coming back under another name? No! This is the resultant mental attitude of those who have entered into the truth of the "Sabbath rest" concept.

The Greek word is 'spoudazo'. Its meaning is to labour in study and application of what is heard (**2 Timothy 2:15**); it means eager exertion with a clear mind and willing heart. The verb is in the Greek hortatory subjunctive, which means that it is a command, but in the command the writer recognises that some will obey and some will not. It is the motivation that is the key concept – it is from a grateful heart that knows the love of God and freely pours out worship and Holy Spirit filled work in joy.

All through this letter the writer is stressing that every day we face the choice to stand for and with the Lord, or to fall to the lower standard of formalism; he calls us to dynamic loving relationship, not legalistic religion. He defines legalistic religion as "unbelief" (Greek word = apeithes = disobedience). To follow the form of godliness rather than be controlled by the power and love of God is to live disobediently. **2 Timothy 3:5-17.** God calls us to joy, not formalism.

Turn to and study **2 Timothy 3:1-17.** Note that Paul and the writer here are in perfect agreement. When a person fails to grasp these principles we are to immediately doubt their maturity, and possibly even doubt their salvation, for their works centred religion is as far from historic Christianity as Satan is from Christ! Religion is Satan's "Ace Trump" amongst his techniques to keep people from a dynamic encounter with the living God, and our lives must be as far from resembling Satanic counterfeits as it can possibly be. We are not to "fall" from grace to a lower standard of life!

Verse 12. What a wonderful verse this is! How powerfully does it point out the marvellous work of the Word of God in our lives. The word truly cuts us about if we let it loose within our hearts and minds. This is God's purpose. Note the characteristics of the Word of God here:

1. It is always living. Religion and it's way of life is dead, but God's Word is alive, and makes the hearer alive and able to enjoy life. **John 10 : 10.**
2. It is powerful. It is energetic in the soul, always achieving it's desired results once it is let loose in the soul of the believer. Power is only effective when the switch is turned one, and we must ensure that the filling of the Holy Spirit is operational (no unconfessed sin in our life and the Bible open before us) so that God's power is able to channel through us.
3. God's Word then will do it's work and it is "sharp" as a sword. The Word cuts through the space-time nonsense to the truth and shows us how we must sort out our life.
4. It is compared to the short fighting sword of the Roman Army, the machaira. This was a weapon that revolutionised warfare, for the soldier was never off balance when using it, and was able to defeat an enemy with a far larger weapon. It was designed to thrust straight through an enemy to their heart or head, and that is what God's word does; it penetrates our very life.
5. God's Word pierces us and gets to the real issues straight away, right to joints and marrow. This was the way in the ancient world that you said, it gets to, "the heart of the matter".
6. It separates us from misconceptions, and from the errors of thinking that so easily lead us astray from the path of truth, be they emotional attachments(heart), or false categories of thinking(mind).
7. The Word is a discerner. God's Word alone lets us see our motivation and it's implications, and lets us see, as an astute critic does, exactly what we have forgotten or fallen short in. It corrects us in both the thinking and the emotions, correcting facts and will; showing us if our love has grown cold, or our thinking slack!

Verse 13. The military analogies continue in this verse. The writer has used many military words through the letter so far and he will use more. His point is clear, (like Paul – I think it is Paul of course...), he sees that this life is a battle field and we must have the mental attitude of the soldier, ever ready to serve our commanding officer, and win honour in the fight for the souls of men and women for whom Christ died and rose again.

The Lord knows us so well, and His Word is well directed to put His finger on our problems for He knows them well. Nothing is hidden from Him, yet foolish people often think their actions are hidden and their thoughts and evil deeds secret! All is "open" to Him (Greek= *gumna* = naked). We may put on the clothes of legalistic righteousness but all is naked before Him, He sees all our life, there is nothing hidden from Him. God does not just passively "see" us, he actively through His Word exposes our soul.

The Greek word for "laid bare" is *trachelizo*. It is another military/gladiatorial/sacrificial word meaning, to expose the throat to a blade. The **perfect tense** indicates that God wants us to be open in prayer about our innermost thoughts and fears, as we have always been "exposed" to His mercy or judgement. This is the concept behind the verb *trachelizo*; we have our throat permanently exposed to the Lord and he holds the knife, and we can relax there! We are as perfectly safe in God's character as Isaac was with Abraham on Mount Moriah, Genesis 22. God has provided the lamb!

We are to always remember that the Lord sees and has the power to act regarding every detail of our lives. We are to walk with diligent focus and the "fear of/respect for/eyes only on the Lord, for he sees all. Our relaxed openness will have permanent/eternal results. Jesus words, "take no thought of your life", from **Matthew 6:25-27**, come to mind here. It is as if the Lord is challenging us to see each and every day as a walk with life and death, and to leave the Lord in charge of all outcomes by being obedient in all situations, whether we see dangers or not.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Have we entered into the Christian life fully? Have we entered into a daily "Faith-Rest Sabbath" in our souls or are we living like religious people? Is every day transformed by the Grace of God so that it is truly a "Sabbath Rest" from human works systems of religiosity?

This is our challenge from this passage. We are to ask ourselves daily about this reality, and test ourselves by asking the right questions. The right questions are, 'do we love the Lord more today than yesterday? 'Do we seek to serve Him more today?' 'Do we seek opportunities for service more eagerly?' Only if we can say "yes" to these things are we living the grace life of gratitude, that will always overflow into service.

Religion seeks to impress God, Biblical Christianity seeks to serve the one who gave his all for us. Religion is centred in works, our living faith is centred in gratitude and the loving desire to give our all for Him. Who do you resemble today brother or sister? Do you resemble the Lord or do you resemble the religious hypocrites? Are you motivated by love and gratitude or do you seek to impress someone? Let us get our hearts and minds right in this matter.

When you have truly seen what the Lord has done for you and you see the wonder associated with the plan of God for salvation, and His provision for time and eternity, what will be the result in your life? Will it not be an overwhelming desire to serve Him with love and focus of mind? Will it not be expressed in more Bible study and a daily search for ways to serve the Lord practically amongst your fellow men?

Those who truly know HIM, and HIS WORK, are characterised by loving service and keen study of every word He has spoken to men. Show me a believer who does not love the Word of God, and I will show you a "believer" who does not know what he/she believes, nor do they know the one they claim to believe in. To know the Lord is to love Him and desire more and more of Him. The believers who do not "exert" themselves in the study and application of God's Word have lost, or never found, their first love! To know the Lord is to love and desire to serve and worship Him!

"Trust grounded obedience" (Stern, 1990, p 673), is what the Lord seeks from us all, and nothing short of this will win eternal reward, and provide the peace of mind and deep satisfaction that we truly seek. Refer also, **Romans 1:5, 16:25, Galatians 2:16-21**.

Have we let the Word loose today in our heart and mind? Have we let the living Word of God take us and transform us? Have we let it cut us to the very centre of our being? The Lord wants all of us, He is not satisfied with any less! Let us be diligent to study, keen to apply, and eager to serve the Lord daily in any way we can. Let us be fearful of falling from the grace standard of life back into any religious system. All that is other than grace is disobedience!

Only as we know His Word, "the mind of Christ" (**1 Corinthians 2:16**), are we aware of what He would do with us. Let us not rob ourselves of the discernment that His Word provides us. Let us not kid ourselves, thinking that anything is hidden from God's sight, for all is "naked" before Him. There are no secrets with God, all is open and nothing is hidden. Let us therefore live lives that are without embarrassment, but filled up with service for the one who loves us.

B. PASTORAL

As we read this chapter we are reminded again of the importance of the "Grace-centred" Gospel message. All preaching that gets away from the message of grace and thankfulness has departed from the apostolic faith and entered into legalistic error. We must be careful as pastors to always copy the apostles rather than copy the religious leaders of Jesus day. The less like Pharisees we sound, act and look, the safer we are! Let us be careful about who we resemble!

Do our people know the peace of God? Peace is the Lord's promised provision for us all, yet how many of the Lord's people know it in their daily lives? **John 14:27, 16:33**. Peace comes only from the knowledge of the Lord's love, mercy and grace. Peace will guard the heart from worry only when the individual knows the Lord and loves Him with all their heart. This is the goal of our preaching is it not? Do we seek this for the Lord's people under our care? Every day is to be a Sabbath rest, where we are active in utilizing all of the provisions of the Lord for us as his children.

There are no secrets before the Lord; all things are exposed naked before Him. We do not serve a limited god but the mighty living Lord of glory. Do the people hear this, or would they pick up from us that they can do things and "get away with sin". There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed for all to see, but right here and now God sees all! All believers need to walk in holy fear of exposure! We serve a holy God, and He requires both holiness and total obedience; all else is sin! Do the people get the message from us? Do we let the living Word of God loose amongst His people every time we can? This is our call – preach the Word – let the Holy Spirit loose.... **2 Timothy 1:7, 4:1-3**.

DOCTRINES

CAIN AND ABEL

1. Salvation and Worship in Pre Flood Time

The only way to have a relationship with God in early times is the same as we have today - the blood of Christ - they looked forward to the Cross, we look back historically. (Hebrews 9:22, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 1:18,19)

The way of Cain: The way of Cain is false religion - no blood - no regeneration - no salvation - the way of good works - good deeds.

The Family: The family was set up in the beginning to teach what is wrong, what is right, and how to approach God. Adam and Eve, who were born again, would have taught their children about spiritual things.

2. WORSHIP

a) Where to worship:

In (Genesis 4:3) and (4:16) they were taught that there was a place to worship - they both brought their offering to a specific place. Evaluation of (Genesis 3:24) would appear to show that the place of worship was at the entrance to the garden of Eden which was guarded by the cherubim. Abel came with the blood of the animal. Cain approached with produce - his own good works.

b) When to Worship:

In (Genesis 4:3) we read "in the process of time " which means at the proper time or at the end of a specified number of days. It could have been the Sabbath, it could have been Sunday.

c) Means of Worship:

In (Genesis 4:4) Abel brought a lamb, sacrificed it, and God was satisfied.

3. Cain and Abel

a) Cain - means 'acquired'. Eve was a little confused when she named her sons. Eve knew there were two lines - the line of the fig leaves - the line of the skins, the seed of Satan and the seed of woman. She thought Cain was the seed of the woman. He was however the first of the seed of Satan.

b) Abel - means 'nothingness' - he was orientated to grace and first in line of regeneration.

c) Occupations: Cain was a farmer whereas Abel was a shepherd. (John 1:29 cf. Genesis 3:21)

4. Cain's Offering

Cain was an excellent farmer who brought the best vegetables and fruit from the ground.

a) Type

- i) it was bloodless (Hebrews 9:22)
- ii) in the sweat of thy brow - it was a result of Cain's own hard work - human good. (Isaiah 64:6)
- iii) it was cursed (Genesis 3:17)
- iv) not acceptable to God (Titus 3:5).

b) Implications

- i) Cain failed to recognise sin and the penalty of sin and his own need.
- ii) He denied the curse of man.
- iii) Cain refused God's offer for help.
- iv) Cain's attitude - I have done this. Self righteousness.
- v) Cain wanted a cover not a cure. (Matthew 23:27,28)

c) Religion ignores the blood of Christ, it is characterized by good deeds.

5. Abel's Offering - Genesis 4:4

Abel was a shepherd and brought of the firstlings of the flock and fat thereof. (Hebrews 11:4, 1 John 3:12)
 Grace Principle - the approach through the blood of an innocent victim. It wasn't that Abel had a nice personality or Cain a bad personality, the principle is divine truth. The blood versus no blood. Divine works versus human works.

6. Verse 5 - God deals with Cain:

Human rejection of divine salvation means divine rejection of that individual. Cain's reaction - he was very angry to the point of a tantrum and his face fell. Abel was accepted. Cain became jealous of Abel and lusted for precedence in the second generation.

Verses 6&7 - God puts the alternative to Cain:

God asked why are you angry and look sad. "If you do well" (totally good) believe in Christ "shalt thou not be accepted", if not (human good) "the sin offering (Jesus Christ) lieth at the door. (Salvation is still available while the door remains open - Revelation 3:20. It is God's will that you be saved - 2 Peter 3:9) " thou shalt rule over him " - Cain was the first-born and had certain rights:- a) rulership; b) priesthood; c) double portion.
 Cain is about to be disinherited because he is not acceptable to God. He again rejects God's approach, his jealousy turns to hatred and hatred to murder.

7. Cain and Abel stand as representatives of the human race. Cain the unbeliever, Abel the believer. (John 3:36)

RELIGION

1. Satan's religion is a humanly acceptable one: no sin, no judgment, no Saviour and no Hell. Satan appears as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:13-19,26).
2. Many pastors in the churches are servants of Satan's policy, knowingly or unknowingly (Isaiah 30:12, Jeremiah 2:8, 2 Peter 2:1-10).
3. Satan's strategy towards unbelievers is to keep them blinded to the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Colossians 2:8, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10).
4. Satan's strategy towards believers is:
 - a) to confuse by false teaching (Matthew 7:15, Romans 16:18)
 - b) to appeal to pride (2 Corinthians 10:12)
 - c) to promote idolatry (Habakkuk 2:18,19)
 - d) to promote legalism (1 Timothy 1:7-8).
5. Satan's policy calls for counterfeit faith:
 - a) counterfeit gospel (2 Corinthians 11:3-4)
 - b) counterfeit pastors (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)
 - c) counterfeit communion (1 Corinthians 10:19-21)
 - d) counterfeit doctrine (2 Timothy 4:1)
 - e) counterfeit righteousness (Matthew 19:16-28)
 - f) counterfeit way of life (Matthew 23)
 - g) counterfeit power (2 Thessalonians 2:8-10)
 - h) counterfeit gods (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

SABBATH AND THE LORD'S DAY

1. Sabbath means Rest.
2. Salvation is the eternal Sabbath (Matthew 11:28) - we must trust in God to save us, apart from our own works.
3. Trusting in the promises is the daily Sabbath (Hebrews 3:11) - we must trust in God to provide all our needs.
4. The original Sabbath (Genesis 2:2, 3) - God finished His work of creation on the sixth day and rested on the seventh.
5. The Sabbath of Israel (Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-15)

- a) In the Old Testament, the Jews were commanded not to work on the seventh day. They were to trust in the finished work of God to supply their needs.
- b) The Sabbath (Saturday) was the remembrance day of the old creation, of the old covenant. (Exodus 20:10-11, 31:12-17, Hebrews 4:4)
- c) Legalists burdened the Sabbath with many hundreds of extra-biblical commandments and regulations.
- d) Under the Mosaic Law the Jews had a sabbatical year; they were supposed to rest every seventh year. (Exodus 23:10, 11)
- e) Because they did not take their sabbaticals they endured the 70 years of Babylonian captivity. (Leviticus 26:33-35, 2 Chronicles 36:20, 21, Daniel 9:2, Jeremiah 25:11, 12, Jeremiah 29:10)

6. The Lord's Day

- a) The Lord's Day (Sunday) is the remembrance of the new creation, the resurrection life of the Church in Christ. (2Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15, Hebrews 9:15, 10:20)
- b) In the New Testament, all days are as unto the Lord. (Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:1-3)
- c) There is a moment by moment Sabbath for the believer in the Church Age. (Hebrews 4:1-3)
- d) The Lord's Day is:-
 - i) the day of the resurrection (Matthew 28:1)
 - ii) the day of the first meeting of the disciples (John 20:19)
 - iii) the day for new instructions (Luke 24:36-39)
 - iv) the day the early church met (Acts 20:6-7)
 - v) the day they gave offerings (1 Corinthians 16:2)
 - vi) the day of the Ascension (John 20:17)
 - vii) the day the church began (Pentecost) (Acts 2).

7. The concept of the moment by moment Sabbath is illustrated in four passages in the Old Testament

- a) Moses at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:10-14)
- b) Abraham (Romans 4:17-21, Genesis 22, Hebrews 11:17-19)
- c) The bones of Joseph (Hebrews 11:22)
- d) Caleb and the Giants (Numbers 13,14, Joshua 14:6-14, 15:14, Judges 1:20).

WORKS: DIVINE GOOD AND HUMAN GOOD

1. Anything we can do in our own strength (human good) is unacceptable to God (Isaiah 64:6, Romans 8:8).
2. Only those things we do in the power of the Holy Spirit (divine good) are acceptable to God, since it is God Himself who produces the work in us (Ephesians 2:10).
3. When a believer produces human good he imitates an unbeliever (Galatians 5:19-21, 1 John 2:11, 3:4).
4. When a believer produces divine good he imitates Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:1-2).
5. Human good is:
 - a) Identified as dead works (Hebrews 6:1).
 - b) Cannot save mankind (Titus 3:5).
 - c) Is condemned by God (1 Corinthians 3:11-16; Ecclesiastes 12:14).
 - d) Is the basis of indictment at the Last Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15).
 - e) Has no place in the plan of God (2 Timothy 1:9).
 - f) Is destroyed at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).
6. Divine good is the basis of rewards (1 Corinthians 3:11-15).
7. God is satisfied with His own work in four general areas:
 - a) IN SALVATION
God approves of what God has done in the form of Jesus Christ. God the Father is propitiated by the work of God the Son on the cross. To be saved is to believe or trust on God the Son (Acts 16:31). Belief has no human merit, all the merit is in the work of Jesus Christ. God does not approve of human good. (Isaiah 64:6).

b) IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

God approves of the works, done under the filling of the Holy Spirit. Spirituality depends on who and what the Spirit is. The way to the filling of the Holy Spirit is confession of sins (1 John 1:9). Confession has no human merit. The Holy Spirit also provides at least one spiritual gift to each believer at salvation (1Corinthians 12:8-11).

c) IN THE WORD OF GOD

The word of God is inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21). It is the mind of Christ (1Corinthians 2:16). The Holy Spirit makes the Word of God effective in our lives.

d) IN ETERNITY

In eternity human works are removed (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). God provides us with a new body (1Corinthians 15:51-3). God provides us with an incorruptible inheritance (1 Peter 1:3-5). God provides everything for our eternal future (1 Thessalonians 4:17-18). God approves of His provision.

PEACE [See page 83 above]

PARAPHRASE

“Therefore, there keeps on being left behind for us the Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the believer who has entered into this Sabbath rest, he has ceased from all human works, just as the Lord has finished all his works, and rested in the completed plan. Let us all then be enthusiastically committed to entering into that Sabbath rest, provided for us by the completed work of God, lest any of us should fall short of God’s standard of living and fall to the low place of disobedience that other generations have! For the Word of God is always living and always powerful producing it’s intended results in the life that is open to it’s application. It is sharper than any two edged sword, cutting to the heart of all matters we need to address, making the distinctions that need to be made, and acting as a faithful trustworthy critic of all our thoughts, emotions, and actions. Nothing is hidden from God’s sight, all things, thoughts, feelings and actions, are naked before his sight. All things are open to view by the mighty God we serve.”

NOTES

5. CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD (CHAPTER 4:14 - 7:28)

CHAPTER 4 VERSES 14-16

“14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

KEY WORDS

Have	echo	present, active, participle; having therefore.
Passed	dierchomai	perfect , active, participle; having passed through, he is still there.
Hold Fast	krateo	present, active, subjunctive; keep on being in control of, exercise power over, hold fast, to take absolute mastery of.
Profession	omologia	our confession, or profession of faith.
Touched	sumpatheo	aorist, passive, infinitive; sympathise with, in the sense of walking with understanding.
Infirmities	astheneia	weakness.
Points	panta	in all things, in all the details of life, just like us.
Tempted	peirazo	perfect , passive, participle; tried in the fire to test the purity of the object. Perfect tense = completed state, continuing results.
Like as we are	omoiotes	in exactly all the ways we are tempted/tested.
Without	choris	apart from, separated from the very possibility of sin.
Sin	Hamartia	acts of sin.
Come	proserchomai	present, middle, subjunctive; come near, in a priestly sense of approaching an altar.
Boldly	Pareusias	with boldness, confidence, assurance.
Obtain	lambano	aorist, active, subjunctive; with the purpose of receiving.
Find	eurisko	aorist, active, subjunctive; discover by searching.
Help	boetheia	help given to someone in need.
Time of need	eukairos	convenient, right time.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The writer of this letter has hopefully thoroughly “terrified” all of us about the reality of judgement and the loss of reward that is entailed if we do not advance on the right path of obedience and application, and so now he reminds us that the Lord is not only the judge/assessor of our productivity in time, He is also our great high priest, interceding for our sins. He is our judge, but He is a judge with mercy and a critic who is also our mentor; our choice is which side of his character will we experience? The choice is for time and for eternity – consequences of spiritual choices are eternal.

Verse 14. All issues of life begin for the believer by, “seeing Jesus”. Any question, concern, testing, or trouble needs to be seen through Him and His work for us. Only the person and work of the Lord give us the right perspective on the issues of time. When we see Him as He is then we see our troubles and questions as they are. The writer has terrified us all, reminding us that we are all in danger of losing our eternal rewards due to our failure to apply the Word of God to daily life. He now reminds us that the judge is our Saviour, and he is ever ready to intercede for us in the matter of our sins before the father. He sits waiting for our call for forgiveness, we must but respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit within and claim His Word (**1 John 1:8-9**), and we have the perfect ministry of our great high priest to wipe away all sin, all guilt, all uncleanness.

Note how the writer speaks about the Lord. He is our great high priest. He is the “great one”, there is none higher than him, and as he rules over the universe, so He sits to intercede for us. We have - we keep on having a great high priest. This continuous tense reminds us that the Lord is ever active on our behalf; we have his wonderful service permanently through this life.

He is our great high priest because he has **passed through** the heavens, with eternal results for us all. He alone has made the journey in his resurrection body from earth to heaven, so he alone is qualified to stand as the mediator between man and God. Note the title of the Lord used by the writer here. He is called the “Son of God”, the title of deity, reminding us that He alone is God’s chosen one to bring the grace gift of salvation to mankind. He is God become man, and yet he also as man, knows our weaknesses, for he was born Jesus (Yeshua/Joshua), the Jewish boy from Nazareth. He was despised and had to put up with all we meet in life and more, and so is able to stand for us, knowing that we are but dust!

Given who He is, who should we be? We should be people who stand firm, who hold fast to their faith, who take absolute mastery of the details of life, seizing every moment for Him, and bringing even every thought into captivity to His will. **2 Corinthians 10:5.** Given who He is, what He has done, and what He presently is doing for us, the least He can ask of us (and He does!), is that we stand firm in the truth that we know, and do not deny the gospel message, even in the presence of the enemy. Dynamic witnessing is based upon dynamic dealing with sin, and faith-filled daily walking in

the power of the Holy Spirit. He has "passed through" to heaven, and so shall we one day, and until we do we worship, we work in Holy Spirit power, and we work and worship in confident joy of who have gone before.

Verse 15. We have a high priest who does know what it's like to face trials and troubles and temptations, for he faced them all, and was without sin in them all. He was put to the test, **tried as it were in fire**, and He passed the test, and the results of that work go on forever to bless and support us in our trials. He walks with us in understanding, knowing all the issues of living in the devil's world. He is the only one who can provide the guidance to serve God in the midst of the enemy's camp. All testing of our faith in the fires of daily life has one objective, and that is to purify our motives, mind and life. He was without sin, and He sits today to be the answer for us when we fail and fall into sin, for His goal for us is that we might serve Him without the stain of sin, as He served the Father.

Verse 16. "Confidence" is a boldness based on a sure foundation. We can be "bold", assured, confident, and mentally stable only as we know the truth of God Word, our confidence growing daily as we see it applied and working in our daily lives. Unless we know the Lord's Word as it works out in our daily life we cannot ever know assurance. Unless the Word is applied and is then seen to work out, we will not grow in confidence.

There is no confidence without application over time, and seeing the results in life. Knowledge of a subject is fine but until it is applied under pressure it is not wisdom, for it hasn't been seen to work. Until it is applied it may assist us pass exams on the subject, but it will not help us live powerfully. God does not want us to pass exams in theology, He wants us to live powerfully with absolute assurance of His character and power, and that only comes when we take theology and put it into our own shoe leather.

Knowledge of doctrine alone will not help us be anything except hypocrites, but once it is applied into daily life, it makes it possible for the believer to live as they should, and pray on the authority of the Word of God, which they now, not only know about, but have seen work out in life. See **1 John 5:14-15**. The key to dynamic prayer is praying according to God's will, and that can only be known through His Word.

The result of the Holy Spirit filled life, and the application of the Word to life is two fold. We are then at every point of asking, "receiving mercy", and "finding all grace", to help us at every point of need. We are free, on the basis of who the Lord is and where we are "in Him", to ask for assistance and we are assured that He is ever there to meet our needs.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

There is no time in our earthly lives when we do not have the Lord there for us to assist us and provide the cleansing from sin that He won for us through the Cross and Resurrection. He is our "great" high priest. There is none greater in power, provision, or love for us. Have we praised Him for His love and provision today? Do we see the reality of His priesthood for us in daily life? Do we have the sense that He is there every moment interceding for us with the Father? Do we see the Lord's perfect provision for our sins, and for our daily life in the midst the troubles of the devil's world? We are provided for, let us praise His Holy Name!

Death is the enemy for unsaved mankind, but for the believer it is simply the gateway into the presence of the one who stands to greet us. This change of attitude will only occur in the believer if they grow in the knowledge of the Lord's character and completed work for us. It is only as the reality of His perfect provision for us grows that the believer in time can relax, without fear, of the troubles and fires of life, or the trial of death. He has passed through the heavens, and by that has opened up a pathway for us to follow Him. You can only "hold fast" to something you know!

Do we spend the time each day learning more of the one who gave His all for us? Let us check ourselves out on this matter by asking a few questions. Do we know Him more now that we did last month? Do we feel more love for the Lord now than yesterday? Do we have more desire to serve Him? Do we feel the fears of life and death slowly moving away from us? If we cannot answer "YES!" to each of these questions, then we are probably not spending enough time with the Lord daily.

He sits at the right hand of power for the universe, and for all eternity that is beyond the universe. Let us get a little glimpse of this power and authority and stand in awe and worship Him. Yet let us also marvel that He came down to this world and experienced every temptation that is known by mankind, and He did not sin! He understands our temptations, and He is able to give us His power to stand against them. He cleanses us when we sin and fall short of Him, and He sits ready (it is no effort to Him) to provide Holy Spirit power for us to stand against all temptations.

He has the solution to our "infirmities", to our weaknesses, and we have them, don't we! The question today for each of us, is, will we utilise the power of God to live, or will we bumble along in failure. Will we live with power, or fall pathetically into our own weaknesses.

Don't blame Satan for this, take the responsibility for it yourself. We can choose to fall into weakness daily or live in Holy Spirit power daily, and it all depends upon our choices. Our challenge is to make the daily choices to stand against sin, and study the Word of God, and apply what we learn with tenacity and worship. There is mercy for our sins if asked for, and there is grace power to stand against the next temptation to fall, but both must be utilised.

B. PASTORAL

Let the Lord be lifted up in our pulpits today and every day. Let all mankind see the one who came to this planet. He is the great high priest and king. If the people of God do not know about these things it is our fault, and the Lord holds us, his under shepherds, and pastors, responsible for this. We are to speak of the Lord always and we are to speak fully of His person and work so that all know His greatness, His power, and His provision for mankind. Too many believers do not know these things, let us ensure it is not because of us.

Do the Lord's people under our care know that they can, "boldly approach", the throne of grace? We can base this assurance, not on our strength, but on His person and work. This sense of assurance and confidence is the property of every believer, and is there to be claimed every day, for He is the same yesterday, today and forever! We must always ensure that when we sit down from our preaching that people see that they stand upon the rock of ages!

There is no variableness with Him; no doubts about any change of attitude towards us – we are beloved. His throne is Grace, not judgement for us, and His throne is the place of gracious power for us all, to strengthen us in the testing situations of daily life. Let us ensure that it is this vision of the Lord that the people get from us every time we speak.

DOCTRINES**MEDIATORSHIP [See page 53 above]****NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD**

Father, Son and Holy Spirit - Matthew 28:19,20. These titles emphasise the function of each member of the Trinity.

- a) Father - the sovereign authority, who decreed the plan of salvation.
- b) Son - the obedient Son, who offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin according to the Father's will.
- c) Holy Spirit - the one who reveals the Son to mankind, thereby bringing honour and glory to Him.

NAMES OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

God reveals Himself and His character by His names:

1. EL - The strong one (singular) - 2 Samuel 22:33
2. EL ELYON - The most high God - Genesis 14:18-22
3. EL OLAM - The everlasting God - Genesis 21:33
4. EL SHADDAI - The almighty one - Genesis 17:1
5. ELOHIM - The all powerful one (plural) - Genesis 1:1
6. JEHOVAH - The self-existent one – "I AM" Exodus 3:14
7. JEHOVAH-ELOHIM - Lord God, Creator - Genesis 2:4
8. JEHOVAH-JIREH - Jehovah will provide - Genesis 22:13, 14
9. JEHOVAH -NISSI - Jehovah is my banner - Exodus 17:15
10. JEHOVAH-RAAH - Jehovah is my Shepherd - Psalm 23:1
11. JEHOVAH-RAPHA - Jehovah that Heals - Exodus 15:25, 26
12. JEHOVAH-SABOATH - Lord of hosts - Psalm 46:7, 11
13. JEHOVAH-SHALOM - Jehovah is peace - Judges 6:24
14. JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH - Jehovah is there - Ezekiel 48:35
15. JEHOVAH TSID KENU - Jehovah our righteousness - Jeremiah 33:16

NAMES OR TITLES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

1. LORD - kurios - emphasises the authority of God. This is His divine title - it emphasises His deity.
2. JESUS = Joshua = Jehovah Saves. This is His human name - it emphasises His humanity.
3. CHRIST = Messiah = The Chosen One. This is His calling - it emphasises His purpose.
4. It is respectful to refer to Him by His full title: the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. SON OF GOD which emphasises deity - John 5:18, 10:33
6. SON OF MAN which emphasises humanity. He calls himself this 30 times in Matthew, 15 in Mark, 25 in Luke and 12 in John.
7. SON OF DAVID - He is King of the Jews on the throne of David forever.
8. THE LAST ADAM (1 Corinthians 15:45)
9. ADVOCATE (1 John 2:1)
10. AMEN (Revelation 3:14)
11. BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD (Revelation 3:14)
12. BRANCH (Zechariah 3:8, 6:12)
13. BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR (Revelation 22:16)

14. CORNERSTONE (1 Peter 2:6)
15. DAVID THE KING (Jeremiah 30:9, Hosea 3:5)
16. DAY SPRING (Luke 1:78)
17. DELIVERER (Romans 11:26)
18. ELOHIM (Isaiah 40:3, 9:6,7, John 20:28, Titus 1:3, 2:13, Romans 15:6, Ephesians 1:3, 5:5,20, 2 Peter 1:1, 1 John 5:20, Romans 9:5)
19. EMMANUEL God with us (Matthew 1:23)
20. THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE (Revelation 19)
21. FIRST AND LAST (Revelation 1:8, 17)
22. FIRST BEGOTTEN FROM THE DEAD (Revelation 1:5)
23. HIGH PRIEST (Hebrews 5:1,5)
24. HOLY ONE (Luke 4:34, Acts 3:14)
25. IMAGE OF GOD (2 Corinthians 4:4)
26. JEHOVAH (Zechariah 12:10, Jeremiah 23:5,6, Psalm 68:18, Ephesians 4:8-10, Psalm 102:12, Hebrews 1:10 ff., Revelation 1-22, Malachi 3:1)
27. JUST ONE (Acts 3:14, 7:52)
28. KING OF ISRAEL (John 1:49)
29. KING OF THE JEWS (Matthew 2:2)
30. KING OF KINGS (Revelation 17:14)
31. LAMB OF GOD (John 1:29, Revelation 5:6)
32. LIGHT TRUE (John 1:8, 9)
33. LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH (Revelation 5:5)
34. LORD (John 20:28)
35. LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 17:14)
36. LORD OF GLORY (1 Corinthians 2:8)
37. LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Jeremiah 23:6)
38. MAKER AND PRESERVER OF ALL THINGS (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16)
39. MEDIATOR (1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 12:24)
40. MESSIAH (John 1:41)
41. NAZARENE (Matthew 2:23)
42. PASSOVER (OUR) (1 Corinthians 5:7)
43. PRINCE OF LIFE (Acts 3:15)
44. PRINCE OF PEACE (Isaiah 9:6)
45. PROPHET (Deuteronomy 18:18, Luke 24:19)
46. REDEEMER (Job 19:25)
47. ROOT OF DAVID (Revelation 5:5, 22:16)
48. RULER OF ISRAEL (Micah 5:2)
49. SAVIOUR (Luke 2:11, Acts 5:31)
50. SHEPHERD (John 10:11, Hebrews 13:20)
51. SHILOH (Genesis 49:10)
52. SON OF GOD (Matthew 3:17, Luke 1:32)
53. SON ONLY BEGOTTEN (John 1:1 4, 18)
54. SON OF MAN (Matthew 8:20, John 1:5 1)
55. SON OF DAVID (Matthew 9:27, 21:9)
56. STAR AND SCEPTRE (Numbers 24:17)
57. WAY TRUTH AND LIFE (John 14:6)
58. WITNESS FAITHFUL (Revelation 1:5)
59. WORD (John 1:1, Revelation 19:13)

PARAPHRASE

Being really clear of this then, that we have a great high priest, who has passed through the limits of space and time and arrived directly in heaven, and that He is Jesus the Son of God. Understanding the implications of this, let us all take absolute mastery of these facts and rest upon them daily. This is the content of our faith. For we do not have a high priest who does not understand us, who cannot have sympathy with our weaknesses, for during His time here, He was tested in all the fires of pressure that we are, yet He never fell into any weakness. Knowing this, let us come with absolute assurance to His Throne of Grace, in order that we might obtain merciful forgiveness and the grace to help us at the right time."

NOTES

CHAPTER 5**WHO IS A PRIEST? – HEBREWS 5 : 1- 10****Chapter 5 Verses 1 - 4**

“ 1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. 3 And by reason hereof he ought as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. 4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.”

KEY WORDS

Ordained	kathistemi	present, passive, indicative; he receives appointment.
Pertaining	pros ton theon	to God
Offer	prosphero	present, active, subjunctive; bringing an offering to God.
Gifts/and/sacrifices		this phrase covers all the work of the high priest.
Compassion	metriopatheo	present, active, infinitive; measures his feelings, so they are in the right measure. This is an Aristotelian word that indicates no excess, either excusing sin, nor being overly judgmental.
Ignorant	agnoeo	present, active, participle; keeps on being without understanding.
Out of the way	planao	present, middle, participle; keep on wandering away from the path.
Compassed	perikeimai	present, passive, indicative; is surrounded by weakness..
Infirmity	astheneia	While on earth the Lord was ringed around with human weakness
Ought	opheilo	present, active, indicative; he keeps on being bound to, moral obligation.
Taketh	Lambano	present, active, indicative; takes to himself.
Honour	Time	the honour” was the phrase used to describe the office of the high priest.
Called	Kaleo	present, passive, participle ;receiving the calling.
As	Kathaper	even as, drawing a strong parallel to Aaron.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

It is important to study the priesthood before reading through this chapter. Refer to the Bible Topic Book and do a Biblical study of the three associated topics there; Priests, Priests: Levitical Priesthood, Priests: Priestly Garments.

We are priests “in Christ Jesus”, and the significance of this will be outlined in this letter to the Hebrews. The function of our priesthood is also addressed in 1 Peter chapter 2, and we have already seen that the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ was introduced in **Hebrews 4:14-16**, as part of the explanations of the Faith-Rest life. Remember that Hebrews deals with the High Priesthood of Christ from the standpoint of his perfect superiority to all who went before Him (word “better” is used 13 times in Hebrews). Priesthood is mentioned 37 times in Hebrews, more than any other New Testament book.

The Principles of Priesthood. Verses. 1-4

Verse 1. Priesthood is unique to the human race. Here we have a definition of a Levitical priest; he is a man commissioned by God, to represent all people before God, in ritual and other ordained service. His role was to offer sacrifices and gifts as part of the Mosaic Law and its associated sacrificial system. His role was to act out the principles of salvation, and sanctification so that people would learn about God’s Character, and way of salvation for them all, male and female.

The entire sacrificial system of Israel was designed to teach, as well as to provide a means of expressing faith in God’s plan and work of salvation for them. The priest was by their actions and life generally to represent God to the people. The Feasts and other rituals were the way the prophetic plan of God was revealed.

Verse 2 A priest must have an understanding based compassion on the ignorant and the deceived. The Lord Jesus Christ has that, in that He was tempted, yet he was found without sin **Hebrews 4:15 and 2:18**. The Lord understands and knows temptation but met and defeated it all, and so can provide us with the means to defeat it also.

The two reasons for falling into sin are given here; ignorance and wandering. Both are culpable, which means, both are to be blamed! We are at fault if we are ignorant when we have had many opportunities to learn and have not taken them. We are equally at fault when we, by sheer stupidity or casual/lazy thinking/attitudes, wander away from the correct path of living and get into things that are not right for us.

Sin begins often with things that are not evil in themselves, but are not the best for us, and then the wandering away from the true path leads to fully formed sins and open evil (remember that “evil” is all that is opposite to God’s Plan). The high priest sets us the example of complete obedience, and we are to follow HIM, and stick exactly to the true path of life for

the believer in Christ Jesus. He had to be correct in each detail of the sacrificial system he was head of. He portrayed spiritual truths and there was no margin for error – for what he portrayed by rituals spoke of God’s purpose and plan for all humanity.

Verse 3. Priesthood involves obligation in regard to sin, and the first sin offering the Jewish high priest offered was for his own sins. The Lord is different, as he has no sins to make any offering for, other than ours. The Jewish high priests could empathise with believers sins, as sinners themselves, but never as victors over their sin. With Jesus we have a high priest who can truly empathise as a man, but also He faces things from a position of strength and power, for He never gave into sin! He was victor even before the Cross, over himself and all that Satan could throw at him by way of subtle temptation, but it is on the Cross that he wins total and absolute victory over sin and death.

The Jewish high priests were men with every weakness and every sin of the people they represented. How much better to have a high priest who knows our weaknesses, but he never gave in to weakness, for He alone is able to bring the perfect sacrifice, and so He is the perfect priest, as the only one who has defeated sin and death. In Him the curse is broken, and so the sacrifices He makes are perfect, and therefore accepted by God once and for all. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews will come to this point later in the letter.

Verse 4. Priesthood is a state of honour, and as such must be received from God. No human ambition or self promotion should have ever have been a part of the appointment of a high priest.

The writer knows, as he writes these words, that this was the “norm” when the Lord established the high priesthood, but by the days of our Lord the office, while referred to as “the honour”, had become the post surrounded by the most politics and intrigue, often being sold to the highest bidder. The writer underlines the point, that by his day the very office itself is not as God intended it to be, it has become corrupt, and is ripe for replacement by the person who, in all its rituals and practises, it spoke of.

Do a short Bible study on the high priesthood and see just how “high and lifted up” was this office. **Exodus 28:1ff, Leviticus 8:1ff, Numbers 16:5, 17:5, 18:1ff, 20:23, 25:10ff, Psalms 105:26, 1 Samuel 6:3ff.** The standard was Aaron, and few by the first century lived up to that, conspiring for the office, which they used to enrich themselves rather than minister God to the people, and bring the people close to God through their actions. By the final forty years of the Jewish Temple the priesthood was as corrupt as the politics of the day and the men involved paid a terrible price for their evil when the Roman’s burst into the city of Jerusalem in August of 70AD.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

How well are we fulfilling our royal priesthood? Are we ministering the Lord’s presence to the unbelievers we meet, and also serving the saints we meet who need a touch from God? This is our role as “believer-priests”, and to fall short of it, is to fall short of our reason for being here.

We are to be like Jesus, and that involves both compassion and action to back up the feeling. Do we feel compassion on the lost, and foolish? If we feel such compassion, or sympathy, what does it do to us, how does it work out in our life? Do we feed the ignorant, both with the Word of God, and with Biblical counsel?

Do we minister the Gospel to the lost in words that meet them where they are? Do we feed the hungry brethren, and clothe the poor brethren? This is what it is to be a minister of the Gospel, a priest of the living God. It is to be one who shows the Lord’s character and program, and lives it daily.

As the high priests from amongst men had first to offer sacrifices for their own sins, so we need to use confession of sins ourselves to ensure we are pure vessels for service for our Lord. We are also reminded here not to seek office, but rather practise **1 Peter 5:5-10**, and humble ourselves, waiting for the Lord to lift us up to any office.

Honourable office within the church is never to be sought, and it is certainly not to be “campaigned” for in a political manner. Rather it is to be prayed about, and then when the appropriate time comes along it will be offered to the right believer by the prayer saturated board of the local church. Anything other than this pattern will lead to disaster. Priests are to serve where they are called, and wait for the Lord’s call to lift them up to a higher place.

B. PASTORAL

As the Lord’s pastors have we fulfilled the office today? Have we led all we have met to the Cross and empty tomb, reminding them, by word and deed, that the door is open to forgiveness and heavenly destiny. Have we expressed our compassion on the foolish and weak by teaching the life giving Word of God, so that they may no longer be ignorant; so that in place of weakness there is strength?

Our role involves all aspects of “shepherding”, of protection, encouragement, correction, and education. Have we been judgmental, or have we remembered that we too have fallen into sins just like the flock has? There is no place in ministry for those who think they are above temptation, for they will fall into it when they least expect it! The great

sadness for those of us in ministry is the number who fail each year through immorality and leave the ministry in disgrace and shame before God and man. They shipwreck their lives because of their lack of vigilance. **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**.

Let us also remember the solemn warning of verse four, the warning that the offices of the church are GODS not ours. They are His to call faithful people to fulfil, not ours to gather votes to secure! Let us be like Aaron was at his points of strength, let us be like Phineas, like Samuel, but most of all let us remember, we are to be like Christ!

DOCTRINES

PRIESTS [See page 58 above]

PRIESTS: LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD

1. Aaron was the first appointed High Priest in the Levitical priesthood (Exodus 28:1, Numbers 18:7, 8).
2. In the Levitical priesthood sons followed their father by physical birth into the priesthood.
3. Any descendants of Aaron who had physical defects were eliminated (Leviticus 21:21-23).
4. The function of the Levitical priesthood
 - a) To teach the law (Leviticus 10:11)
 - b) To offer the sacrifices (Leviticus 9)
 - c) Maintain the tabernacle (Numbers 18:3) (Levites)
 - d) To function in the Holy Place where they changed the shewbread and trimmed the candlestick (Exodus 30:7-8, Leviticus 24:5-8)
 - e) They inspected diseased persons in order to declare them unclean. (Leviticus 13, 14)
 - f) They acted as the supreme court of the land and judged major controversies. (Deuteronomy 17:8, 19:17, 21:5)
 - g) Priestly blessings. (Numbers 6:22)
5. Some priests also received the office of prophet - e.g. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah.
6. The tribe of Levi
 - a) The Levites descended from Levi who was chosen by God for the care and protection of holy things. (Numbers 3:5 ff, 8:14-19)
 - b) The first-born of all tribes of Israel were consecrated to the Lord. They were ransomed back by five shekels of silver, this money paying for the tribe of Levi who were their representatives.
 - c) The period of service for the Levites was from 25 to 50 years of age because of the tremendous pressures of being involved in spiritual activity.
 - d) The function of the Levites:-
 - i) To preserve the law, transmit it for posterity, constantly writing out the scripture. (Leviticus 10:11, Nehemiah 8:9, Ezekiel 44:23)
 - ii) They were to assist the priests in the service of the tabernacle and later the temple. (Numbers 18:4)
 - iii) There were two tasks that were not done by the Levites:
The hewing of wood and fetching of the water by the Gibeonites (Joshua 9:21)
The gatekeepers (1Chronicles 26:1, 19).
 - iv) Classification of the Levites:-
Kohath responsible for the ark, table of shewbread, the two altars, the lampstand, the sacred vessel and the veil.
Gershon, for the coverings, hangings from the tabernacle, the doors.
Meran, for the planks, the bars, the pillars, the sockets, the pins and the cords.

v) The Levites were responsible for the transportation of the tabernacle.

vi) The Levites were also responsible for all the music.

7. Dress of the High Priest (Exodus 28)

Except on ceremonial occasions, the dress of the priests and the high priest was no different from that of the common people. On ceremonial occasions the High Priest's uniform consisted of the following: white linen shorts, a white linen coat approximately hip length, a belt in the same colour as the curtains - white, blue, scarlet and purple, a turban-like cap with a golden crown inscribed 'Holy to Jehovah' (his badge of rank), an ephod of blue lavishly embroidered with colours, a breastplate of gold and cloth with the twelve stones representing the tribes engraved with their names and fastened with gold clasp. (See Priestly Garments).

8. The consecration of the priests and High Priests described in (Exodus 29)

9. The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)

On that high holy day, the high priest donned his ceremonial robes and entered the Tabernacle where he sprinkled the blood of the bullock of the sin offering for himself over the top of the mercy seat. (v6, 14). If he emerged from the Holy of Holies his priesthood was assured for another year. He re-entered a second time with the blood of the goat of the sin offering for the people to do likewise for them. His return to the Israelites signified that he had obtained national pardon. The people of Israel were spared (v30).

10. The descendants of the High Priest

a) Succession occurred upon the officiating high priest's death with the eldest surviving son's installation (Numbers 20:28).

b) The line was promised to pass down through Phinehas eldest son of Eleazer, the son of Aaron. (Numbers 25:10-13). Eli was a legitimate priest and descendant of Ithmar, but not an high priest; the switch in the line took place during Saul's reign. It was rightfully restored to the line of Eleazer during Solomon's reign (1 Kings 2:26, 27, 35). When Israel was about to go under dispersion in Jeremiah's day, Seraiah was high priest. He was captured by Nebuzar-adam and executed at Riblah (2 Kings 25:18-2 1). His son Josedech, who should have inherited the office, never served as high priest but lived and died in captivity at Babylon (Haggai 1:1-14). His son Joshua assumed the office when the High Priesthood was restored in the days of Zechariah and Zerubbabel (Zechariah 3).

c) His successors were Jothum, Eliashia, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua, who served in time of Alexander the Great. He met Alexander's conquering army with a scroll of Daniel in his hand. By reading him those passages dealing with him Jaddua won Alexander's friendship for the Jews.

d) Jaddua's successors were Onias I and Simon the Just. Onias II, too young to become the high priest, was set aside in favour of Simon's brother Eleazer.

e) The high priesthood was passed down to the Asmonaeon family of the course (class or order) of Joiarits (1Chronicles 9:10, 24:7, Nehemiah 11:10), and continued in that line until Herod the Great destroyed that family, the last high priest, Aristobul being murdered by order of Herod (Herod the Great's brother in law) in 35 BC.

f) There were twenty-eight high priests until the year 70 AD. Two high priests related to the death of Christ were Caiaphas and Annas.

AARON – HIGH PRIEST

1. SCRIPTURE Exodus 4:14 - 40:31; Leviticus 1:5 - 24:9; Numbers 1:3 - 33:39; Deuteronomy 9:20, 10:6.

2. BIOGRAPHY

Aaron was the first high priest of Israel. He was a Levite of the family of Kohath and was the elder brother of Moses. Both were younger than Miriam their sister. He had four sons, the two oldest, Nadab and Abihu, being killed by God (Numbers 3:4), leaving Eleazer and Ithamar to serve in the priestly line. Eventually, due to the size of the families during David's reign, 24 courses of priests from the younger sons were formed (1 Chronicles 24:3-19). He acted as spokesman for Moses (Exodus 4:14-16). Aaron was not as strong a character as his brother Moses for whilst he helped Moses with the defeat of the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-13) and performed miracles in God's power in the Egyptian court (Exodus 7:10-13, 19-21), he also sided with the people in the building of the golden calf (Exodus 32:1-5) and with his sister Miriam in criticising Moses because of his Ethiopian wife (Numbers 12:1-10). God, however, used Aaron as the high priest of Israel, who, adorned in his high priestly uniform (Exodus 28) served in the tabernacle. In a plain linen uniform he made atonement for the nation and himself (Leviticus 16:1-23). He was prevented from entering into the promised land (Numbers 20:12) and died at the age of 123 (Numbers 33:39) on Mt Hor; while his garments were removed and placed on his eldest surviving son Eleazer (Numbers 20:23-29).

3. EVALUATION

The function of the high priest on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)

- a) The high priest was not allowed unrestricted access into the Holy of Holies (16:2).
- b) He enters the holy place having offered a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering (16:3).
- c) Aaron was to remove the ornate high priestly garments, put on a plain linen uniform, and wash himself (16:4).
- d) The bullock is offered for Aaron, since he, also, is a man. The bullock is the highest value offering in Leviticus 1. The blood from the bullock is sprinkled on the mercy seat seven times (16:6, 11-14).
- e) Aaron was to select two goats and then select (by casting lots) which goat would be slain and which would be the scapegoat (16:5,7,8).
- f) One goat is slain as a sin offering for the nation of Israel (16:9,15,16), whilst the scapegoat is released into the wilderness (16:10).
- g) He has to go in alone (16:17) and offer the blood of the animals (16:18,19).
- h) The scapegoat is then symbolically made the sin bearer of Israel by the placing of the hands on its head and confessing Israel's iniquities (16:20-22).
- i) Aaron changed from his linen uniform to his high priestly garments (16:23-24).
- j) It was to occur on the feast of atonement (16:29,30).

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) A priest is a man who represents other men before God (Hebrews 5:1).
- b) We have a high priest, Jesus Christ, who at the right hand of God makes intercession for us (Hebrews 7:24-27).
- c) Because Jesus Christ was perfect He had to enter only once into the Holy of Holies for the sins of mankind (Hebrews 7:27, 9:28a). He was the sacrifice.
- d) The linen uniform worn by Aaron represents Jesus Christ becoming true humanity and dying on the cross (Hebrews 2:9a). He laid aside his embroidered priestly garments (glory) for a plain linen ephod (humanity).
- e) The high priest's uniform with its glorious richness represents the glorified resurrection body which Christ received after His death (Hebrews 2:9a).
- f) The scapegoat shows our sins are removed far from us (Psalm 103:12).
- g) When Christ satisfied God's holiness on the cross, the veil was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51). This allows us, through our High Priest Jesus Christ, direct access to the throne of God (Hebrews 4:14-16; 10:19-22).
- h) Even with Aaron's failures, God still used him mightily (2 Corinthians 12:9).

MELCHIZEDEK

1. Melchizedek is not a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ, he is a real person.
2. Melchizedek is an historical figure being the King of Salem. He was also a priest based on regeneration. He ministered to Abraham after rescuing Lot.
3. Christophanies are never given a formal name; the angel who visited Abraham or the man who wrestled with Jacob.
4. Christophanies are never attached to a geographical locality - e.g. Salem.
5. A Christophony always discloses God as the messenger.
6. Psalm 110:4 is a prophetic reference, Christ is being addressed. It does not say, you are Melchizedek.

7. A priest must be true humanity to be a priest. Jesus Christ was not true humanity until the incarnation. Therefore Melchizedek was a man. (Hebrews 7:10, Isaiah 7:14)
8. Jesus Christ of the tribe of Judah obtained his kingship by birth. Jesus Christ of the order of Melchizedek obtained his priesthood by appointment.

CHRIST: PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING [See page 57 above]

CHRIST FORMED IN YOU [See page 54 above]

PARAPHRASE

For every high priest is taken for this office from amongst his fellow men, in order to serve as God's representative to his fellow men, in all matters pertaining to God's dealing with man, to offer all the gift and sin offerings prescribed in the Mosaic Law. The reason for this, is that he is then able to have compassion on his fellow men, on their weaknesses that lead to sin, and their tendency to walk on paths that lead away from God. As a man he himself is surrounded by his own weaknesses, and for this reason he is obliged to first offer sacrifices for his own sins, then those of the people. No man was to take for himself such a great honour as the office of high priest, but to wait for the Lord's call to the office, as Aaron did."

CHAPTER 5 VERSES 5-10

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

KEY WORDS

Glorified	Doxazo	aoist, active, indicative; did not actively seek glory. Christ did not seek for himself the glory of the office by becoming high priest.
Begotten	gannao	Perfect , active, indicative; begotten with permanent results.
Prayers	deesis	formal prayers of the heart.
Supplications	ikaterias	petition by a person seeking mercy, often waving an olive branch.
Strong crying and tears		three levels of prayer were explained by the early Rabbis entreaty - crying - tears. All three are covered here.
Heard	eisakouo	aoist, passive, participle; received hearing.
Feared	eulabeia	godly fear, watchful reverence.
Learned	manthano	aoist, active, indicative; to learn as a disciple under discipline, through experiences.
Suffered	pascho	aoist, active, indicative; suffered, underwent affliction, pain.
Obedience	upakoe	the military virtue of obedience under great pressures.
Perfect	teleioo	aoist, passive, participle; he received completion, perfection, in the sense that He under went all the suffering and never lost His integrity, rather became stronger.
Obey	upakouo	present, active, participle; to those who keep on obeying.
Called	prosagoreuo	aoist, passive, participle; having been saluted, greeted, recognised formally as.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

In this section we see the Lord Jesus Christ; Our Unique High Priest. (Vs. 5-10) As Aaron was called to the high office so the Lord was called uniquely to the office, to the glory of God, and the fulfilment of the divine plan.

Verse 5 Christ the Son (His unique name, 1:4-5) was appointed in a unique way, through his virgin birth he was born a man, yet without sin. He was born as Adam was created, without an Old Sin Nature, and at the time of his baptism by John he received his calling clear for all to hear, that he was the unique Son of God, the Saviour, priest and king. (Compare **Psalm 2:7, Acts 2:36, 13:33-34, Hebrews 1: 5**). The Lord is the unique person of the universe, for He is the Creator God, and through his virgin birth and obedience to the divine call, He has become the Saviour of all who will believe in His Holy name. He is Creator-Lord and Saviour-King with permanent results for us all!

Verse 6. Melchizedek is a strange figure, he enters the pages of the Old Testament, interacts with Abraham once, and then leaves. He is king and priest of Salem, modern Jerusalem, and so he is the type of the Lord as the priest-king. The lines of the Israelite high priesthood and the kingly line were separate, one from the tribe of Judah, the other from Levi.

Melchizedek gives us the picture of another priesthood to Aaron's line, one connected with kingship. The Lord is not a high priest after Aaron, but a high priest after Melchizedek. The writer now moves to describe the character and work of the Lord to demonstrate that His nature is that of God's final High Priest, the one who is perfect in all He does.

Verse 7 Although God's Son, He learned obedience through suffering. This introduces the doctrine of Kenosis (Refer to BTB). (**Philippians 2:5-11**) In order to pay the penalty for our sins the Lord had to be tested and proved in the fires of greater suffering than any man had ever endured. The test was to see if He would still operate as a high priest, even when he himself was being hurt and finally killed. The Lord sets the standard of service for us all, and what a standard it is – it's the fullness of the character of Christ – **Ephesians 4:13** – that the Holy Spirit will produce in us.

The Lord, of course, passed the testing, for all through his earthly life he kept on praying for us, interceding for us in all things. As creator he continued holding the universe together, and praying for it's creatures, all while He suffered for his creation! His tears in the Garden of Gethsemane, **Matthew 26:36-46, Luke 22:39-42**, were tears shed for us. His prayers with pain and sorrow, were prayers for us. We are blessed because He was prepared to go all the way as our great high priest, and put any personal issues aside, and focus only on his role as our high priest.

His focus was total, through the most awful death to the glory he would win for us all. He did not falter before the cross, for he saw the glory, and he saw what it meant for us. We were on his mind as he hung there. He was in holy fear of falling short in any way of the plan he had been given. He had reverence for the task, such that He focussed all his energies on it's completion, that we might have his perfect provision to lead us into glory. So, let us focus on our path!

Verse 8. Suffering is the school of service and obedience, or the path to despair and disgrace. For our Lord it was the school of obedience, where we can see him succeed and give praise and honour to the Father for the plan. The Lord placed himself in the place of service and persevered there to win our salvation. It was suffering unto death, and he willingly went through it all, for us all. John will later sum this all up when he recalls the Lord's words. **John 15:7-14**.

Verse 9. Through his work on the cross he perfected, or completed the plan for salvation. It remains for us now to follow his example and practise the same obedience he did, and seek the father's will rather than our own. The path to salvation is the path of obedience; we must obey his command to come to him and be saved, and we must obey his commands to ensure blessing on the road of life. Without obedience there is neither salvation nor blessing, and as we reflect, obedience to the Lord makes sense, for we cannot know enough facts to make good decisions. **Isaiah 55:6-11**.

Verse 10. As the High Priest of the Order of Melchisedec, Christ is unique in that He offered Himself as the sacrifice. (See; **Hebrews 9:14- 15; 23-28**). The Lord has been formally recognised as the great high priest by God the Father, and that means for us we are accepted and approved in Him, for the sacrifice of such an high priest is always acceptable and perfect.

The writer will build on this verse in chapters 7-10, but here he makes clear from the start, that we have an high priest who has fully and finally done the job and it is acceptable to the one who matters. Once the first hearers of the words of this letter had understood this, they were in the place he wanted them to be. Once they saw that the Lord had done the job of the high priest perfectly, they would then see that he did not need to do it again, and that no more sacrifices needed to be offered. Once they had seen that, their response should have been to withdraw from the temple precincts and never again offer any sacrifice in the temple at Jerusalem.

The "once for all time" sacrifice of the Lord is enough, and we are not to keep worshipping within any religious system that practises on-going sacrifices, as that spoils the picture of what the Lord did. The only sacrifice we are called to is the daily one of every minute of our life given over to the Lord's service. **Ephesians 5:14-18**. God gives us allotted time and a specific space on this planet, and we dedicate "our space-time" back to Him, for joy now and glory forever.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

He did not seek to glorify himself but rather draw attention to the Plan of God and so open the door of salvation for all. Words written to the Jewish churches before Hebrews, in **1 Peter 5:5-7**, are key verses for us all, and in the Lord's example we see their application. The Lord humbled himself under the Plan of the Father for Him, and so was exalted. We are to follow the Lord and do the same in our own lives, humbling ourselves before the Lord and seeking his time and opportunity to be lifted up into any position within the church.

There is no room for politics, or personal agendas amongst God's people, only room for obedience to Him. The Christ centred life is the one we are called to in Him. All too often we think of ourselves, or our group, when the only criteria for success in this life is His glory and His will done in our life. Nothing else wins the rewards of eternity. Let us test ourselves against the principles of this verse. As the Lord became our high priest, and was totally focused on his role

and responsibility to serve, so we must be focused on whatever our role is within the local church, and in daily life. Our sole concern must be to serve the living God, where and as He has called us.

The Lord has given us time, it is not to be wasted. **Proverbs 4:23-27, Ephesians 5:14-18, Colossians 4:5.** We are called to serve in the place/role the Lord has called us, not day dream in matters that are not ours! Let us be active in His service, and reject the temptation to self interest, nor be distracted by the politics of our friends, or the threats of our enemies. The Lord's eternal "well done, good and faithful servant!", is all we need to hear, for it is all that matters!

The Lord has completed his work, it was perfectly done, and we have complete salvation, so let us live in that completed work. What does that mean to us? Do we live as saved and delivered people, or do we fall back into patterns of sin that are wasteful of our time, and spoil our witness? Sin of any sort is both time wasting and opportunity destroying. Let us see that the Lord's work for us is complete and ours for him has just begun; so let us rise up daily to serve our perfect Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit alone!

Do we see suffering as an opportunity for expand service and learn more of the Lord, or do we see it as a strange thing that is clearly not God's will for us? Too many believers today are caught up in a fatally false gospel, called the "prosperity gospel", which teaches that sickness and suffering is not what believers should be experiencing, rather, only blessing and more blessing. Bluntly put brethren, this is FALSE, dangerous nonsense, and if it is followed it will make shipwreck of your life and witness. It directly attacks all that the Lord said, from the Sermon on the Mount onwards! **Matthew 5:3-5, 10, John 16:33.** Remember Paul's earlier warning to the book of Hebrews. **1 Corinthians 9:22-27.**

In this section we see that the Lord learned obedience through suffering, and we are called to follow our Lord, and that means we will suffer during our lives here, if we are truly serving Him and making a difference in the Angelic Conflict. We do not seek it out, it will come to us, and when it does we must take it, "as unto the Lord", depending on His power to deal with it in a manner that we learn more of him through it. Suffering is to be taken triumphantly, as we look for the Lord's will in the midst of it, and seek His glory through it – we enter into the "fellowship of His suffering". **Philippians 3:10, Colossians 1:24-26, James 5:10, 1 Peter 2:19-21, 4:13.**

B. PASTORAL

As pastors do we encourage politics in the church by the way we do things? What is the message people get from the way things are done in our church? Do they get the message that the Lord has done the work of salvation, and that we are daily to apply what he has done to life, or do they get another message from our words and deeds?

Christianity says "the work for your salvation is DONE, now do the work the Lord has called you to, in a spirit of praise!". Religion says, "do works in your own strength, or you will never be saved". What is the message people get in our church? For many churches a short questionnaire is needed to really explore what the people are hearing, rather than resting on the assumption that your messages are "ok". Prepare a short anonymous questionnaire on basic topics of faith and works and see what the responses are like, and then ask how well you are communicating.

We live in a very self centred world, where success and failure in our increasingly technological world are widely separated, and where success financially means a person can live like a king, while others are in poverty.

Such a world encourages self centredness and ambition, and many find these human (satanic?) "values" hard to shake off when they enter the church. For some American capitalism has become "Christian", when it is not! For others "socialism" is seen as the "Christian" viewpoint, when it is not either!

The Lord does not want us getting side tracked from the mission, which is an eternal one, not a temporal one. We are not here to make the world a safer place for the unsaved to go to hell in! We are here to give the gospel and witness to the saviourhood and eternal lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pluck those brands out of the fire! **Jude 20-23.**

Our examples are the apostles in Acts, and if we find ourselves doing things they did not, we must seriously ask whether we have left the apostolic faith! Let us ensure in our preaching that we are not, American, British, African, Australasian, but Christian, standing on the faith once delivered to the apostles. **Jude 3.**

DOCTRINES

KENOSIS OF CHRIST [See page 52 above]

SUFFERING

1. Ultimately, all suffering is a result of the sin of Adam.
2. God is sovereign and allows even undeserved suffering to come upon the world for a reason (Romans 8:28)
 - a) To bring people to a point of helplessness where they call out to Him
 - b) To test and develop faith, so bringing glory to Himself.

3. There will be no suffering for believers in eternity (Revelation 21:4).
4. Unbelievers will suffer forever in the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:12-15).
5. Suffering can be caused by:
 - a) Discipline for your own sins
 - b) The effect of the sins of others on you - gossip, war, crime
 - c) Self-induced suffering as a result of your own actions – e.g. sickness from smoking, poverty from poor stewardship
 - d) The sovereign will of God - health, weather.
6. Premise of Suffering:
 - a) All suffering is designed for blessing in the Christian walk (1 Peter 1:7, 8, 4:14)
 - b) Even discipline is designed to restore fellowship (Hebrews 12:6)
 - c) Suffering follows the principle of grace (Romans 8:28, 1 Thessalonians 5:18).
7. Purpose of Christian Suffering:
 - a) To receive discipline for carnality or backsliding (Psalm 38)
 - b) To glorify God (Job 1:8-12, Luke 15:20, 21)
 - c) To illustrate doctrine (Book of Hosea)
 - d) To learn obedience (Philippians 2:8, Hebrews 5:8)
 - e) To keep down pride (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)
 - f) To develop faith (1 Peter 1:7, 8)
 - g) To witness for Christ (2 Corinthians 13:4)
 - h) To demonstrate the power of God (2 Corinthians 11:24-33, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10)
 - i) To manifest the fruit of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 4:8-11)
 - j) To help others who suffer (2 Corinthians 1:3-5)
 - k) From indirect action - because other believers get out of fellowship (Romans 14, 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13, 26, 1 Samuel 21, 1 Chronicles 21).

GOSPEL OF SALVATION

1. Gospel means "good news" - there are four gospels found in the New Testament.
2. Gospel of the Kingdom.
 - a) Preached by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1, 2), the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 4:23) and his disciples (Matthew 10:7) Thy Kingdom come (Matthew 6:10).
 - b) It consists of the setting up on earth of Christ's 1,000 year Kingdom thus fulfilling the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7-16)
 - c) There will be another preaching of the gospel by the Jewish remnant in the days of the Great Tribulation before the 2nd Advent (Matthew 24:14, Revelation 7). After the 2nd Advent the 1,000 year reign commences (Revelation 20:1-6).
3. Gospel of Grace - the gospel of personal salvation by grace through faith. This gospel appears under many names and is the means of salvation throughout the history of mankind.
 - a) Gospel of God (Romans 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 2:2)
 - b) Gospel of Christ (Mark 1:1, Romans 1:16)
 - c) Gospel of the Grace of God (Acts 20:24)
 - d) Gospel of Peace (Ephesians 6:15)
 - e) Gospel of your salvation (Ephesians 1:13)
 - f) Glorious Gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4)
4. The Everlasting Gospel - (Revelation 14:6) - the good news is everlasting. This gospel will be preached on earth just before Christ's return in glory (Matthew 25:31, 32). This gospel is the means of salvation to countless thousands both Jews and Gentiles (Revelation 7:9-14).
5. Paul's "My Gospel" - (Romans 2:16) This is the same gospel of salvation by grace through faith but includes the mystery doctrines of the church age not previously revealed. The gospel in the Old Testament was revealed by the Tabernacle, Feasts, Levitical Offerings etc.
6. "Another Gospel" which is not another (Galatians 1:6, 7, 2 Corinthians 11:4) This is a perversion of the Gospel of Christ (Galatians 1:8, 9) The curse is proclaimed on any who preach it. There have been many perversions - legalism in Galatia, angel worship in Colossae (Colossians 2:18) among others.

ONE THING

1. One thing is a certainty - DEATH (Ecclesiastes 3:19)
2. One thing lacking - COUNTING THE COST (Mark 10:21)
3. One thing known - CONFIDENCE (John 9:25)
4. One thing is needful - CONDUCT/CONDITION (Luke 10:42)
5. One thing to do - CONSECRATION (Philippians 3:13)
6. One thing not to be ignorant about - TIME (2 Peter 3:8)
7. One thing desired - TO DWELL IN GOD'S HOUSE (Psalm 27:4)

PARAPHRASE

"Just so, the Lord Jesus Christ did not actively seek the glory of the high priestly office, but rather the one who said to him, 'you are my Son, today I have brought you into life', He was the one who gave him the office of high priest. Saying in another place, 'you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek'. During the days of the Lord's life upon the earth, he offered up prayers and petitions, with sincere emotion and desire behind them all. He prayed to the Father, who was able to deliver him out of death. His prayers were heard, for his service and life was characterised by watchful reverence in all he did. Although he as the unique Son of God, yet he learned to be obedient to all the plan through the things he suffered. The result was he perfectly fulfilled the plan of salvation, and became the author of our salvation, and of all who will obey him. He has been formally recognised by the father as a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

THIRD DANGER WARNING - BEWARE OF NOT HEARING 5 : 11 - 14

CHAPTER 5 VERSES 11 - 14

" 11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. 12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

KEY WORDS

Of whom	peri ou	concerning whom, relating to the order of priesthood of Melchizedek.
Hard to be	dusermeneutos	difficult or hard to explain, interpret.
Ye are	ginomai	perfect , active, indicative; you have become(with permanent results for you)
Dull	nothros	dull, stupid, sickly slow in understanding, sluggish in thinking.
Ought	opheilo	present, active, participle; you keep on being obliged, (by reason of your age).
First principles	stoicheia tes arches	the basic elements of the universe, of the beginning.
Useth	metecho	present, active, participle partakes of, or eats as their meal.
Unskilled	Apeiros	unskilled, untried, ignorant of the basics of a trade, lacking work experience.
Babe	Nepios	infant, toddler, child-like.
Strong meat	sterea trophe	solid food.
Full age	teleios	mature, complete, ready for action, fully grown and mature.
Reason of use	exis	habit of life that has produced maturity.
Senses	aistheterion	faculty of judgement, the senses of perception.
Exercised	gumnazo	perfect , passive, participle; trained by hard exercise in the gym, with lasting results.
Discern	diakrisis	distinguishing, deciding, making of judgments.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

This begins a section that goes through to the end of Chapter 6, dealing with the things that stop the believers function as a priest of the Lord, and things that must be done to achieve recovery. It forms a parenthesis, and Chapter 7:1 picks up where 5:10 leaves off. The first danger that all young and old believers face, is failure to grow up in Christ, failure to feed on His Holy Word and apply it in their daily lives. It is the saturation of our minds with divine viewpoint, through hearing and application of the Word into daily life, that alone keeps us safe, and builds spiritual discernment.

Verse 11. The writer notes that there is much still to learn by these people, even though many have been believers for years, but they are apathetic, indifferent to the doctrines of the Scriptures. Their indifference makes them slack in their study of the Word, and non-existent in application, for what they do not know they cannot apply!

The writer makes no apology for his words to them here, for they have been lazy. Some things in the Word are hard to understand, **2 Peter 3:10-18**, and you have to study hard and really apply your mind and soul, but after all, these are the things of God and we are but human beings, so a number of topics will be hard. The problem is not with the hardness of the doctrines, but with the culpable stupidity or slackness of the believers.

The writer blames them for their sluggish thinking. If a person is "stupid", or intellectually not bright, we cannot blame them for not learning, for they lack the mind with which to do it, but as believers we have no excuse, for we have the Holy Spirit as our teacher. All that is required is that we open ourselves often to the teaching of the Word.

Whatever we lack in brain power the Holy Spirit makes up for, and way more besides. Our study and application of the Word of Life is what is required, and that has been lacking with these people, and they are blamed for it. **Matthew 12:35-36** are sobering verses, reminding us that we are to be judged for careless words spoken, and how much more then for idle time that should have been spent studying, applying and preaching the Word of God?

Verse 12. Though saved for years, these believers are ignorant of the most basic doctrines of the Word of God, and therefore the Lord's use of them is limited. They have been believers for years, yet they cannot be used as teachers for they have never learned, even the basic things of the scriptures. There are two possible references to the "time" here.

Firstly, they should be teachers, given the time they have had as believers, but secondly they are in a "time" of history where it is vital that they know the Word and apply it to life, and they cannot, for they don't know enough! In both senses of the word it is "time" they got to know these things; but it is nearly too late for them. The good news is that these people will listen and obey this letter, and all will be saved from the destruction of Jerusalem that is to follow a few years after this letter arrives. This letter was their "last word", and had they not heeded it they would not have been ready to flee.

To remain a spiritual baby is a sign of sinful disobedience; these people do not even have the basic foundational doctrines clearly in their minds. The majority of them are not even drinking their daily milk. Even this level of spiritual feeding would be a bad sign, for they should have graduated to solid food years before! Feeding only on milk (basics) demonstrates ignorance and lack of experience with the Word of God; it means they have become spiritually retarded, rather than spiritually mature! They have no genuinely powerful, and eternal reward winning, spiritual fruit in their lives, for they walk in the strength and weaknesses of their Old Sin Natures. **Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 3:1-13.**

Verse 13. Those who drink only milk as their food are toddlers, or babies, and they need to be cared for, they cannot be given any responsibility. Babies and Toddlers are "unskilled", they lack the practical work experience of a mature tradesman, and that is what the Lord seeks to do His work. We are all saved as babies, but we are called to grow up and serve in maturity. **2 Peter 3:9, 18.** We were not saved to sit around and wait for the Lord to return, but to do His work; to witness, worship and work for His glory in the Holy Spirit's power.

We can only do His work if we know Him, know His policy, walk in Holy Spirit power, and have proved the doctrines of the Word in our daily lives. God does not like spiritual babies who should have grown up! We have a solemn obligation to grow up! If we do not grow, we cannot be used by the Lord, and so we cannot fulfil our part in His plan for our lives!

Verse 14. In contrast to the lazy, stupid, or unthinking believer who stays a baby, the mature believer craves meat, which by application gives ability to discern good and evil, and so work well. The Lord wants us "filled" with discernment; able to teach, encourage, and lead others to safety in troubled times. We have this holy obligation (opheilo) to grow up and be of use for the Lord's service; the lives of others, as well as our eternal reward depends upon it.

To be a priest of the Lord, we must be able to discern good and evil to function, otherwise the priesthood is lowered to human standards (legalism, empty religion) not ordained by God. We must know God's standards, and have seen them applied into life, so that we rest secure in our full knowledge of His truth. Anything short of this means we cannot be used in our role. As this is the sole reason the Lord has left us here on earth after our salvation we are truly time and space wasting if we do not grow! Let us not be "oxygen thieves", but utilize all divine operating assets for His glory!

Note the verb "gumnazo" in the perfect tense in this verse. If we seriously "work out" in God's daily gymnasium of faith-rest application of God's Word we are going to be as discerning as we need to be. Anything less than 100% athletic focus is not good enough in the angelic conflict. We are either at the level of a top athlete with serious focus on the Lord's Word, or we are a casualty!

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

How much time each day do we spend in the Word of God? Do we spend as much time in the Word as we spend eating physical food? If not it is a reasonable assumption that our lives will be out of balance. If our spirit is not fed at least as

often and as long as our body, we are declaring our values before all the angels who watch us. Are we “dull of hearing”, and have we become useless and a danger to ourselves by being so ignorant of what we have had time to learn?

Are we not applying what we know and being hungry for what we need to know to serve the Lord? Are we sharp spiritually, discerning the truth clearly and explaining it well to all who need to hear it, or have we grown cold and slow in our spiritual thinking? Each of these questions could be expressed as one; “Have we ceased to be useful to the Lord”?

It is a dangerous thing for a person, who is left on earth to do a task, not to do it. If the only reason we are here is to fulfil the plan, what are we asking the Lord to do with us by our inaction? Do we want to be taken to heaven early? All of us have seen believers taken home early because they were no earthly use due to their slackness. Let us not be amongst them. Let us come into heaven rejoicing at what the Lord was able to do with us in the Holy Spirit’s power. Let us feed upon and apply into life the whole counsel of God’s Holy Word.

B. PASTORAL

As pastors of God’s flock let us remember the Lord has left each member of His Church upon the earth for a limited time only. None know their allotted span, and so it is our responsibility to “stir them up” every time we meet as a church to study and apply the living Word of God. We are here to serve the Lord, and the challenge for us all is to be “thoroughly furnished”, **2 Timothy 3:17**, for every good work the Lord has called us to perform.

We must teach the Lord’s flock so that they can, “discern the times”, and speak knowledgeably into the moments of time we walk through, and so meeting the needs of others and themselves.

Without Biblical wisdom people have nothing to offer their neighbours except opinions. In troubles people need certainty not wishful thinking; they need the Bible’s truth not men’s thoughts. How will they know these things unless the pastors do the teaching? Too many seek places where all might share their thoughts, but if they have empty heads their opinions will be empty of spiritual power and significance, and as such they will be dangerous.

God calls us to teach as his holy heralds, not share our human thoughts! God doesn’t need more human PhDs in an obscure aspect of theology, He needs obedient servants who are saturated in God’s Word and who walk in Holy Spirit power to apply what they know where the Lord has called them to serve.

Maybe we need a few teaching services on the topic, “God does not like babies!” Provocative but true, for we are all meant to grow up and be adult servants of the Lord. Milk drinking must end and be replaced by full meals of the full gospel of the living Word. Let us audit our services to ensure that we are not just producing milk type food. The Sunday night “Gospel Service” must have a lot more meat in it than the simple proclamation of the gospel, or else the believers will not grow.

Do we have a Bible School in the church? Every church should be a Bible school! Can the believers we are responsible for grow and serve within the church, or must they go else-where? Are we teaching enough truth to grow strong?

It does not have to be a big church to have a Bible school. The author has run a full Bible College, using the EBCWA Diploma Course within a church of less than 200 adults, and had between 20-80 students, and recently with a church of only 50 adults, we had 12-20 at Bible studies 4x a week, studying to serve the Lord more. Churches that lift up the Lord and the Word grow, witness, bless their community, minister, and plant many others! There is a truth in here, is there not! Let us feed the flock: as the Lord commanded Peter, so let us do! **John 21:15 -17**.

DOCTRINE

MATURITY

CATEGORIES OF BELIEVERS

1. Standpoint of Spirituality:

- a) Spiritual believer - the Holy Spirit controls the inside of the believer (Romans 8:6b).
- b) Carnal believer - the sinful nature controls the inside of the believer (Romans 8:6a).

2. Standpoint of Growth:

- a) Baby - one who has just received Christ as Saviour.
- b) Adolescent - one who has learned some doctrine but is not yet in the application state.
- c) Mature - one who knows and applies doctrine and spends a maximum amount of time in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

3. Relationship of Maturity and Spirituality:

a) Spirituality is an absolute. The Holy Spirit either controls or He does not. One cannot be a little bit carnal. If he is carnal he is NOT spiritual.

b) Maturity is speeded up by spirituality, but a baby believer can be either carnal or spiritual, and a mature believer can be carnal or spiritual.

MATURITY: CROSS TO THE CROWN

1. Salvation is only the beginning of the plan for man. After salvation the believer's objective is to advance in stages of spiritual growth on the path from the Cross to the Crown.

2. At each stage the believer faces increasing intense tests that can only be passed by faith. Paul in Romans 1:17 says believers progress from faith to faith. The five Hebrew words for faith illustrate the five stages of growth described in the New Testament.

a) The Babe - 1 Peter 2:2 - AMEN - the leaning faith of Genesis 15:6

All believers enter the family of God as infants when they exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. After the tremendous stress of birth, of coming from darkness into the light the infant's impulse is to nurse. The objective is nourishment but the baby also receives great comfort in feeding. God's objective for the spiritual infant is for growth, but He commences this with comfort. Not much is expected of a baby in his first few years, he cannot feed or change himself. Spiritual infants are just as helpless and need a great deal of nurturing, encouragement and patient encouragement and patient instruction.

b) The Adolescent - 1 John 2:13-14 - BATAH - the wrestling faith of Psalm 37:3

Adolescents young, strong and eager believers. This is the stage where people have grown to the point at which they understand some of the principles of truth and are beginning to apply them to their lives. But like most adolescents, they have the growing pains of arrogance and rebellion against authority; they are sometimes too eager to act on their own, and this often gets them into trouble. They have knowledge which they mistake for wisdom, but they lack the experience. Their tendency is to want to apply the truth to other people's lives. Adolescents may be troublesome, but at least they are not apathetic. They must be patiently trained and encouraged to channel their energies. No one makes it to maturity without passing through adolescence.

c) The Mature - Hebrews 5:14, 6:1 - CHASAH - the confident faith that takes refuge in the Lord - Psalm 57:1

The mature believer is able to take meat, the advance doctrine of the Word. A believer who has arrived at spiritual maturity knows enough about the Bible to take responsibility for his own life. He knows how to apply the Word of God to himself so rather than airing all his problems he knows how to solve them. He is not ready to take on every one else's problems but he can take control of his own life. He understands that God has a plan for his life and sets about fulfilling that plan. He gives himself to training and discipline, exercising himself and building spiritual muscle.

d) The Hero of Faith - Isaiah 53:12, Hebrews 11 - YACHAL - the healing faith of Job 13:15

Heroes of faith are men and women who have gone beyond maturity and have learned to fight the good fight. They have advanced beyond simply taking responsibility for their own lives to becoming responsible for the lives of other people. They are always willing to pick up fallen comrades, to treat their wounds, to encourage them and supply their needs. Heroes of the faith still make mistakes, they still fail but they always stand back up and go back into battle.

e) The Friend of God - James 2:23-25 - QAWAH - the enduring faith of Isaiah 40:31

The highest of all possible achievements in life is to become a friend of God. Every believer has the potential and the assets necessary to reach this point, but very few Christians do. It takes persistency and tenacity. The only people who make it this far are those who absolutely refuse to quit.

MATURITY - SIGNS OF MATURITY (Romans 15:1-15)

1. Helping others (v 1-3) The mature believer should bear the infirmities of the weak (v 1; cf. Galatians 6:2). Paul includes himself as a believer of mature strength.

a) A mature believer is characterised by:

- i) Knowing doctrine.
- ii) Knowing promises.
- iii) Spending a maximum amount of time by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

b) A weak or immature believer may be:

- i) A new believer.
 - ii) An ignorant believer who does not know the Word.
- c) A mature believer bears the infirmities of the weak believer by:
- i) Giving information about the Word (doctrine, promises, procedures). This may be in private conversation.
 - ii) Giving advice based on the Word.
 - iii) Exercising grace; listening to and helping others with problems.
- d) The mature believer is not to "please himself" (v 1,2):
- i) He is not to feed his ego or brag about helping others. It should never be done for self-glory or self-stimulation, but for God's glory.
 - ii) Christ as the supreme example (v 3):
He did not please Himself; but as a man He received more pressure than we will ever have. The Old Testament says, "the reproaches of Israel ('them') that reproached the Father ('Thee') fell on the Son ('Me') on the cross." Paul quotes a Messianic Psalm (Psalm 69:9). Christ was under maximum pressure when He bore our sins on the cross.

2. Knowledge of the Word of God (v 4)

- a) The Old Testament ("things written aforetime") was the only scripture existing at the time Romans was written. The canon is now completed.
- b) the purpose of the Word:
 - i) Learning - doctrine God wants us to know.
 - ii) Patience - faith in the long distance race. Believing moment by moment.
 - iii) Comfort - in trials and difficulties of life.
 - iv) Hope - for the future. Believers know where they are going.

3. Attitudes (v 5-6)

Believers are to see others from the divine viewpoint and be "like-minded one toward another". Their one purpose in life, after salvation, is "with one mind and one mouth, glorify God" (v 6). This is only possible from the divine viewpoint.

- i) We are all saved by grace. Christ died for us when we were His enemies (Romans 5:8).
- ii) We all have the same spiritual privileges and responsibilities (except spiritual gifts).
- iii) Every believer has a sinful nature but have different ways of expressing it.
- iv) We all get spirituality the same way (filling of the Holy Spirit) and all grow the same way, by the Word.
- v) God loves each believer with the same amount of love, whether we are in or out of temporal fellowship.

4. Fellowship as the basis of grace (v 7)

- a) Believers are to receive one another as Christ received them.
- b) He received them in GRACE to the glory of God.

5. Ability to distinguish between Israel and the Church (v 8-12)

- a) Christ was a minister under the Law (v 8).
 - i) He was born, ministered, died, arose and ascended under the dispensation of the Law.
 - ii) Therefore all He said (except Matthew 16 and John 14-17) amplified the Mosaic Law, confirmed the four unconditional covenants to Israel and the future of Israel with Him as their King. Some principles He gave are re-stated in the Epistles as the Christian way of life.
- b) Before the Law was given (v 9) the Abrahamic and Palestinian covenants promised blessing to the Jews, that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy.
- c) Paul quotes (Psalm 18:49; Deuteronomy 32:43; Psalm 117; Isaiah 11:1-10). (Jesus Christ as the root of David and Jesse, is to reign over the Gentiles too.)

6. Faith that appropriates (v 13)

- a) The God of hope is to fill the believer with joy and peace in the sphere of believing. Faith is the means.
- b) Faith appropriates salvation, restoration to fellowship, filling of the Holy Spirit, doctrine, promises.

7. Knowing the operation of grace (v 14,15)

- a) A mature believer realises all he has is because of God's grace and he operates his life on the basis of grace.

- b) Grace is manifested in the believer in:
- i) Salvation (Ephesians 2:8,9)
 - ii) Prayer (Hebrews 4:16)
 - iii) Suffering (2 Corinthians 12:9)
 - iv) Releasing power (2 Timothy 2:1)
 - v) Growth and stability (2 Peter 3:18)
 - vi) Restoration and fellowship (Hebrews 12:15; 1 John 1:9)
 - vii) Producing works (1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 6:1; 9:9)
 - viii) Christian way of life (2 Corinthians 1:12; Hebrews 12:28).

SERVICE [See page 9 above]

PARAPHRASE

“Concerning whom we have many things to communicate to you all, some things that are difficult to understand and will require concentration, and we are concerned because you have proved yourselves slow in your thinking, and slack in your study of the Word. For at a crucial time in history, and your own lives, when you should be teaching others, you require others to teach you! You require teaching even of the basic elements of foundational doctrines! You have become in need of milk, like babies, rather than the full meals of adults. For every one that drinks milk as their food is unskilled, like a child, they lack work experience and cannot be used on a work site, for they are babies. But full meals are appropriate to those who have reached the age of maturity, and because they have used their minds and bodies have exercised them, and so are able to make the distinctions and be discerning in the matters of good and evil.”

ADDITIONAL DOCTRINE

THE IMPECCABILITY OF CHRIST

1. The Bible declares that Christ was tempted yet did not sin. Matthew 4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 4:15.
2. The key to understanding Christ's impeccability is found in the uniqueness of the hypostatic union.
 - A. Two natures united without mixture or transfer of attributes, or loss of identity being both personal and eternal. John 1:1-14; Romans 1:2-5, 9:5, Philippians 2:5-11, 1 Timothy 3:16
 - B. Christ is eternal God and perfect man, not humanity indwelt by God, not man having "harmony and sympathy" with God.
 - C. The hypostatic union is necessary:
 - i. For him to be Saviour - Philippians 2:7-8, Hebrews 2:14-15
 - ii. For him to be Mediator - Job 9:32-33, 1 Timothy 2:5-6
 - iii. For him to be High-Priest - Hebrews 7:4-5, 10:5-14
 - iv. For him to be King - 2 Samuel 7:8-16, Psalm 89:20-37
3. Being man, Christ was tempted and temptable (Matthew 4, Hebrews 4:15) being God, He could not sin or be tempted with evil. 1 John 1:5, James 1:13
4. Christ's humanity was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 2:16
5. Christ had no Old Sin Nature due to his virgin birth. Luke 1:35, John 8:46, 14:30, 1 John 3:5
6. Christ is a true mediator in that He is holy and untemptable in deity - having been tempted in humanity – yet never would or could sin.

Refer BTB for further studies on the Lord Jesus Christ - His perfect character and work.

NOTES

CHAPTER 6

THE FOURTH DANGER - THE DANGER OF DEPARTING - VERSES 1 - 20

There are four things to be seen in this chapter, which is like a, “summary so far”, of the book, and an expansion of principles from the letter of James (Faith that Works out in life), and John 15 (Be Fruitful or be Judged). The four sections of this warning chapter are:

- 1) The purpose of the book - “Let us advance in Biblical knowledge!”
- 2) The problem of these Hebrews - “Do not become slack and fall away from the truth”
- 3) The desire of the author - “We are persuaded that you can be fruitful”
- 4) The faithfulness of God. - “God’s promises towards us stand secure”

HEBREWS 6:1-3

“ 1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of the laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgement. 3 And this we will do, if God permit.”

KEY WORDS

Leaving	aphiemi	aorist, active, participle; having left behind(the starting place of the path of life).
Principles	arches	the beginning of the.
Doctrine	logos	words(and the principles behind them)
Go on	phero	present, passive, subjunctive; let us receive the Lord’s power(divine passive voice) and go on, walking the path in His power.
Perfection	teleiotes	Maturity – completion – ready for more service
Laying again	kataballo	present, middle, participle; not “casting down” (laying) the foundation
Foundation	themaion	the foundation of a building, basis of an argument/case. The writer is saying, having proved the case, don’t repeat the basic argument again, it’s proved!
Repentance	metanoia	change of mind.
Baptisms	baptisma	Hebrew - mikveh. Here it is plural = baptisms.
Laying on	epithesis	Jewish practise of laying on of hands, refer below.
Resurrection	anastasis	resurrection
Judgement	krima	formal judgement.
Permit	epitrepo	present, active, subjunctive; if indeed after all, the Lord allows us, in spite of the opposition.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The writer begins this section by reminding us of the purpose of the Book. We are meant to graduate from basic doctrines of Christology, to more advanced doctrines. The purpose of the advance in knowledge of God through the Word and prayer fellowship, is that we might serve Him more efficiently and effectively while we live upon this earth.

Knowledge is never a thing in itself, it is purposive, and it’s purpose for believers is that we might serve more. A soldier is of no use to their commanding officer unless they advance in their training, for it is only the fully trained soldier that can be used in the more difficult battles; the basic trainees are not much use for anything except camp cleaning duties.

The great tragedy of the church is that so few advance to the point where they can be of use in full battle. The writer sees the nature of the times in which he lives, and urges his hearers to advance in their knowledge and application of doctrines or else they will be caught in a place of danger/opportunities without the inner resources to cope. Remember the difference between defeat and victory is often ruthless training so that the battle is won easily due to the preparation of the winning forces. It is rarely numbers, but it is often supply, training and morale that wins crucial and hard battles.

Verse 1. The word for "leaving" (aphiemi), may be best translated here, “having left behind”. It can be thought of in terms of any of the analogies the writer has used to date in the letter. Soldiers “leave behind” their camp in order to go into the battle. Builders “leave behind” (they bury, obscure, by building upon) the foundation of the building. Foundations are meant to be laid, then built upon, or advanced beyond; that is the nature of a foundation. It is meant to disappear under later work. It’s very existence draws meaning and significance from what is built upon it. It is not built to be seen, but it must be soundly laid or all that is built upon it will collapse when the load comes on.

A foundation does not exist for itself, but only for what is built upon it. Once the structure is built the foundation is not seen, even though the entire structure rests upon it. Just so with the army, a camp is the base from which they operate, but there is no victory (the purpose for having an army!) unless they keep leaving the safe camp and going to battle with

the enemy. The foundations of Christianity are the doctrines of Christology and Soteriology. A correct view of the nature and person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ is essential to salvation and sanctification. You are no use unless you know the real Jesus and are 100% committed to His Word of Truth, and determined to walk His path for your life.

A false view of the Lord means the person does not have, has not met, the real Saviour, and so remains lost. Such doctrines are clearly foundational, for salvation, for worship of the Lord, and for service, but unless more advanced doctrines are learned the believer is restricted to singing the Lord's praises, for they do not know enough to advance anywhere beyond the church/camp.

Having laid the foundation, an intelligent builder does not pause and rest, for now the real work begins to build the structure of the building upon it. The writer urges the hearers to advance beyond the basics, and spells out for us what he considers to be the basics. We are to all, "press on" (phero), which means to bear onward, be driven forward by diligent and energetic work in the power of the Holy Spirit. (**Hebrews 4:11, 6:11**) The goal is "perfection"(teleiotes), or spiritual maturity, completion of knowledge/training, so that we attain "fully trained" status as the Lord's soldiers, or builders, and are able to do the work of ministry!

Both words used here can have military and building usage, and both analogies are useful. A soldier wins praise for energetic pressing forward in the battle, as a builder is praised for energetic timely completion of a safe and sound building. Both trades are purposive, and the writer of Hebrews reminds us, so is our faith! We are here for a purpose and that is to be followed through completely. There are no deck chair Christians; only fakes and pretenders!

The writer mentions three pairs of basic doctrines of Christology, which form the foundation he spoke of in chapter five, and has referred to again here. These six principles are meant to form the foundation for all training for young believers, for upon them all advanced doctrines rest. They are meant to be built upon. They are:

1. Repentance from dead works.
2. Expression of faith towards God.
3. Baptisms (Washings).
4. Laying on of hands.
5. Resurrection from the dead.
6. Eternal judgement.

Doctrines 1 + 2. Repentance from dead works (human works of righteousness - **Isaiah 64:6, Acts 14:15, Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Timothy 1:9, Titus 3:5**). As the new believer turns from sin they turn, by Faith, toward God (the only means of salvation). **Acts 4:11,12, 16:31, 26:17-20**. There is no other by means of whom we have salvation, and there is no other way to obtain salvation, than to turn by faith from your sins to Christ the only Saviour. This is the first basic concept (doctrine) that a person must understand and apply to even enter the family of God.

Verse 2. Doctrines 3 + 4. Doctrine of Baptisms. (The Bible teaches us that there are seven baptisms(refer the BTB study and note that the word baptism is plural here). The second concept of "laying on of hands" speaks within a Jewish context, of both identification and commission for service. It was an authoritative sign that responsibility and authority had been passed on to the one commissioned by such an act. **Leviticus 1:4, Matthew 21:23, Acts 6:6, 8:18, 28:8, 1 Timothy 4:14**.

Once again, in these doctrines we are reminded that these things all point to the need for application of them into a life of service. We are baptised for service, we are identified with Christ in order that we might serve Him; both of these are not "stand alone" rituals in and of themselves, for they point to authoritative service as their objective. We are commissioned to represent the Lord upon the earth, as He represented the Father. We are entered into union with Him in baptism and commissioned to authoritative service as his ambassadors. **2 Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 6:20**.

Doctrines 5 + 6. The next two doctrines covered are, Resurrection from death for the believer, but also Eternal judgment for the lost (The "Great White Throne" - **Revelation 20:11-15**). The resurrection is the key "hope" doctrine of the Christian faith, and it separates our faith from all others. We serve a risen Saviour and He is going to provide a body like his own for us. We have an eternal destiny, and that destiny is as sons and daughters of God with a body like our Lords. This was such a different thing to the expectation of the pagans amongst whom the early believers lived that it was earth shaking for them. The belief of all pagans then and now is that of a shared after-life with all people, but it is false hope built on wishful thinking and satanic deception. There are no second chances at the choices of this life!

Today it is still the same, the doctrine that sets Christianity apart is the Physical Bodily Resurrection, and it is one that every young believer must understand to have a secure mind in the face of death. Just as the Resurrection is the hope of the believer, so the last judgement is the certain reality for the unbeliever, even though they do not want to hear it. Both must be understood by the believer and be acted upon. How will these doctrines work out in life? In our evangelism both will, with the other four covered by the writer here, form the basis for our message to the lost.

Verse 3. These basic doctrines should be taught and be well established in the lives of all young believers, then they should move on and build upon this foundation towards maturity. We will keep on doing this growth, the writer says, and keep moving forward to maturity. The last phrase, "if God permits", reminds us that we live and move under God's care and protection, and we will live to see growth only if He wills it, and we walk with Him!

Our life is very insecure, humanly speaking; it hangs by a thread, and death waits every moment. Yet we can have the confidence of children with their all powerful father, for as long as we walk with the Lord nothing can touch us, and when death comes it comes in HIS time, and we join him. The only danger we are ever in, is the danger associated with being out of the Lord's will for our life. If we walk with the Lord, his promise is that we will be kept safe until the moment we join him. **Jude 24, 25**. Until then we are to "take no thought for our life". **Matthew 6:25-27**.

The other way of seeing the phrase, "If God permits", reminds us that the clock is ticking towards the First Great Jewish Rebellion and the Roman destruction of the nation Israel, just as Daniel had foreseen. **Daniel 9:24-27**. The approaching national disaster of the years 67- 70 AD is only a few years away as these words are written. The church in Judea do not have time to waste, it takes time to get to maturity, and so be safe; there is no time to waste for these people, or for us!

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Stop constantly laying the same foundation over and over without building upward. Many Christians want only to hear the same basic Gospel truths over and over, but refuse to move on to advanced doctrines! We are here for a purpose, and that does not involve re-laying the foundations of our faith constantly with topical three point sermons! God calls us to be advancing to Christian maturity as fast as we can so that we can be of maximum use to our Lord. We are here to serve, and our not growing hinders the Lord's available roles for us. The Lord cannot use baby believers in great works. We must grow and mature to be of service. Let us advance together and serve Him in the tough places.

How often do we expose ourselves to advanced doctrine from the living Word of God? All too often believers are comfortable hearing the same things again and again, and the writer here reminds us that such an attitude is fatal to service. Unless we advance there is no opportunity for advanced service. To relay foundations is to waste time, and that is one commodity we do not have any more of! We are here for a very limited time and every moment is to be used to learn more of the Lord, so that we can serve the Lord. We do not know when the national disasters that will change our nation will strike, all we can do is position ourselves in advance to be of use when they occur.

B. PASTORAL

To prepare the Lord's people under our care for natural and other disasters is a major role of the pastor. We do this by faithfully teaching all the truths of the Word so that all can know them, and by faith can rest secure in full knowledge of God's character and plan. Anything short of this level of confidence is not good enough to handle the testing times that life will bring to us. As we are in "last days" we have a greater urgency to get the truth out.

How well do the flock we lead understand the basics, as the writer has expressed them? Sadly many believers are not even sure of these six doctrines. Do the believers understand the nature of the resurrection, the certainty that their unsaved family and friends will be judged?

If these things are not understood they will not be strong when facing death, nor urgent when giving the gospel to their lost friends and family. This is our responsibility, we must make the truth known. What the flock does with the truth is their responsibility, ensuring they know these things is ours! Ezekiel Chapter 3!

DOCTRINES

GOSPEL OF SALVATION [See page 105 above]

SALVATION [See page 59 above]

BAPTISM

1. Usage of word "baptism" prior to the Koine (common) Greek (pre. 350 BC).
 - a) The English word "baptism" is a transliteration of the Greek verb BAPTIZO meaning to identify. This word was used by Greek poets, dramatists and historians to portray identification of one object with a second so that the nature or characteristic of the first object is changed.
 - b) For example Xenphon (fourth century BC) tells of Spartan soldiers dipping their spears into pigs' blood before going into battle. By identifying the spears with blood, the nature of the spears was supposed to have been changed from a hunting to a warrior spear.
 - c) Euripedes (fifth century BC) used the word to describe a sinking ship. As it sinks, the character or nature of the ship is changed. It is so identified or "baptised" with the water that it no longer floats - it becomes a wreck.

2. Meanings of the Koine Greek:

- a) Verb - BAPTO - to dip (John 13:26, Luke 16:24), to dye (Revelation 19:13).
- b) Verb - BAPTIZO - to dip, to immerse, to cleanse by washing.
- c) Noun - BAPTISMOS - washing of dishes (Mark 7:4), doctrine of baptisms (Hebrews 6:2).
- d) Noun - BAPTISMA - ritual baptism (Matthew 3:7, 21:25), spiritual baptism (Romans 6:4), figure of martyrdom (Mark 10:38, Luke 12:50).
- e) Noun - BAPTISTES - one who baptises like John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1, 11:11, Mark 6:25).

3. Real baptisms: an actual identification - a person identified with something real. These are dry baptisms, and do not involve water. There are four real baptisms:

- a) Baptism of Moses - a double identification of the children of Israel at Red Sea (1 Corinthians 10:2).
 - i) With Moses - the people were identified with Moses in his faith, leadership and deliverance. They had victory "in Moses".
 - ii) With cloud - the people were identified with God (the cloud) as He delivered them through the dry seabed and destroyed their enemies behind them. They had victory "in God".
- b) Baptism of Fire - unbelievers are identified with judgment (Matthew 3:11, 13:24-30, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).
- c) Baptism of the Cup - identifies the Church Age believer with the victory of Christ after the cross - Christ identified himself with our sins (Matthew 26:39, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- d) Baptism of the Holy Spirit - enters Church Age believers into the Body of Christ, and therefore identifies them with everything that Christ is (1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 6, Ephesians 1:3)

4. Ritual Baptisms: involve literal water, which represents something else:

- a) Baptism of Jesus - unique (Matthew 3:13-17). Water represented Father's Plan. Christ identified himself with the Father's will in going to the cross.
- b) Baptism of John (Matthew 3:1-11, John 1:25-33, Acts 18:25). Water represented the kingdom. Identification of John's converts with Jesus and His Kingdom.
- c) Believer's (Christian) baptism (Acts 2:38,41, 8:36-38, 9:18, 10:47-48, 16:33).
 - i) Water represents the work of Christ.
 - ii) Identification of Church Age believer, with Christ in his death (going into the water), burial (under the water) and resurrection to "newness of life" (coming up out of the water).
 - iii) Water baptism is a testimony to personal faith in Christ.
- d) Two ordinances for the Church:
 - i) Water baptism - once; represents salvation.
 - ii) Communion - repeated; represents fellowship.

CONSECRATION

1. Consecration means full surrender of self to God (Romans 6:13).
2. This is the attitude of "denying self" and "not my will, but yours be done" (Matthew 16:24, 26:39, Galatians 2:20).
3. This is the only acceptable gift to God (Romans 12:1,2).
4. The consecration of the Temple is a picture of the believer's life: the Outer Court (the body), the Holy Place (the soul) and the Holy of Holies (spirit).
5. You are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and therefore must be set apart as a holy vessel (Romans 12:1-2 cf. 1 Kings 8:1-11).

1. The resurrection of Christ is central to the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
 - a) Had there been no resurrection then we would all still be in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17).
 - b) Resurrection indicates completion of justification (Romans 4:25, 2 Corinthians 5:2 1).
 - c) Resurrection is a guarantee of ultimate sanctification (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).
 - d) The resurrection is the Father's seal on Christ's completed work, and the public declaration of its acceptance.
 - e) Without the resurrection it is impossible for Christ to be glorified. The humanity of Christ is glorified higher than the angels. (John 7:39, John 16:14)

2. Historical proof of the resurrection:
 - a) The empty tomb. (Matthew 28)
 - b) Many of witnesses died rather than change their testimony.
 - c) Subsequent changes and confidence of the disciples after the resurrection.
 - d) The day of Pentecost. The reality of the resurrection was so well known that when Peter preached the first two sermons in Jerusalem over 8000 people were saved. (Acts 2:41, Acts 4:3-4)
 - e) The observance of the first day of the week as the worship day. (Acts 20:7, 1Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10)
 - f) The historic existence of the church. The church worships a literal risen Saviour, and not merely the memory of a dead martyr. (Romans 5:12,14,17, 6:3-9, 8:2, 1 Corinthians 15:26,54-55, Hebrews 2:14)

3. Baptism is a sign of the new resurrection life (Romans 6:3-11, Colossians 2:12).

4. The Lord's Supper is a reminder of the expected return of the risen Lord (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

5. Order of the resurrections:
 - a) The first for believers only including Jesus Christ which is divided into four parts:
 - i) The resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:23, Romans 1:4, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 1 Peter 1:3)
 - ii) The Rapture of the church (1 Corinthians 15:51-57, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)
 - iii) The Old Testament saints and tribulation martyrs at the end of the Tribulation (Daniel 12:13, Isaiah 26-19-20, Revelation 20:4)
 - iv) The Millennial saints and those who survive the Tribulation to enter the Millennium in their physical bodies.
 - b) The second resurrection occurs at the end of the Millennium and is for unbelievers only. They are judged and cast into the lake of fire forever. (1 John 5:28, 29, Revelation 20:12-15, 2 Peter 3:7, Matthew 25:41)
 - c) Jesus, who must be the first eternally resurrected human, was not raised until three days after the crucifixion.
 - d) People in the Old Testament who were "raised from the dead" were merely resuscitated, and later died.
 - e) Matthew 27:52-53 is a transfer scene not a resurrection scene. The transfer is one of saints from paradise to the third heaven (Ephesians 4:8). Some were given resuscitated bodies to witness to the Jews.

6. The sequence of events at the Lord's resurrection is as follows:
 - a) Mary Magdalene, Salome and Mary the mother of James and Joses head towards the tomb followed by other women carrying embalming spices.
 - b) The three find the stone rolled away. Mary Magdalene goes back to tell the disciples (Luke 23:55-24:9, John 20:1-2).
 - c) Mary the mother of James and Joses draws near to the tomb and sees the angel (Matthew 28:2).
 - d) She goes back to the women carrying the spices.

- e) Peter and John who have been advised by Mary Magdalene arrive, look inside the empty tomb and go away (John 20:3-10).
- f) Mary Magdalene returns weeping, sees two angels and then Jesus (John 20:11-18).
- g) As instructed by the Lord she goes to tell the disciples.
- h) Mary the mother of James and Joses meets the women with the spices and returning with them they see the two angels (Luke 24:4-5, Mark 16:5).
- i) They also receive advice from the angels and, going to seek the disciples, are met by Jesus (Matthew 28:8-10).

7. Recorded appearances after his resurrection:

- a) Mary Magdalene (John 20:14-18)
- b) Women returning from the tomb (Matthew 28:8-10)
- c) Emmaus couple (Luke 24:13-31)
- d) Peter (Luke 24:34)
- e) Ten disciples (Luke 24:36-43)
- f) Disciples including Thomas (John 20:24-29)
- g) Lake Tiberias appearance (John 21:1-23)
- h) To the 500 (1 Corinthians 15:6)
- i) James (1 Corinthians 15:7)
- j) Disciples at the ascension (Acts 1:3-12)
- k) Stephen (Acts 7:55)
- l) Paul on Damascus Road (Acts 9:3-6)
- m) Paul in the Temple (Acts 22:17-21)
- n) Paul at night (Acts 23:11)
- o) John on Patmos (Revelation 1:10-19).

8. The resurrection body of Jesus Christ:

- a) Retained the nail prints in the hands and feet (Psalm 22:16, Zechariah 12:10, John 20:25-29)
- b) Retained the wound sear in the side (John 20:25-29)
- c) Christ was recognised on 15 appearances by his disciples as the one who died and rose again.
- d) Resurrection body of Christ could eat (Luke 24:42-43)
- e) It had substance, it could be touched and felt (Matthew 28:9, Luke 24:39, John 20:17)
- f) His body could breathe (John 20:22)
- g) His body possessed flesh and bones (Luke 24:39-40)
- h) Could walk through closed doors (Luke 24:36, John 20:19)
- i) Appears and disappears suddenly (Luke 24:31,36)
- j) Could move vertically or horizontally (Acts 1:9,10)
- k) Our body will be just like His without the nail prints or wound in the side.

JUDGEMENT: GREAT WHITE THRONE

1. The judgement of the Great White Throne is the last judgement. (Revelation 20:11, 15)
2. Only the unsaved are judged at the last judgement as there is no judgement for Christians. (Romans 8:1)
3. The last judgement occurs at the end of the Millennium. (Revelation 20:7-15)
4. The unsaved are judged according to their works from the Books of Works. (Revelation 20:12)
5. The judgement is to show that the Human works of man cannot satisfy the justice of God. God is totally fair and shows that he is only satisfied by "The Good Work" - the death of Christ on the Cross.
6. Having shown the unsaved they have failed to satisfy the holiness of God, the condemned are cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:15)

PARAPHRASE

"Therefore, leaving behind and advancing past the basic doctrines relating to Christ's person and work, let us march onwards to full Christian maturity. Let us not keep on relaying the foundational doctrines! ; the doctrines of repentance from sin, faith in Christ, of baptisms, of consecration for service, of the resurrection from the dead, and of eternal judgement for the lost. This is what we will do, if indeed after all that has been done(or time wasted), the Lord allows us to do this before judgement falls on the nation."

HEBREWS 6 : 4 - 8

“ 4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 if they shall fall away again, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. 7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh off upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8 but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.”

KEY WORDS

Impossible	adunatos	Impossible, without strength, impotent.
Once	hapax	once for all.
Enlightened	photizo	aoist , passive, participle; illuminated, eyes opened, so that they can see the truth.
Tasted	geuomai	aoist, active, participle; tasted of, with sense of real enjoyment of the thing tasted.
Heavenly gift	dorea euranios	ep gift from out of the heavens.
Partakers	metochos	sharer, participators.
Tasted		as above.
Word	rema	spoken word.
Powers	Dunamis	exercise of mighty, ruling power.
World	aionos	age(of time).
To come	mellontos	on the point of coming.
Fall away	parapipto	aoist, active, participle to fall beside the way, to go astray from the path, to fall away.
Renew	anakeinizo	present, active, infinitive; to keep on bring them to renewal, to keep on making them new again.
Repentance	metanoia	change of mind.
Crucify	anastauroo	present, active, participle; they keep on crucifying again and again.
To themselves	eautois	for themselves, dative of advantage (as they see it - that's why they keep on doing it, and while they do, it is impossible to change their mind - they must stop doing this or there is no hope for them!)
Put him	paradeigmatizo	present, active, participle; they keep on exposing publicly, they keep on acting in a disgraceful manner, bringing daily shame upon.
Open shame		understood in the verb.
Bringeth	tikto	present, active, participle keeps on bringing forth.
Herbs	botane	all manner of green plants.
Meet	euthetos	fit for food, good for their use.
Dressed	georgeo	present, passive, indicative; keeps on being cultivated. Emphasis in this verse as in the last on continuous actions being done.
Receiveth	metalambano	present, active, indicative; keeps on partaking with others, receiving blessings.
Blessing	eulogios	blessing.
Beareth	ekphero	present, active, participle (conditional) if it keeps on bringing forth, producing.
Thorns and briars		thorns and thistles - the signs of the curse, Genesis 3:18,19.
Rejected	adokimos	declared flawed, unacceptable, rejected as not fit for use, or as a fake.
Cursing	katara	the curse of Genesis 3 is in view here. The two alternatives are starkly drawn here; either in blessing/salvation or under the Adamic curse through sin.
Burning	kausis	burning up so that nothing remains of it, judgement involved. Deuteronomy 29:23, 2 Peter 3:10,12.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The difficulties of this passage can be dissolved by simply reading all the verses of this chapter slowly all together, and remembering the history of these Jewish believers through the 1st Century! Remember the people who received this letter were in Jerusalem, and the older members of the community had been there with the apostles, and the Lord himself. They had heard his words (rema) clearly and often. For thirty plus years now, they have been in the city where the Lord was executed, and from where he both rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven.

They were there on the Day of Pentecost, but their problem is that they have stayed within Judaism rather than seeing that the work of the Lord has moved beyond the old wineskin of the Jewish faith. **Matthew 9:17, Mark 2:22.** The Age of Israel was now “on hold” because of their national rejection of their Messiah, and all the sacrificial system associated with the Mosaic Law no longer applied. **Daniel 9:26,** Romans Chapter 11. All was about to be swept away by Rome!

They had never left the old behind, and had been offering the regular sacrifices in the Temple, keeping their Jewishness intact as they saw it, but ruining their witness regarding the changes Messiah brought, as God saw it. They are called here to, “come out”, of their old ways, for they are replaced, and the call is to be visibly different – as God wants them.

Each of these sacrifices in the temple spoke of the person and work of Jesus the Messiah – but HE had COME – He had completed all the work that the sacrifices spoke of! Why were they continuing picturing his future coming, when he had come – the fulfilment was past tense, and so needed to be the sacrificial system. It was over!!!

Remember the old saying by Dr David L Cooper, “a text out of it’s context is a pretext”. This passage is not speaking of, “eternal security”, it is speaking of the need to stay on the path for this age, and not fall away into ritualistic religion that has run it’s course! To keep on using a sacrificial system that had been replaced by a greater and final sacrifice is to miss the point of the Lord’s person and completed work! This passage is not about loss of salvation for the genuine believer, it is very close to John 15, and James 2, and like those two chapters speaks of the need for changed lives to demonstrate the presence of saving faith on the part of genuine believers who are confused/deceived!

The writer of Hebrews is echoing the Lord and James here, asking these people to prove they are genuine by their witness, or else to stop kidding themselves and acknowledge that they are “Phonies”. As we will see in the next section, he knows the majority of these people are saved, but he must challenge them strongly to get them to “come out” and live as the “Post-Cross/Resurrection/Pentecost believers” they are! Their Jewishness needed re-definition!

Verse 4 Verse four begins with the strong word, “impossible!” The writer underlines his point here, and the verse would have hit these people like a sledge hammer. What is impossible? The writer is going to point out that it is impossible to bring spiritual renewal to those who keep on doing things that are passed and replaced! There is no renewal or revival if you use old means, only if you use current or new means. The past is fixed in space-time, only the Holy Spirit can lead us forward, and the Spirit will not use “past things” that are fulfilled in Christ, for the Spirit ministers Jesus will and words, and so will not be involved with the use of the aspects of the Mosaic System that are fulfilled since the Day of Pentecost. Only the Autumn Feasts remain to be fulfilled, and they will be at the Second Advent.

If people are determined to follow a system that has been replaced, they can never “get with” the new one, for their commitment is to the old, and their power is limited to the power that the old thing had! This is the issue for those in the Jerusalem church; it is one that they must face to prove their faith as genuine, or to demonstrate that they are just legalistic Judaistic phonies after all.

Enlightenment, or seeing the truth, is a “once for all experience”, is it not? Once you have seen the truth you have seen it! The only problem you have is of you forget what you have clearly seen, and such a mental attitude indicates foolishness at best, active disobedience to the truth at worst. The writer is blunt with these people, they must decide where they stand now, either for the truth they have clearly seen, or against it.

They had, “tasted the heavenly gift”, and then they “fell away”. They truly experienced the power and glory of God through the words of Jesus, which they heard: they saw the glory of heaven in his acts and know of the power of his resurrection for it occurred amongst them. **Acts 26:26.**

They have experienced the ministry of the Holy Spirit, for they saw his work from Pentecost onwards. They enjoyed the warmth the Spirit brought to the church, and they basked in the wonder of the saved community they had joined, but were they really now being true to the Lord or not? The writer indicates that they have veered off the true path, they have fallen off the path that the Holy Spirit has shown them to follow.

The urgency of the need to sort this problem out is underlined again by the reference to the shortness of the time they have. The power of the Holy Spirit seen amongst them is the sign of the end of the Age of Israel for them, and the dawning of a new age, and they are about to “miss the boat”; to be left behind to die amongst the legalists in the doomed city if they stay there. The “good news” is that the entire church left Jerusalem – they heeded this letter, and John reminded them of Luke’s record of Jesus words in **Luke 17:25-37!** The “eagles” were going to be on the hills, and they were in October of 66 AD, and the day they could flee the city they did!!! Good news here – the church did “get this”!

Verse 5. They had heard the very words of the Lord, for he had been there in Jerusalem, and many in the church as younger people had seen and heard him there. Not only the Lord was seen and heard, but the early miracles of the apostles, done through the Holy Spirit were also seen or heard of. **Acts 26:25-26.** They had “tasted” all these things, yet they had carried on their religious lives within Pharisaic Judaism as if nothing was changed.

The writer is pointing this out with all the subtlety of a sledge hammer! Such words and actions of the Lord Jesus the Messiah indicate ALL IS CHANGED and that it will never be the same again; the old is gone and the new is here! The age to come is here; that is what the signs and wonders were all about, yet these foolish people have missed them! If you miss the truth, or ignore the truth, you are living a lie and in mortal danger, for truth keeps us safe and free of self deception, but a lie believed and acted on opens you to quick death! There is no middle ground here, for spiritually they are either with the Holy Spirit moving forward, or with the Judaism that is doomed to fall in the city and temple.

Verse 6 It is impossible to restore people to newness of life if they keep on practising the way of death. The actions of these people hinder the work of the Holy Spirit (grieve, or quench), and they cannot be restored to new life for their actions block the truth having any effect in their lives. They can remain Jewish in culture, but their faith-rest life must “rest” in Jesus completed work, or they will lose their lives with the very people who murdered Jesus and hate them! All disobedience, all sins, hide the truth and the Lord’s presence from us. **Isaiah 59:2.**

Having fallen off the true path of spiritual life, and being determined to stay in their false path, they have placed themselves beyond restoration, unless they change. Only repentance will open the door to change and restoration, but while they actively follow an error they cannot be restored. The good news is that these people in the churches of Judea did hear the words of this letter, and it is just as well, for it was the Lord's last words to them! They had to hear this letter of correction or they would have died with the unbelievers in the fall of Jerusalem only a few years later. The Roman "eagles" were on the hills around the city in 66 AD, but the Roman Governor had over-estimated his strength and underestimated the rebels, and was forced to pull back towards Caesarea, and he was killed at the battle of Beth Horon, and in the brief respite before the zealots stopped people leaving the city, the church escaped, leaving the unsaved Jews to their fate – 2 million rejecters of Jesus as Messiah would pay with their lives or in slavery!

What were they doing offering lambs? Was such action to "crucify Christ again"? Crucifying to themselves the Son of God, indicates a return to the animal sacrificial system of Temple worship, which in themselves looked forward to Christ's "once for all" sacrifice. Once the Lord had come, the animals were not needed, in fact they now gave the wrong message; indicating by their continued presence in the temple making sacrifices that the Lord's sacrifice was not enough, or hadn't worked!

To continue to be part of the Mosaic sacrificial system was to be "putting Him to open shame". It was to insult the Lord's completed and perfect sacrifice, and also to insult the priesthood that the believers had become members of through Christ's work. **1 Peter 2:9-10**. It was a disgrace for Royal Priests of the order of Melchizedek to wilfully submit to the dead Levitical priesthood, and to let them offer a sacrifice that after the Cross had no meaning whatsoever. It is a daily shame, a public disgrace, an evil thing that they are doing by re-entering the Temple that the Lord was rejected from.

The writer stops short of calling them traitors to the Cross, but he goes close enough to this point to make it clear that this is where they are straying. Instead of enduring whatever opposition was to come from their standing for Christ, these Jewish believers bowed to it, thus exposing Christ to humiliation and disgrace. It is Jesus' fellowship, or that of the High Priests of Judaism! It is Jesus' perfect sacrifice for them, or the daily sacrifices of the men who rejected Jesus! Do they think they can achieve what the Lord did not? What will be the price for their acceptance? They are in bad company.

Verse 7 The two alternative responses to the words of God are now illustrated using a farming analogy. In verse seven the writer pictures the believer who is doing what the Lord requires. The believer (land) that receives God's Word, believing and applying it into daily life (periodical rain) is productive (spiritually advances to maturity and service) towards God (landowner) and receives God's blessing. **1 Corinthians 9:24-27, 2 Timothy 2:3-7**.

The Lord's parable of the sower and the seed is very relevant here, and the writer may be making a direct reference to it. **Matthew 13:3 - 23, Mark 4:3-20, Luke 8:5 -15**. The emphasis of this parable, as of the letter to the Hebrews, is that the people might be receptive to God's correction, and therefore spiritually productive. The challenge – what sort of ground are you? Are you productive ground bearing spiritual fruit, or "hard hearted", unfruitful, and unresponsive to truth?

The Lord gives the rain so that the green crops might grow, and He gives the living water of the Word of God, so that we might grow spiritually and bear fruit for His Kingdom. The daily washing of the water of the Word is what is required – why have they not been doing this? **Ephesians 5:26**. We are here to bear fruit, that is His will for us. **Matthew 12:33, John 15:2-16**. Lack of fruit = lack of vital relationship with Jesus! In the dangerous days they are in, this is fatal!

Verse 8. Sadly the believers of Jerusalem have been unfruitful through the years since their "glory days" in the first few years. They have sat still while other places grew and evangelised the lost around them. The problem with standing still is that you tend to fall backwards, and that is what has happened here. They have heard the words of the Lord but not taken them in and applied them, they preferred to hold their old ways. They are stagnant ponds and broken cisterns rather than clean running water. **Jeremiah 2:13**. As happened to Jeremiah's generation, so will unfold for this one – the loss of nationhood, city and temple, but this time it will be for more than 70 years!

The farming analogy makes clear what is about to happen. The believer (land) rejecting Bible doctrine produces dead works (thorns, and thistles) with immediate and far reaching, even eternal results (divine discipline in time, and judgement in eternity). All merely human production in our lives will be burned at the judgement seat, the "Bema" of Christ - refer also to **1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10-20**. Nothing that is produced by carnal human effort can enter heaven, only the works of the Holy Spirit enter heaven. They must characterise our lives – only spiritual works.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

These people had seen the truth clearly laid out before them, and they had claimed to believe in the Messiah whose acts they saw, and whose words they heard. They had "tasted" of the power of the Holy Spirit within the church, and enjoyed the great warmth the Spirit brought into worship and fellowship, and had marvelled at the miracles of power done in the Holy Spirit's power by the early apostles.

Yet with all these realities they had carried on with animal sacrifices in the Temple! They had failed to see the significance of everything Christ had done for them! They had failed to see the significance of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. They had apparently believed the truth, yet they had not been changed by it; their culture, thinking,

attitudes and actions were the same as before! They claimed to see the truth of the Lord's sacrifice on the cross, yet they insulted the Lord's completed work at the Cross by their actions daily in the Temple.

We marvel at them, yet do we not follow these people's example when we hear the Word and fail to apply it to our daily lives and attitudes. Are we transformed people today? Do our neighbours see visibly different people, clearly born again in new life, or do they see simply fellow citizens of the devil's world?

These people were going to prove by their actions that they indeed did believe the Lord, and they were going to be delivered from the judgement that fell on their nation. They proved by their actions that they truly believed the truth, and so do we! Our actions, our application of the Word of God to life prove we believe it, our words prove nothing, if not backed up by life! Under these conditions of continuous actions that amount to apostasy, "it is impossible to renew them to repentance". Repentance is the first basic principle listed in verse 1 from which they must graduate. However, this "moving on" cannot be accomplished as long as they maintain their present apostasy! Their hardness of heart makes any change impossible – unless they will allow the Holy Spirit to soften their hearts and bow in repentance.

Continuous wilful sinning keeps conviction, repentance, and the very possibility of change at bay. You will not change your life if you do not want to! No believer habitually involved in false, or now replaced religious practices, can ever advance to maturity while they continue in their chosen path of ritualistic error!

Fruitfulness to God's path is an important principle in our Lord's teaching. In Matthew 7 and John 15 the Lord underlines the point, that we know people's spiritual status by the fruits! How are we assessed? By our fruits! If the Holy Spirit is not bringing forth spiritual fruit to the glory of God in our life then we are, "none of His"! **Romans 8:9**.

Let us remember the judgement seat (bema) of Christ. We will give account for all we have done and said and that should be a purifying thought sorting out the time wasting evil that otherwise we will get sidetracked into. **Matthew 12:36, 18:23, Luke 16:2, Romans 14:12, Philippians 4:17, Hebrews 13:17, 1 Peter 4:5**.

We are here to grow and serve in maturity. Our spiritual "production" on earth is what we are judged regarding, and rewarded for in eternity. The crowns and eternal rewards the Lord promises us are the result of our Spirit filled service in maturity. If we do not ever get to maturity we have no opportunity to win any eternal rewards! Let us be purified and motivated by this and grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord! **2 Peter 3:18**.

B. PASTORAL

"A text out of it's context is a pretext". Let us always remember this saying of Dr David L Cooper. This passage we have just seen has been used down the centuries to teach Calvinism or Arminianism, when it actually refers to neither theology. This passage reminds us to come to scripture with our theological pre-conceptions put aside. We must let the text speak not tell it what to speak before we start. This passage is a call to leave the now temporarily set aside "Age of Israel" (until the Rapture of the Church) and enter the "Church Age", putting aside all the sacrificial system that has been left behind. It is a call for faith to transform life, or the untransformed life will be judged and ended.

People can sit in a church, enjoy the warmth the Holy Spirit brings, love the fellowship, and sing the songs of faith yet be untransformed in their lives. Their faith is a hot water bottle on a cold night for them, but they have not let it transform their lives. We are reminded by the history of these people, not to enter into a discussion of whether they are saved or not, rather we are encouraged to follow the writer here, and demand action to back up what they say they believe.

If they are genuine they will have no trouble backing up their profession by a daily confession in life. If they are phonies their actions, after confrontation with the truth, will prove it. We are called to preach the Word of the Living God, and so "flush out" the real nature of the hearers of the Word.

Repentance from dead works is a necessary thing for an unbeliever to be saved, and also for a religious believer to be freed for service. One must cast away their sins, the other must cast away their legalistic and ritual security blanket. We can serve the Lord in no other way, other than through obedience to the Word through the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Those who resist the Spirit's work will either, not be saved, or not grow spiritually. As pastors of the Lord's flock, do we really let the Holy Spirit loose upon the congregation through our systematic Bible teaching, or are we too light in our preaching for the Spirit to really go to work on the people?

The Lord demands fruit! His parables made that very clear. We are left here for service, and to fail in that is to fail in the entire purpose for our being left on earth! Do the congregation see this? If they do not have urgency they have not heard the truth from us and we are judged for such an oversight! Let us be urgent in our preaching, and ensure the Lord's people really understand the Lord's policy.

The writer makes it clear that the Fifth and final Cycle of national discipline is coming upon the land, it will be burned to the ground, and all that is within it will perish with the people dispersed. The language used has echoes of passages that describe the destruction of Sodom in the days of Lot, and the end of the present universe. Catastrophe is clearly indicated by the use of the word for burning. Refer to **Deuteronomy 29:23**, where the same Greek word is used in the Septuagint. Also refer **2 Peter 3:10, 12**.

They have limited time to come out from “replaced and set aside religion” into “living life-transforming relationship” with Christ, to leave behind their religious culture and move into the new age, but the clock is ticking. The clock is ticking for all believers who are not living as the Lord wants them to. He is patient and long suffering towards us, but there is a limit and too many pastors and people are tempting the Lord to judge them. Let us be careful for ourselves on this matter, and let us warn the people of the dangers of failure to apply the Word to life.

DOCTRINES

SIGNS [See page 38 above]

HOLY SPIRIT

HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD

1. The Holy Spirit is God, the third member of the Trinity.
2. The Holy Spirit is Jehovah God (Isaiah 6:8, 9, Acts 28:25, Jeremiah 31:31-35, cf Hebrews 10:15).
3. He has the characteristics of God:
 - a) sovereignty 1 Corinthians 12:11
 - b) all knowing (1 Corinthians 2:10, 11)
 - c) all powerful (Genesis 1:2)
 - d) everywhere (Psalm 139:7)

HOLY SPIRIT: THE SEVEN SPIRITS

The Seven Spirits of God is a description of the one Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2, Revelation 1:4):

1. The Spirit of the Lord.
2. The Spirit of Wisdom.
3. The Spirit of Understanding.
4. The Spirit of Counsel.
5. The Spirit of Might.
6. The Spirit of Knowledge.
7. The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord.

HOLY SPIRIT: SYMBOLS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

There are a number of symbols for the Holy Spirit in the Bible:

1. Dove. (Matthew 3:16)
2. Oil. (Exodus 35:28)
3. Water. (John 7:38-39)
4. Wind. (Acts 2:2)
5. Fire. (Acts 2:3)
6. Seal. (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30)
7. Pledge. (Ephesians 1:14)

HOLY SPIRIT: MINISTRY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit did not indwell all believers, since Christ was not yet glorified (John 7:39). Instead,

He only came upon some Old Testament saints to perform special functions.

- a) JOSEPH, a believer who was a prime minister (Genesis 41:38).
- b) Believers who were artisans occupied in the construction of the Tabernacle (Exodus 28:3, 31:3).
- c) Believers involved in administration (Numbers 11:17, 25).
- d) A believer who was both a political and military leader - JOSHUA (Numbers 27:18).
- e) Certain Judges: OTHNIEL (Judges 3:9, 10) GIDEON (Judges 6:34) JEPHTHAH (Judges 11:29) SAMSON (Judges 13:24, 25, 14:5-6, 15:14).
- f) Kings of Israel (1 Samuel 10:9, 10, 16:13).

- g) DANIEL (Daniel 4:8, 5:11, 6:3).
 - h) Post exilic rulers (Zechariah 4:3, 12-14).
2. Believers in Israel could be disciplined by the removal of the Spirit:
- a) SAUL (1 Samuel 16:14)
 - b) DAVID (Psalm 51:11)
3. A believer could obtain the Holy Spirit by request, but not as an indwelling presence (2 Kings 2:9, 10, Luke 11:13).
4. Jesus gave the Holy Spirit without request to the disciples just before the ascension. Purpose: To sustain them for the ten day interim before the Church Age would begin (John 20:22).

HOLY SPIRIT: MINISTRY TO JESUS CHRIST

- 1. The ministry of the Spirit in sustaining Jesus Christ was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 11:1-3, 42:1, 61:1-3).
- 2. The virgin birth was only possible by the work of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18, 20, Psalm 40:6, Hebrews 10:5).
- 3. The Holy Spirit was given without measure (constant unhindered filling) to the humanity of Christ (John 3:34).
- 4. The Holy Spirit was related to the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16).
- 5. The Holy Spirit sustained Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry (Matthew 12:18, 28, Luke 4:14,15,18).
- 6. The Lord acknowledged the work of the Spirit in his works and miracles - Matthew 12:8 (Quoting Isaiah 44:1), 18, 28, Luke 4:14-21.
- 7. The sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the Lord when he bore our sins on the cross (Matthew 27:46, Psalms 22).
- 8. The Holy Spirit had a part in the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:11, 1 Peter 3:18).
- 9. The present ministry of the Holy Spirit to Jesus Christ (John 7:39, 16:14).
- 10. The same sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit is passed on to us at salvation, and we are commanded to make use of this ministry
- 11. To grow thereby (Galatians 4:19, 5:16, Ephesians 3:16, 17, 5:18, Romans 13:14).

HOLY SPIRIT: MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. TO THE UNBELIEVER

- a) RESTRAINING (2 Thessalonians 2:7)
If unbelievers were unrestrained in the Church Age the one world system which Satan is trying to establish would come. After the rapture of the Church it will come.
- b) CONVICTING (John 16:7-11)
 - i) Sin - the barrier which remains in unbelief.
 - ii) Righteousness - God is totally righteous, man is only relatively righteous and needs God's righteousness for salvation.
 - iii) Judgment - Satan and all unbelievers are judged.
- c) REGENERATION (John 3:5)
Man without the spirit cannot understand spiritual things. The Gospel is spiritual, the Holy Spirit makes the gospel a reality to the unbeliever when one believes and is "born again" or regenerated (1 Corinthians 2:14).

2. TO THE BELIEVER AT SALVATION

- a) Regeneration (John 3:1-16, Titus 3:5)
- b) Baptism (Acts 1:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:5). We are baptized into union with Jesus Christ and become part of the body of Christ. This is not to be confused with the Filling of the Holy Spirit.

- c) Indwelling (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). From salvation on the believer is indwelt by the Spirit.
- d) Sealing (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30). This ministry relates to your future with God, the guarantee of eternal security.
- e) Distribution of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11). Each believer receives a spiritual gift at the point of salvation in order to function in the body of Christ.

3. TO THE BELIEVER AFTER SALVATION (Spirituality)

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit after salvation is the means by which we live the Christian life ordained by God (Ephesians 2:10, 5:18).

- a) The Filling of the Holy Spirit (spirituality through confession of sin and surrender of the life). (1 John 1:9 Ephesians 5:18)
- b) The character of Jesus Christ is produced by the believer when he is filled with the Spirit (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23).
- c) Glorification of Christ (John 7:39, 16:14, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).
- d) Fulfillment of the Law (Romans 8:2-4).

HOLY SPIRIT: COMFORTER

The Holy Spirit is the Comforter (paraclete = one called alongside to help)

1. He abides forever with the saints. (John 14:16)
2. He dwells in the saints and is known by them. (John 14:17)
3. He teaches the saints. (John 14:26)
4. He imparts hope. (Romans 15:13, Galatians 5:5)
5. He gives us the love of God. (Romans 5:3-5)
6. He testifies of Christ. (John 15:26)
7. He communicates joy to the saints. (Romans 14:17, Galatians 5:22, 1 Thessalonians 1:6)
8. He edifies the church. (Acts 9:31)

HOLY SPIRIT: TEACHER

1. He is the Spirit of Wisdom. (Isaiah 11:2, 40:13-14)
2. He reveals the things of God. (1 Corinthians 10:13)
3. He reveals the things of Christ. (John 16:14)
4. He guides into all truth. (John 14:26, 16:13)
5. He enables ministers to teach. (1 Corinthians 12:8)
6. He teaches the saints to answer persecutors. (Mark 13:11, Luke 12:12)
7. He directs in the way of godliness. (Isaiah 30:21, Ezekiel 36:27)
8. He brings the words of Christ to remembrance. (John 14:26)

HOLY SPIRIT: SINS AGAINST THE SPIRIT

1. RESISTING THE HOLY SPIRIT (Unbelievers only) (Acts 7:51, John 16:8-11) This is hardening to the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit.
2. BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT (Unbelievers only) (Matthew 12:31) The purpose of the Holy Spirit was to reveal the person of Jesus Christ. The Pharisees rejected this by claiming He was demon possessed.
3. LYING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT (Believers only) (Acts 5:1-3) A sin of false motivation. - Ananias and Sapphira.

4. GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT (Believers only) (Ephesians 4:30) Any sin which the believer commits.
5. QUENCHING THE HOLY SPIRIT (Believers only) (1 Thessalonians 5:19) A believer who is not allowing the Holy Spirit to exert His full influence.
6. UNPARDONABLE SIN (Matthew 12:22-32)
 - a) Rejection of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour is the only sin which cannot be forgiven. This unbelief is shown in Matthew 12:24, denying the person and power of Jesus.
 - b) It is impossible for a believer to commit the unpardonable sin. (Isaiah 1:18, Isaiah 44:22, 1 John 1:7)

HOLY SPIRIT: FILLING OF THE SPIRIT [See page 42 above]

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

1. The Fruit of the Spirit is listed as follows:-

Galatians 5:22-23 - Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control
Romans 14:17 - Righteousness, Peace, Joy
Colossians 3:12-15 - Compassion, Kindness, Humility, Gentleness, Patience, Forgiveness, Love, Peace, Thankfulness
1Thessalonians 1:3 - Faith, Love, Endurance, Hope
2. In principle, it is the imitation of God (Ephesians 5:1).
3. The most important is Love (1Corinthians. 13:13).
4. Not to be confused with spiritual gifts. These are listed in (Romans 12:6-8; 15:18-19; 1Corinthians 12:8,10; 1Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:1) and other places.
5. One can know Christians by their fruit (Matthew 7:16-20; Luke 6:43-45; 1John 3:10 & 11; John 15:8) especially by their love (John 13:35) but not by their gifts, as Satan can imitate them (2Thessalonians 2:9).
6. Three fruit represent the fruit of the Spirit: Apples - love, Grapes - Joy, Pomegranates - Peace.
7. In Galatians 5 the fruit is divided into three sections:
Love, Joy and Peace towards God;
Patience, Goodness and Kindness towards others;
Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control towards oneself.

DISCIPLINE OF BELIEVERS [See page 75 above]

REWARDS AND CROWNS [See page 75 above]

PARAPHRASE

“For once people have had their eyes opened to the truth about Christ, tasted of the joy and fellowship that the Holy Spirit brings to a church, have actually participated in the Holy Spirit’s work, have heard and enjoyed the very words of the Lord Jesus, witnessed the powerful works of the new age, (and yet they have not been transformed), then it is impossible to make them new again, if they are fallen off the right path by their own choices! If their mind is set on falling off the path then they cannot be renewed and have their minds changed, (for they keep on being determined to go the other way). The evidence for this is their actions in offering daily sacrifices in the Temple, crucifying Christ again and again, (as if his death was not final), thereby they keep on bringing the Lord into open disgrace and shame. (Listen to the analogy), when the rain falls on the ground, the ground hungrily drinks the water in, so that it might bring forth all manner of green plants, and thereby blessing from God is received by all, but land that only brings forth thistles and thorns is cursed land, and will be burned off by the farmer. (The question for you all is, will you be blessed through growth, or be burned off, like scrub or weed cleared land ready for others to be planted and grow in your place?”

HEBREWS 6 : 9 - 12

“But beloved we are persuaded of better things from you, the things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

KEY WORDS

Beloved	agapetoi	Loved ones. reminding us all that we are objects of God’s unmerited favour.
Persuaded	peitho	perfect , passive, indicative; strongly stated, we have absolute confidence that will last forever.
Better things	Ta kreittona	comparative word, better things than the things described beforehand.
Accompany	echo	present, middle, participle; to have and to hold oneself fast, middle voice here = inner belonging, close association. “Are closely associate with your saved status”.
Speak	laleo	present, active, indicative; though we keep on speaking as we have.
Forget	epilanthanomai	aorist, middle, infinitive; God has not forgotten, (genitive), you are benefited by this!
Labour	kopos	labour, toil, trouble.
Shewed	ekdeiknumi	aorist, middle, indicative; demonstrated in action.
Ministered	diakoneo	aorist, active, participle; then the pres, act, part; having served the saint, you keep on serving them, meeting their needs.
Desire	epithumeo	present, active, indicative; we keep on strongly desiring, yearning for.
Show	ekdeiknumi	present, middle, infinitive; infinitive of purpose, demonstrate interest by focus on the achievement of the desired object.
Diligence	spoude	total commitment, earnestness endeavour to reach the goal, true grit.
Full assurance	plerophoria	full assurance, most certain confidence.
Slothful	nothros	dull of mind, but also slow in thinking and application, sluggish.
Followers	mimetes	imitators of character and action.
Faith	pisteos	faith in an object that is expressed by action.
Patience	makrothumia	strong tough patient endurance under fire.
Inherit	kleronomeo	present, active, participle; keep on inheriting.
Promises	epaggelia	the things promised. God has promised many things, and by active faith and patient endurance under pressures those people keep on knowing the result of the promises of God in their lives, even in the midst of their pressures.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

This section covers the certainty of the Jerusalem believers salvation and the desire of the author for them right now. There are three parts to this last section in Verses. 9-12. Let us get a summary before we go ahead and analyse these last verses.

1. The author is persuaded of their salvation and past productivity , even if they have “lost the plot” more recently.
 - a. Knowing the justice and faithfulness of God.
 - b. Knowing of their past ministries towards the people of God.
2. His desire is that their diligence will continue toward full assurance of hope (confidence based on the truths of God’s Word) to the end. Compare **Hebrews 3:6,14**. It is not sufficient to grow and be productive for a time, then to sit back and trust in past success. The Christian life is a race that requires patience and lifelong endurance, and they must keep on running the race. **2 Timothy 4:7, Hebrews 12:1**.
3. Instead of being sluggish (dull - apathy towards both study and application of the Word - Hebrews 5:11), he encourages them to imitate past heroes of the faith, as Abraham (Vs. 13-15), and other mature believers who made a difference in the Plan of God . He will take this up again in Chapter 11.

Verse 9. The author reminds them by his reference to them as “beloved”, that they are under the loving care of their Saviour God. Even if we waste the time the Lord has given us we are still His and He loves us; He cannot love us less as his children than he loved us as unbelievers. In Chapter 12 he will explore this thought further. These people have not done much for years, except obscure the gospel and embarrass the Lord, yet they are still “Beloved” of their Father.

He tells us that he has no doubts about their salvation also in this verse. It is good that he does this for it stops the foolish speculation of the theologians, if only they would read the text more carefully!!! By using the **perfect tense** of the verb describing how “persuaded” he is of their spiritual status, he underlines that he has no doubts at all about their salvation, and this must have re-assured the first hearers of the letter at this point. He has been very blunt about their error and disobedience, and many would have been brought to the point of doubt about their salvation by this point.

We are persuaded, he strongly states, of better things of you than the things I have raised so far! He then mentions that the things he knows they have exist only in the lives of those who are saved. They accompany, are closely associated with, salvation. This is a crucial verse for interpretation of the chapter and the letter, for it tells us that he does not doubt their salvation, but believes they are in danger of discipline. Even though he has spoken harshly and strongly about their behaviour, they are his brethren in salvation, and they remain beloved of God.

Verse 10. They, like us, are not beloved because their acts have been “lovely”, but in spite of their deeds the Lord loves them because of who He is! He reminds them of God’s perfect character. God is righteous, He cannot be unrighteous, and on the basis of his perfect character he deals with them. God remembers their good deeds done in the power of the Holy Spirit, from their heart of love towards the Lord and their fellow saints.

They have ministered in the past and they have kept on ministering to others through to the present. In the midst of their theological errors they have kept on demonstrating some of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and this proves their position as members of the Lord’s family still. This reminds us that believers can be totally theologically wrong on some points, but they do love the Lord Jesus, no matter how scrambled their worship and cultic beliefs. Error is to be corrected always, but we must be careful of writing people off, for the Lord doesn’t until there is not hope of repentance, and then they enter heaven under the “Sin Unto Death”.

Verse 11. The writer’s strongest desire is for them to keep on the path of spiritual life and service. He wants every one of them to focus of the goal of growth and service, and have lives that count for God. To reach the goal of spiritual maturity and enter the service that goes with it, requires total commitment, real “diligence”. The writer wants them to have lives without distraction; to be totally focused on their Christian service. Because of who God their Saviour is, they can have total confidence in their salvation, and that should give them the confidence to totally focus on the service the Lord requires of them.

Verse 12. Do not be slugs! Do not sit and idle by the hours and days, but get up and use them for God! This was a favourite concept for the writer of Proverbs, calling on the people of his day to look to the ant and work, at least as hard as they could see ants work! **Proverbs 6:6, 9, 10:26, 13:4, 20:4, 26:16.** Slothfulness and laziness generally was considered a serious sin to the ancient Hebrews, for they saw it, quite correctly, as a wasting of the gift of time given by God to each person. They were most aware of the shortness of our human life and were most serious about not wasting it, and our attitude to time is to be the same today.

We are tranquillised by modern media, business, and social activity and so we often sleep through the spiritual opportunities that we are here on the planet to fulfil. To be “slothful” is to be foolish indeed, it is to waste opportunity that will not repeat, and it is to be under divine discipline. **Proverbs 12:24, 27, 15:19, 18:9, 19:24, 21:25, 22:13, 24:30, 26:13 -15, Matthew 25:14-46, Romans 12:11.**

Patience is the virtue that the writer reminds them is needed to achieve their goals also. They need to persevere through the hard times of life or they will never be fit to be the soldiers of Christ in the real battles that need to be fought in the Invisible War. To come through the days of time, and inherit the blessings of eternity may require that we walk through many dark valleys in this short life, but if we focus on the Lord and his Hope and hold the truth with patience we will inherit the rewards that await those who serve Him faithfully. This verse reminds us that there is a price to be paid at times, and those who walk with grit, determination and patience are the ones who win the crowns and other rewards the Lord has for those who love and serve him as he calls them to.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Even as disobedient children we are still children and as such we are beloved. These people had not been doing the right things for years, but they are still beloved of God. This is a comfort to all who have faltered in their walk with God. Let all be encouraged by this but also warned, for these people would lose everything they owned in the years to come; they would have to flee their city and take refuge with others. The Lord was loving and patient with them but they were not obedient and so there was a price to pay. Just so with us, if we do not follow what the Lord tells us to do there will be a price to pay, even though we are still “beloved”.

Matthew 7 reminds us that the Lord expects the fruit of the Holy Spirit to be in our lives. No fruit = no reality of faith! “By this shall all men know you are my disciples, if you love one another!” **John 13:35.** Our Lord’s words come back to us here. Even if a brother or sister is engaged in theological error, yet they have the fruit of the Spirit, they are still safe, and they are indeed our brethren, and our sole focus should be to do what the author here does, correct them and restore them to the fullness of the truth of God’s Word. They proved their family connection by expressing the “family likeness” through love in their relationships with other believers. Love does cover a multitude of sins as far as the Lord is concerned, but the day of reckoning for the sins will eventually come if they are not dealt with! **Proverbs 10:12, 1 Peter 4:8.**

What is our desire for our fallen brethren? **Galatians 6:1,** reminds us that if we believe we are spiritual we ought to be the first to try to restore all who have fallen into sin and error. The writer sets us the example here of true spiritual maturity as he goes about a reasoned and thoughtful plan to win these people over to the truth and save them from the consequences of their errors. His sole desire is for them to grow and so serve their Lord as they ought. He wants them to

be safe from the destruction that is coming, and he wants them to win spiritual rewards for all eternity. He thinks of their blessing and through writing this letter has clearly "sweated blood" for them trying to find the best way to put the truth in order that they might be delivered from their errors. This is the commitment the Lord requires of us all, we must be ready to put ourselves out for our brethren.

Diligence must accompany assurance/confidence, in the same way as works of faith accompany salvation early on in our Christian life. As young believers we express our newly found salvation with energetic witnessing and other acts of love, and as we mature these acts must continue, even if they are in different areas then.

We are to keep on expressing our faith in action, and we are keep on having the mental attitude of the soldier and the farmer, true grit and determination, in the face of troubles, testing and trials. The Lord calls us to "grit it out" in the power of the Holy Spirit. How are we doing believer under the daily pressures of life? Do we tough it out, do we have the diligence and faith that the Lord calls us to, or have we become moaners?

B. PASTORAL

How encouraging are we with those who fall into theological error? We see the writer of Hebrews doing the job here really well, for he has really laid out the error of these people to them, yet here he draws close and reminds them that they are "beloved", and that they have much more to do than they have done, but their track record should give them grounds for hope. He reminds them that they are secure, not on the basis of their works but only on the basis of God's perfect character.

God's perfect righteousness is their security not their erratic works for the saints. He got them to look unto the perfect character of the Holy God, and be corrected by that vision. How well do we measure up to the writer of Hebrews? Are we encouragers of the fallen in such a way that they are restored? We are to be assessed by our results, and the writer here achieved his goal; these people were restored to usefulness. Let us assess our ministries this way!

How well do the saints under our ministry understand the importance of serving their brethren? Do they see that the love of the saints is the most important measure of their spiritual status? Do they also see that grit and determination are indeed Christian virtues, and are necessary to please and serve the Lord in the pressures that the world will bring upon us? Do they hear that sloth is an evil? Do they see that faith, confidence and patience are the three virtues that matter above all others, for they lead to all others? If we can not answer a strong "yes" to these questions then we may be off the mark in our work.

DOCTRINES

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT [See page 124 above]

FAITH – OVERCOMING BY FAITH

1. By faith learn to accept conditions as God's will for life and be thankful - Romans 8:28, 1 Thessalonians 3:3; 5:18.
2. By faith maintain fellowship with God, walking in the light - 1 John 1:7.
3. By faith consistently day by day examine your conduct, confessing all known sins - 1 Corinthians 11:28, 31 1 John 1:9.
4. By faith receive the Word of God daily as being more necessary than daily food. - Matthew 4:4; 5:6, 2 Peter 3:18.
5. By faith approach the throne of grace boldly in every case of need, requesting aid, casting every care on Him - Hebrews 4:15,16; 1 Peter 5:7.
6. By faith resist the attempts of Satan and he will flee from you - Ephesians 6:10-13, 1 Peter 5:8.
7. By faith maintain the habit of thinking and meditating on spiritual values and priorities - Philippians 4:6-9.
8. Walk by faith and not by sight - 2 Corinthians 5:7.

PROMISES

1. FROM GOD'S VIEWPOINT

When a person promises you something the promise is only as strong as the character of the person making the promise. The character of God is perfect therefore His promises are totally reliable.

- a) Unchangeable - A promise in the Bible is the same for us in the 20th Century as it was to Paul.
- b) All-knowing - God knows all our problems so there is always a promise or doctrine to cater for our difficulties.
- c) Love - God will provide for His children.
- d) Truth - All the promises are totally true.

2. FROM MAN'S VIEWPOINT

- a) We must know the promises.
- b) We must believe the promises.
- c) We must want to trust in God.

3. THERE ARE ABOUT 7,000 PROMISES THAT DEAL WITH THE CHRISTIAN ON EARTH

4. TYPICAL PROMISES FOR VARIOUS STAGES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

- a) Stage 1 - Salvation (John 3:16; Acts 16:31)
- b) Stage 2 - Christian on earth (1 John 1:9; Romand 8:28; 1 Peter 5:7)
- c) Stage 3 - Believers in Heaven (1 Peter 1:3-5; Revelation 21:4)

5. FOR THE CHRISTIAN ON EARTH - HOW DO WE MAKE THEM WORK?

- a) We must be a believer in Jesus Christ.
- b) Take every promise to mean what it says.
- c) Confess all your known sins using the promise in (1 John 1:9)
- d) If a promise says to do something, do it (i.e. pray, believe, confess etc.)
- e) Wait for answers, the Lord will answer in His time.
- f) Keep a promise notebook, learn the promises.

6. GENERAL SCRIPTURE ON THE PROMISES OF GOD (Hebrews 3:7 - 4:11)

- a) The geographical areas in which the Exodus generation found themselves can represent stages in the Christian.
 - i) Egypt - unbelief.
 - ii) Red Sea crossing - salvation by faith (i.e. leaving Egypt)
 - iii) Wilderness - the carnal and immature Christian life claiming only some promises and failing regularly.
 - iv) Jordan crossing - full realisation of God's favour by faith.
 - v) Promised land - the mature Christian resting in God and only failing occasionally.
- b) The author of Hebrews in (Chapter 3:7,19) exhorts the Jews at Jerusalem and us not to fall into the same traps as the Exodus generation in unbelief.
- c) Questions And Answers on Hebrews (Chapter 4) refers to the Christian on earth.

Verse 1: What happens if we fail to claim a promise? - We lack peace of mind.

Verse 2: What characteristic of God does this verse highlight? - Unchangeable.
How are the promises made active? - By being mixed with faith.

Verse 3: Which came first, man or the promises of God? - The promises, God is all-knowing.

Verse 4: Why did God rest? - Because He had provided all things necessary for man.

Verses 5 & 6: Will any succeed in this area? - Yes, some will.

Verse 7: Are the promises still available today? - Yes.
What must we do? - Accept God's provision.
What must we not do? - Harden our hearts.

Verse 8: Jesus in some translations is, in fact, Joshua.

Verse 9: To whom are the promises available? - Believers only.

Verse 10: What choice have we as a Christian? - Human works or God's works and provision.

Verse 11: What is the great trap? - Unbelief. We should actively pursue the promises of God.

7. MAJOR PROMISES

Learn to claim these when:

- a) In difficulties (Romans 8:28)
- b) You have sinned (1 John 1:9)
- c) You are worried (1 Peter 5:7)
- d) You have been wronged (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- e) Prayer (Matthew 7:7)
- f) You are lonely (Hebrews 13:5)
- g) You have doubts (Philippians 4:13)
- h) The Bible (Hebrews 4:12)
- i) You cannot sleep (Psalm 4:8)
- j) You are unhappy (Psalm 147:3)
- k) You are tempted to retaliate (Romans 12:17,19)
- l) You are in danger (Psalm 23:4)

HOPE

1. Our hope is based on the reality of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ and His message (Romans 5:4-6, 1Timothy 1:1).
2. Our hope is also of our resurrection (Acts 24:15). This hope influences our conduct here and now (1 John 3:3).
3. The hope of resurrection was longed for and believed in, in the Old Testament but after the Lord's resurrection we can be totally confident (Acts 26:6-8).
4. Hope of resurrection is a "lively hope" which influences every aspect of the soul who truly knows what we have (1Peter 1:3).
5. We also have hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7).
6. It is a key doctrine of the church, without it our faith is a sham (1 Corinthians 15:19).
7. We have the sure hope of deliverance from the Tribulation by the Rapture of the Church which occurs before the Tribulation (Romans 8:24-25, 1Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18).
8. The coming of the Lord to save us from coming catastrophe is a "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13).
9. We all have the hope of blessing in time if we reach maturity (Galatians 5:5).
10. We all have one hope in maturity (Ephesians 4:4-6).
11. All true pastors hope that their flock will go on to maturity to the greater glory of the Lord Jesus Christ (1Thessalonians 2:19-20).
12. As we see and know what the Lord did for us we can take confidence from it (1Peter 1:21).
13. Confidence comes as we hear what God has for us through His word (Romans 15:4).
14. The way to know hope is to be firmly grounded in God's word (Colossians 1:23).
15. We are told to grow in hope (Hebrews 6:11-12).
16. We are to hold fast our hope, firm in doctrine (Hebrews 3:6).

17. All hope is anchored in doctrine in the soul (Hebrew 6:18-19).
18. God's grace provisions for us here in time provide the basis for hope and confidence (2Thessalonians 2:16-17).
19. The purpose of the pastor - teacher teaching the Word of God is to pass on God's information so that all believers can be partakers of this hope (1Corinthians 9:10, 2 Corinthians 3:12).
20. The pastor's prayer for his people will always be that they should know the hope of their calling (Ephesians 1:18) This would include salvation, resurrection, eternal security, eternal reward, eternal life, blessing and maturity and deliverance from the problems of life.
21. Unbelievers have no hope. This should be the motivation for evangelism (Ephesians 2:12, 1Thessalonians 4:13).
22. We should be ready to give a defence to our hope (1Peter 3:15).
23. "Now abides faith hope and charity and the greatest of these is charity" (1Corinthians 13:13).

PARAPHRASE

"But you are beloved ones of the Saviour God, and we are absolutely confident that you are capable of better things than we have seen to date. We know that we will see the works that are the accompaniment of your salvation, even though we have spoken harshly to you in this letter. God is righteous, and he never forgets your work for his people in the past, done because you loved his holy name, and indeed you keep on serving his saints. Our strong desire for you is that every one of you really fully commits to the goal of spiritual service, with complete confidence towards the end of your time on earth. We desire that you be not known as lazy people, but rather that you are imitators of the heroes of faith, who through their applied faith and patience under pressure keep on inheriting the promises of God."

HEBREWS 6 : 13 - 20

"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 to 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: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

KEY WORDS

Promise	epaggellomai	aorist, middle, participle; when God promised.
Swear	omnumi	aorist, active, infinitive; he made a solemn oath.
By himself	Kath eautou	genitive, the oath is backed by God's immutable character.
Blessing	eulogeo	Hebrew infinitive absolute expressed in Greek; blessing now, I will bless you forever.
Multiplying	plethuno	infinitive absolute also; multiplying I will multiply you. This is certain!
Patiently	makrothumia	strong stable tough patience under pressures.
Obtained	epitugchano	aorist, active, indicative; to arrive at the place where it was obtained.
Confirmation	bebaiosis	confirmation.
End	peras	legal guarantee.
Strife	antilogia	dispute, controversy
More abundantly	perissoteron	especially, more convincingly still!
Willing	boulomai	present, middle, participle; keeps on desiring, purposing, willing.
Show	epideiknumi	aorist, active, infinitive;; to point out, to demonstrate.
Immutability	ametathetos	not able to be moved, unchangeable. It was another legal word indicating a contract that could not be changed, or set aside.
Confirmed	mesiteuo	aorist, active, indicative; intervened to act as his own sponsor, pledging himself as surety.
Impossible	adunatos	impossible.
Consolation	paraklesis	encouragement.
Fled	katapheugo	aorist, active, indicative; to flee for refuge and safety.
Lay hold	krateo	aorist, active, infinitive hold fast and seize tightly to what belongs to you.
Set before	prokeimai	present, middle, participle; laid out before for inspection.
Anchor	agkura	big ship's anchor for storms.
Sure	asphale	certain, safe.
Steadfast	bebaios	firm and established within itself, steadfast.
Forerunner	prodromos	advanced scouts of the army who went ahead to see all was safe.

Entered	eiserchomai	aorist, active, indicative; has entered in.
Forever	eis ton aiona	unto the ages, forever.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Faithfulness of God illustrated in the life of Abraham. Vs. 13-20

The Abrahamic Covenant and Abraham's lifelong reliance on God's faithfulness becomes a challenge to every believer to imitate; both in trusting God's character, as Abraham did, and in faithful service and obedience.

1. The promise given. Vs. 13-14. Compare **Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-6**.
2. The patient endurance (faith-rest) of Abraham. Vs. 15. Compare **Romans 4:13-25, Hebrews 11:8-12**.
3. The oath of God an end to dispute. Vs. 16-17. Divine essence the basis of every promise. **2 Peter 1:4**.
4. The two immutable things (God's promise and God's oath) provide a hope (elpis - assurance).
 - a. The assurance of God's Word is a refuge of the soul.
 - b. The assurance of God's Word is a secure and firm anchor of the soul.
 - c. This assurance of God's Word is focused on our High Priest (**Colossians 3:1-2**) who has preceded us as the advance guard into heaven - there to continue a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, which we share. (**1 Peter 2:9**)

Verse 13. The writer uses the Jewish practise of oath making to back up all contractual agreements as his illustration of God's faithfulness. Remember, at this point in the chapter, the writer's point is not the obedience of the believer, but the faithfulness and dependability of God's holy character. Just as men are in the habit of doing, so God backed his promise to Abraham (the Abrahamic Covenant) with an oath. The oath was not taken in the name of any other person or thing, for nothing is more reliable than the Holy Character of God itself.

The writer's point is clear; the most reliable thing in this created temporary space-time universe of constant change, is the Holy Character of God. It is upon God's character that we live and move and have our being as believers, and HE is completely trustworthy and reliable. We may have been faithless but He always remains faithful! **2 Timothy 2:12-13**.

Verse 14. The double statements of this verse underline the faithfulness and loving mercy/blessing of the Lord. To Abraham he said, "blessing, I will bless you, multiplying I will multiply you". This is the Greek translation of the Hebrew infinitive absolute, indicating in the strongest way language was able to state, that God was determined to do this, that it would happen, and that the results were going to go on into eternity. We have eternal life, and eternal rewards, our very life as Christians is eternal and blessed beyond the minds of mankind. It is the eternal life perspective that we need when facing the tests of time. "Look up believer!" Our stability is never "in the earth under our feet", for this universe itself is temporary, but our temporal/eternal stability is securely anchored in heaven, where our Heavenly Father awaits our physical presence as heirs of eternity, with a settled place in the world God has for us beyond space-time. **John 14:1ff**.

Verse 15. Now the writer moves from the dependability of God, to the faith response of Abraham. This is always the correct order in teaching. First people must know how secure they are in God's loving and stable character, then they can be challenged to obedience. Abraham had many difficult times, and was forced by them, as we are, to apply what he knew of God, or else panic and fall apart. Abraham didn't trust in fables, or the common religions of the pagans he was surrounded by, he met with the real God and trusted his life and eternal destiny to the one who made the universe.

The writer invites us to go back into Genesis, and see that as he faced the tests of time, Abraham applied the truth that he knew most times, and when he failed, he quickly dealt with his sin and re-applied the truth. Abraham is therefore the perfect person to point to for the Jerusalem church (as for ourselves today), for he was no plaster saint, he was a real man with foibles and failures, but his greatness was seen in his getting up after every "fail" to have faith in God again.

The call of the writer is to the patient endurance of Abraham. The writer uses the favourite word of Paul, (patiently endured = makrothumia = big souled) a military word that was used of the soldier who would always fill the gap in the line, whose tough patient endurance could be depended upon. Abraham's patient endurance rested upon a secure foundation – the Character and Plan of God for his life. Although he couldn't see it at that point in space-time, he expressed faith in what God said would come, rather than live in the reality of only what he saw with his eyes at that time.

Verse 16. In a legal document the oath is meant to end all present and future disputes as to the meaning and purpose of the agreement. Men always swear their oath by a greater power to underline their commitment to the agreement, and to make clear to the other parties that they intend the agreement made to be totally binding, and the end of all strife that might have existed to that point. God wanted a formal commitment by Abraham, a secure and binding legal agreement that would be eternal in its scope. Abraham was challenged to see that God meant business, both for his temporal and very temporary life, and into eternity itself.

Verse 17. God was desiring, and willing, even more than men who make contracts, to underline the dependability of His promises. Believers are called here, "heirs of promise", making it clear to us that this is our new nature as

Christians, as God sees us. We are, "heirs of God's promises" at all points in our lives, the only question is, are we living as if this is true, or are we living at a lower level? What do we truly "see" as we walk through this space-time universe?

God demonstrated the unchangeable nature of his character and faithfulness of His Word by both an oath and a direct promise. God pledged himself as security for the "deal" he makes with mankind. God puts his character on the line to win our salvation. If we follow his instructions and we do not receive what he promised, we have proved God a liar, and thereby he loses his good name! God will not lose his good name; He does not change, He remains faithful! What do we "see" as we face difficulties and overwhelming troubles? Do we see God's character at stake, or just our difficulties? Abraham is the "father of people of faith" (more in chapter 11) because he "saw" God's promises as more real than his troubles, fears and doubts.

Verse 18. The writer adds evidence to evidence here, underlining the impossibility for God to ever be a liar on these matters. This is the strongest encouragement ever for us, God can be trusted totally. The reality of our life upon the earth is fragility itself, for we cannot compete in power with the demonic, for they have thousands of years of experiences to draw upon to outfox us at every turn. We are trapped in space-time, unable to even think in terms of eternity and infinity yet that is our destiny! We come to God as those who seek refuge from disaster we cannot understand or outplan or face, and we must cling for our lives, for our temporal and eternal life is at stake!

This matter of salvation is the most important of all things we face upon the earth. God's message to us is one of hope, of the confidence we can have in his promises, for they are backed by his character. We must put the effort into discovering his character, and assessing his character on the basis of the facts we can know, in order to trust the Lord for all the facts we cannot at this point know. Abraham knew enough to trust God's Plan/Person – and so do we!

Verse 19. Our faith in God rests upon the bedrock of the character of the creator of the universe. Nothing can be more secure than the promises of God, for they rest upon His loving plan behind the very existence of the universe itself. God is the only place of refuge in the universe, for he alone has the plan that formed it, and knows the purpose and end of it all, and has already prepared its replacement.

He alone is our hope, all else is simply an uncertain place between the "big bang" that started the universe and the "black hole" that will end it (if we believe the astronomers, who are the only ones left if we reject God). God alone is the anchor of the soul in the storms of this life. We do not rest upon things, and the temporary security they bring, but upon the character of the living Creator, Saviour God, who in Christ we meet as our loving heavenly Father.

This anchor of the soul is both sure and steadfast; it is safe given the external threats to our stability, and it is secure, within itself having the power to hold us if we cling to it. Once we see that our security rests upon the knowledge of and trust in the character of God we have "broken through" to a knowledge of God and his plan that puts us ahead of most in the previous age.

They were locked outside the Temple Veil, they saw very little of the workings of redemption, but by seeing this, we break through to a relationship with God, where He discloses to us the secrets of his heart! We enter behind the veil of the Temple, we enter the Holy of Holies, we meet with God. This comment is just made here, and the shock of it would have hit the first hearers of this letter hard, and the writer wants this to sink in before he will go further with this thought later in the letter.

Verse 20. We do not enter behind the veil alone, for that would be too frightening, it would be to die! We follow our Lord Jesus Christ, who tore the Veil in two, and who entered through into the Holy of Holies with the acceptable sacrifice for our sins. **Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45.** The Lord is our fore-runner, the advanced scout of the army who ensures it is safe for the rest to follow, and he has done that very thing. The way is clear for us to follow, for the path is the one that he has cleared.

He comes in the order of Melchizedek, and he is high priest forever in that order, ever able to intercede for us, as the Priest-King of the universe, and the creator God of the universe itself. The next chapter will explore this high priesthood further, and see just how marvellous is this position that we have in Christ Jesus, for he is above all things and people. Worship His Majesty! We can trust His Holy Word.

THE ANVIL - GOD'S WORD

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, thought I, the anvil of God's Word,
For ages sceptic blows have beat upon;

Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed - the hammers gone.

Author Unknown

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

The story was told of an old Christian lady who had one son, for whom she saved up all her money to send to a seminary that he might serve the Lord. Sadly he went off to a liberal seminary where he lost the certainty of his faith. On one of his visits home he mocked his mother's faith in the doctrine of Eternal Security, saying, "Mother, you are not that significant, God would not lose anything if he lost you!"

The old lady, knowing her scriptures, replied, "Son, he would lose more than me, he would lose his good name!" We cannot fall through God's fingers, for we have become members of his body; we have become the fingers! We are secure in vital union Him. **John 6:36-40**. It is not being "added" to the Church, it is being entered into his body the Church. We are in union that is eternal – our eternal life began with salvation.

We do not depend on the theologies of men, but on the character of the living God, who made all, and has a plan for all he has made. He has won the victory, we follow his battlefield glory and can enter with boldness into the spoils of that victory; for us that means we can know God and depend totally upon Him throughout our earth bound life, secure in the knowledge that we are with Him in blessedness forever and ever. The Lord has entered through the veil and is seated at the right hand of power, and so let us enter with confidence into our "heirship" and claim the promises that are ours through Christ Jesus our Lord's work for us!

Do we look at the lives of the early saints as often as we should? The lives of the Patriarchs especially give us cause for confidence and celebration. They demonstrate the power and dependability of our Saviour God. As we know the stories of the great believers of the past so we gain more confidence in our own lives. Do we read the scriptures as often as we should, to gain this level of confidence? Many believers complain that they lack the faith of the fathers, but they are not prepared to be saturated in the Word of God as they were! Let us get serious about knowing the faith of the fathers, and let us imitate them in our study and application of the living Word of Truth.

B. PASTORAL

Biblical teaching is telling people about the dependability of the character of their great God. Do we preach about theology proper as often as we ought? If people really know God, they will feel the solid rock beneath their feet and have confidence to face the pressures of time. The essence, or Character of God, is the foundation upon which all else is built. As we know Him we learn we can trust Him in all things.

Once the knowledge of the Holy Character of God is well grounded in the Lord's people, we must move to the example of the early saints. This must be the subject of much of our regular advanced Bible teaching, for as we look at the lives of the early believers, of both Testaments, we see faith applied under pressure, and we see that life is not always a "bed of roses". The reality of living out faith in this world is facing pressure with faith and patience, completely trusting the power and plan of God to bring us through.

Ask yourself pastor, do these people I teach have a sense of an anchor deep within their soul? Do they feel the rock beneath them after they have heard the Word taught? Do they sense the power of God in the midst of their pressures, or do I simply fire them up for a time? Our call is to stabilise the Lord's people upon His foundation, the bedrock of confidence resting upon his faithful character and victorious plan for mankind's redemption.

Do they see themselves as, "the heirs of eternity", or do they see themselves, "on approval only"? The security of the believer's salvation is the stability upon which service is built. You build nothing on anxiety except neurosis! Believers are meant to be stable, strong, courageous, and confident, for we serve the risen Saviour, the king of Kings and Lord of Lords. Let us lead the Lord's people under our care, in praising His holy name for who he is and what he has done.

DOCTRINE

GOD: CHARACTER OF GOD

Whilst God is three persons all three persons have exactly the same essence or character:

a) SOVEREIGNTY

The Father (Ephesians 1:11, cf. Isaiah 40:8, Matthew 6:10, Hebrews 10:7, 9)

The Son (John 5:21, Revelation 19:16)

The Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11, cf. Hebrews 2:4)

b) RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Father (John 17:25)

The Son (Luke 1:35, Hebrews 7:26, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

The Spirit The Holy Spirit

c) JUSTICE

The Father (Job 37:23, cf. 8:3)
 The Son (Acts 3:14, John 5:22, Revelation 19:11)
 The Spirit (Nehemiah 9:20)

d) LOVE

The Father (John 3:16)
 The Son (Ephesians 5:25, 1 John 3:16)
 The Spirit (John 16:7-11, 1 Corinthians 2:10)

e) ETERNAL LIFE

The Father (John 5:26)
 The Son (Micah 5:2, cf. John 1:1-2, 1 John 5:11)
 The Spirit (Isaiah 48:16)

f) ALL-KNOWING

The Father (Hebrews 4:13, cf. Matthew 11:27, 1 Peter 1:2)
 The Son (John 18:4, cf. Matthew 9:4, John 2:25, 1 Corinthians 4:5)
 The Spirit (Isaiah 11:2, cf. 1 Corinthians 2:11)

g) EVERYWHERE

The Father (2 Chronicles 2:6)
 The Son (Matthew 28:20, cf. Ephesians 1:23)
 The Spirit (Psalm 139:7)

h) ALL-POWERFUL

The Father (Mark 14:36, cf. 1 Peter 1:5)
 The Son (Hebrews 1:3, cf. Matthew 24:30, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 3:21)
 The Spirit (Romans 15:19)

i) UNCHANGEABLE

The Father (Hebrews 6:17, Psalm 33:11)
 The Son (Hebrews 13:8)
 The Spirit (John 14:16)

j) TRUTH

The Father (John 7:28, John 17:3)
 The Son (1 John 5:20, cf. John 1:14, 14:6, Revelation 19:11)
 The Spirit (1 John 5:6, cf. John 14:17, 15:26, 16:13)

PARAPHRASE

"For when God promised great things to Abraham, because he could swear an oath by no greater, he swore the oath upon his own character, saying, it is certain, that blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you. And it was just as God said, for after Abraham patiently stood firm under the pressures that came, he arrived at the place in life where the promise was obtained. For men in truth swear oaths by a greater power or thing, and a solemn legal oath is the way men go about ending all disputes. God's desire for mankind is that we might be even more sure of his unchangeable promises than any legal system could provide, God confirmed his word by his oath. So, by two unchangeable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, God's purpose was, that we might have strong encouragement, trusting Him for our place of refuge, confidently laying hold of the hope that is set before us. This godly hope we have as an anchor of our soul, stable under the worst storms of life, and securely grounded in the character of the mighty God. Through God's provision we enter, even within the Temple Veil, where our fore-runner has already entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

DOCTRINES NOT FOUND IN THE BIBLE TOPIC BOOK

CHRIST: HIS HUMILIATION AND EXALTATION – THE ROAD TO GLORY

1. The Lord Jesus Christ in Exaltation - Hebrews 8:1 "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;"
2. The Road to Glory - Philippians 2:5-11

[a] Verse 5 **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:**

Vs. 5 "have this attitude" - (Present. Active. Imperative) To think objectively, noble thinking of divine viewpoint based on thinking the mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:16 compared to 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

"in yourselves" - among believers Vs. 4 "look" - (Present. Active. Participle] consider, focus Basis of 4 Laws of the Christian Way of Life.

[b] Verse :6 **Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:**

Vs. 6 "form of God" - Inner Character. Divine Essence- in his pre-incarnate state.

"existed" - (Present. Active. Participle.) Eternal existence. Revelation 1:8 John 1:1 Colossians 2:16

"robbery" - "to be grasped" - (Present. Active. Infinitive.)

1. Used for act of robbery
2. Used of a thing robbed
3. A prize or thing to be grasped; be won but something to clutch hold of strongly,

[c] Verse 7 **But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:**

Vs. 7 His incarnation: not something to hold.

No reputation - "emptied" - (Aorist. Active. Indicative.) To lay aside privileges, deprive oneself of normal function:

1. Not loss of deity
2. Not loss of divine attributes
3. Rather, a choosing not to exercise His essence so as to become "like us:" Hebrews 2:14,17

"taking the form" - (Aorist. Active. Participle.) human essence - body, soul, spirit no Old Sin Nature

"being made" (Aorist. Middle. Participle.) Having become. Precedes "humbled"

"likeness of men" - of same condition, nature and ability.

[d] Verse 8 **And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**

His Humiliation: - "being found" - (Aorist. Passive. Participle) being recognised, discovered.

"in appearance" - In contrast to all that He was, what He appeared outwardly to others.

"He humbled Himself" - (Aorist. Active. Indicative.) Mental attitude of grace from birth to death. True humility Romans 12:3

"becoming obedient" - (Aorist. Middle Participle.) to hear & obey.

"to the point of death" - Spiritual death. Christ learned obedience through suffering (Hebrews 5:8) maximum self-discipline.

Vs. 8 His Humiliation: - "death on a cross" - Most disgraceful form of death. Reserved for hardened criminals and runaway slaves.

[e] Verse 9 **Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:**

His Exaltation: - "therefore" - because of His humiliation "highly exalted" - (Aorist . Active. Indicative.) To raise above and beyond.

Christ shared God's glory in Eternity Past, but this is the exaltation of His humanity. Compare Ephesians 1:20-23

"bestowed" - (Aorist. Middle. Indicative.) Freely bestowed, as Christ gave Himself freely.

"name" - The rank, office, dignity. The name, Hebrews 1:4-8

[f] Verse 10 **That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;**

Celebrityship Recognised/Universal Acknowledgment: "at the name" - In sphere of His exalted position

1. Those in heaven - angelic
2. On earth - human
3. Under earth - dead unbelievers and imprisoned demons.

[g] Verse 11 **And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

"every tongue confess" - (Aorist. Middle. Subjunctive.) Openly acknowledge volitionally - self condemned

"Jesus Christ is Lord" - Deity

"to glory of God"

APPLICATION

1. True humility is the way to greatness. Luke 22:24-27 grace-oriented thinking. Romans 12:3
2. The way to lead with authority is to follow with submission. Luke 7:1-10
3. True understanding of authority demands that one serve - not be served. 1 Corinthians 9:1-18 The Law of Supreme Sacrifice and the Christian Medal of Honour.
4. Application to the Pastor. 1-Peter 5:1- 4

NOTES

CHAPTER 7

THE BETTER PRIESTHOOD OF MELCHIZEDEK

PART 6. CHRIST IS AFTER (SUPERIOR TO) MELCHIZEDEK - CHAPTER 7 : 1- 28

There are two(or more ways to divide up this chapter.

He is a perpetual Priest	7 : 1- 3
He is a Perfect Priest	7 : 4 - 22
He sums up all perfection and permanence in his priesthood	7 : 23 - 28
He is better than Abraham	7 : 1 - 10
He provides better assurance than any other old priesthood	7 : 11 - 19
He provides a better covenant	7 : 20 - 28

INTRODUCTORY CONCEPTS

1. The word "better" is a key word used in 12 places in Hebrews.
2. "Better" (Kreisson) comes from Kratos, which denotes power in activity and effect. It indicates that which is superior in powerfully producing desired results. It is dynamic, not just a moral statement.
3. Here it demonstrates the superiority of the priestly order of Melchizedek (as opposed to Levi) in that it provided for salvation and spirituality through its High-Priest, Jesus Christ. Melchizedek Better than Abraham. Vs. 1-10 (See: Genesis 14:17-20.)

HEBREWS 7 : 1- 10

“ 1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is king of peace; 3 without father without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. 4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. 5 And verily, they that are of the Sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: 6 but he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham and blessed him that had the promises. 7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. 8 And here, men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. 9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. 10 For he was yet in the loins of his father when he met Melchizedek.”

KEY WORDS

This	outos	this one!
Most high	upsistos	superlative = most high, above all others, mighty God.
Slaughter	Kope	defeat.
Blessed	eulogeo	aorist, active, participle; spoke a blessing.
Gave	merizo	aorist, active, indicative; divided out a tenth(dekate) = a tithe = literally a tenth.
Interpretation	ermeneuo	present, passive, participle; being explained, interpreted
Without	apator/amator	without mother or father being known.
Descent	Agenealogetos	without genealogy being known(a disqualification had he been of Levi)
Neither	mete ... mete	neither beginning (arche) nor end (telios) being recorded. Not the normal words for birth or death, they are words used to speak of something eternal.
Like	aphomoioao	perfect , passive, participle; made like, spoken of as if he is, made a copy of.
Consider	theoreo	present, active, imperative; really concentrate, consider what you see; it's an order!
How great	pelikos	how great in honour and importance.
Spoils	akrothinion	from the top of the heap; the best of the spoils of war was given to the gods.
Patriarch	patriarches	the ruler of the tribe, with the definite article = the great patriarch.
Take tithes	apodekatoo	perfect , active, infinitive; to take the tithe.
Come out	exerchomai	perfect , active, participle; go out from , descend, be born from, with lasting results.
Not reckoned	Genealogeomai	present, middle, participle; trace ones descendants.
Received	dekatoos	perfect , active, indicative; received, with everlasting results, tithes.
tithes		
Blessed	Eulogeo	perfect , active, indicative; blessed with everlasting results. The two perfect tenses in this verse really emphasize the permanence of the results of the blessing.
Contradiction	Antilogia	contradiction, logical argument against.
Less	elatton	lesser, inferior.
Greater	kreitton	comparative, superior to the others.
That die	apothnesko	present, active, participle; men that keep on dying.
Witnessed	martureo	present, passive, participle; to be witnessed, to be reported.
As I may say	os epos eipein	“so to speak”, or, “one might almost say”.
Payed	lambano	present, active, participle; the one who keeps on receiving tithes, has been tithed.
Tithes	dekatoos	perfect , passive, participle; has been tithed, with results that go on forever.
Met	sunantao	aorist, active, indicative; when he met.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

This chapter is very tightly argued in a Rabbinic fashion, demonstrating point by point (drash by drash) that the superiority of Melchizedek was recognised by Abraham, and therefore the Lord, as the high priest of the order of Melchizedek, is superior to all other orders of priesthoods, and that he delivers as high priest, a superior package to mankind to that delivered by the Aaronic priesthood. This is no accident; it is the Plan of God.

Point 1. He is better by virtue of rank and authority. (Melchizedek was a royal-priest, and the Lord is King of all human kings and Lord of angelic lords).

Verse 1. The verse starts with the exclamation, “this one”, meaning, this great man, this strange figure Melchizedek. His titles are then given to underline the similarity of the Lord and he. He is king of Salem (Jerusalem), but the meaning is “king of peace (shalom)”. He was also the priest of the most high (only true) God. He steps out of history to meet Abraham after his defeat of the confederation of kings led by Chedorlaomer (Genesis 14), and he pronounces a blessing on Abraham. He is God’s man in a crisis, keenly aware of what God is doing in history, and speaking to men with the sole perspective of the words of the living God.

Point 2. He is better by interpretation of his name and title.

Verse 2. Abraham paid a tithe from the spoils directly to this man after his blessing. This was a recognition by the victor that the person he was honouring by this gift had played an important part in the victory. How is this? It can

only be that Abraham is recognising the prayer warrior status of Melchizedek, and he is honoured for his faith in the reality of the victory, and his untiring prayers for victory. His name is now interpreted by the writer, reminding the hearers that this man was a unique character, with special significance. Names in the ancient world were given with prophetic significance, and this man is both king of righteousness, and king of peace; both titles later assigned to the Lord.

1. King of Righteousness (Melek = King, tsedek = righteousness).
2. King of Salem (Jerusalem) = King of peace, or reconciliation.

Point 3. He is better because he is a type of Christ. This verse doesn't indicate that he is a theophany, only that by having no recorded genealogy, birth or death, he is made to resemble the Son of God, who is a king and priest forever.

Verse 3. No record existed of his birth, death or genealogy amongst the men of his day; it was as if he had stepped onto the stage of history and was recognised by his people as "different", and made king and priest. This was unusual in the ancient world. For a person to avoid giving a genealogy often meant that person was ashamed of their illegitimate or poor birth! Only those able to call out their genealogy and prove their descent from Levi and Aaron were entitled to be priests. An illegitimate birth, or lack of knowledge of any parent in the line meant that person was disqualified from priesthood. The exception was the nobility, excellence and courage of an individual, which rendered them so unique as to be "without parents" – their genealogy was irrelevant for they were exceptional.

The Lord had the stigma of illegitimacy cast at him, for he was not the son of Joseph according to the flesh. The only exception to this rule – that genealogy had to be said aloud as noted above - was if the person spoken of was unique, that they were God's man, or God become man. Melchizedek is spoken of "as if" ("made to be like" – perfect tense) he was the Son of God, and the writer is indicating by saying this, that Moses, under God's guidance, recorded it this way to later draw this very analogy to the person and work of Jesus. Moses in writing the story this way, from the tablets he had, made the analogy to Messiah clear. He is High Priest-King "in continuity/perpetuity", without break. Also a perfect tense, but not the normal way to say "forever" – this indicates he remains actively in place as the symbol of the superiority of the one who is to come to all that will be established through Levi.

Death ends the service of the priesthood's of man, but the order of Melchizedek has no end for his death is not recorded. This is a very Rabbinic way of arguing (called "a drash") but the Spirit's seal is upon it, as it is here before us in scripture! The story of Melchizedek is recorded by Moses in such a way as all these things can later be drawn from it, and in this we see the hand of God. This man stands for a greater reality than what occurred in his own lifetime.

Point 4. Abraham recognised him as better than he was, and gave him tithes of the choicest of the spoils.

Verses 4-5. The writer starts this verse by urging the hearers to really concentrate on just how great this man Melchizedek was! He was honoured by the great patriarch Abraham, and thereby recognised as one superior to Abraham. He didn't get any old "tenth", but Abraham took from the "top of the spoil heap" to give to him. Once again a traditional practise is referred to; to underline the importance and superiority of Melchizedek.

After a great victory the spoils of war were piled up in a great heap, with the most valuable things on top. The top tenth of the spoils, the best of them, were given to the gods of the victors. Here these things are given to Melchizedek indicating his place as the representative on earth of the true God at that time.

Verse five contains another very Rabbinic argument, for a son was reckoned "in" his father (grandfathers and great grandfathers are included in the concept), and if the father acknowledged a superiority, then that recognition applied also to his son, and he was bound by the words of his father. As Levi was still unborn, and therefore, in a manner of speaking, in the loins of Abraham, he is bound by the recognition that his "father" Abraham gives to Melchizedek.

It should also be noticed that the writer reminds his hearers that the Levites received tithes of their brethren by command of Law, but Melchizedek received tithes of Abraham freely, by virtue of Abraham recognising his superiority and position as the priest king of the living God. In the next two verses the writer takes the mirror point and makes it clear that from all perspectives Melchizedek is superior. In the loins of Abraham Levi also was recognizing Melchizedek as superior.

Point 5. The better (Melchizedek) blessed the lesser (Abraham).

Verses 6-7. The first point made is, Melchizedek pre-dates Levi, he does not draw any authority from Levi. He is not of Abraham's line, who had God's promises, yet he took the superior position in the interaction of Genesis 14 and blessed Abraham. To give a blessing is to demonstrate that you consider yourself superior and able to deliver a blessing, as God's chosen woman/man, to another in need of your ministry. Melchizedek was able to do this without any arrogance, and his blessing was accepted and honoured by Abraham in a way indicating that Abraham appreciated the eternal significance of the gesture, and was personally prepared to acknowledge all it signified.

There is no argument about this matter, the writer explains in verse seven, for only the superior blesses the inferior, and conversely only the inferior is blessed by the superior. The interaction between the two men tells us who is superior and who recognises that they are inferior. This reasoning (drash) would have been a shock to the first hearers of this letter, for they had not used or heard this logic before. It means that before the Levitical priesthood is established, there is a

type of **priest-king** brought out onto the platform of history, **who is always superior** to what will be established later in Levi, and who will later again replace the Levitical priesthood itself. The argument continues in the next two verses.

Point 6. In conclusion, the Levites through Abraham paid tithes to the superior priesthood of Melchizedek, and so of those who stand in Melchizedek's place, for Christ is priest forever. So are we! Read again **1 Peter 2:9-10**.

Verses 8-10. Men who keep on dying form the Levitical priesthood, and yet even though they die like their brethren they receive the tithes of the people as God's representatives. How much more superior is a priesthood built upon one who does not die, but lives forever? The logic is inescapable, Melchizedek and the Lord Jesus Christ are both superior to Levi. That much these people had seen, but they had not applied it to their religious practices at this point! They had not yet accepted that the Law of Moses, the function of the Levitical or Aaronic priesthood was over, finished, completed, to be completely replaced until the Second Advent of the Lord as King, when modified and very limited sacrifices will begin again for the Millennial Kingdom.

The writer then repeats the principle already mentioned above in verse five, drawing more powerful application from it. If Abraham paid tithes then in a manner of speaking, Levi also has been tithed, and the tithe was paid to Melchizedek. Levi, in the Jewish way of thinking, was there at the meeting with Melchizedek, he was within the genetics of Abraham, and the actions of his great grandfather were binding on him. He has "recognized" this in his ancestor, and his order is set aside for the Church Age, as it had fulfilled its purposes by that point. The Levitical priesthood will be recalled for the Millennium but with modified sacrifices – for they all look backwards at that point.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

This passage has a very Jewish way of arguing throughout it, and I suspect that most times you have read this you, like me, will have just skipped over the passage to get to more straight forward verses, but let us pause here and see what personal applications can be made here to encourage and challenge us!

When a blessing of money or success was received by anyone in the ancient world their first thought was of thanking their "god" for the bounty bestowed upon them. Where do our thoughts turn when we receive money today? Do they not first turn to what we can spend it on? Why do we have so often "leaky pockets", with money in short supply? Could it be that we are not blessed with material things as much as God wants us to be, because we are not in the habit of thankfulness and giving.

The tenth/tithing principle of giving is minimum standard for believers; we should be giving thanks, in offerings to the Lord, far above a tenth, for we are part of the superior priesthood to the Levitical. Are we known as people of bounty towards the Lord? If not we must set our hearts (and wallets) right before God, for we ought to stand as the royal priesthood we are, and that means we live at a higher level than the old!

We are often in our egalitarian day embarrassed about concepts of "superiority" yet the Bible constantly reminds us that some are superior and some inferior in service and/or status with God's plan. As royal priests, **1 Peter 2:9-11**, we are called to live in a superior way to the Old Testament saints. How are we doing? Are we giving and serving more faithfully than those we read of?

Some will argue, 'wait a minute these men were great and we are just ordinary men and women!' Yet we have the Holy Spirit permanently with us to empower and we have a completed revelation from God, and we have a clear overview of the Lord's plan and our present and future place within it. They did not have all these things. With such superior spiritual "assets" to them, will not more be expected from us? Remember the Lord's words on this matter. **Luke 12:48**.

In Jewish thought the son was considered "in" his fathers, and the benefits won by the father, even generations before, were accredited to the sons and daughters of that father. Just so we accrue, or have recorded to our account the benefits won by the Lord Jesus Christ for us. When we enter into union with him, becoming his son's and daughters we enter fully into the blessing won by him. We don't think this way normally, and as believers we are challenged to meditate upon this and live it out with thankfulness.

B. PASTORAL

Our great position in Christ Jesus is to be a constant theme of our preaching, is it not! Every week at some point the Lord's people need to be reminded of who they are and what that means for their daily life. We are royal priests and ambassadors of heaven's kingdom, and ought to be living as such.

The Lord is High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek and that means we too are priests of this kingly order because of our position "In Christ". The Lord's people need that weekly challenge to remember they are royalty and must, in the eyes of the world, live in such a manner as befits their kingly and heavenly status.

DOCTRINES

GIVING AND TITHING

1. Giving is an important part of spiritual life. It includes your attitude, the giving of yourself, your capacity as well as your possessions. Giving is as much a part of worship as praying, singing, listening to teaching, observing the Lord's Table, reading the Word.

2. Basic Principles of Giving

- a) Old Testament Giving - this giving was a freewill offering. (Proverbs 11:24,25)
- b) New Testament Giving - also a freewill offering. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- c) Tithing (meaning "ten percent") - was a form of income tax for all Jews.
- d) The time to give - the first day of the week, Sunday. (1 Corinthians 16:2)
- e) How much - as God has prospered (1 Corinthians 16:2)

3. General Scripture on Giving. (2 Corinthians chapters 8 & 9)

- a) 2 Corinthians 8:1-8. Contrasts the Macedonian givers to the Corinthian givers, the former having been made poor by Roman oppression gave liberally. The Corinthians, the richest Church in Greece, gave sparingly.
- b) Giving is an attitude of grace and inner happiness rather than the amount donated (2 Corinthians 8:2)
- c) Before money is given you must give yourself - a surrendered life to God. (2 Corinthians 8:5)
- d) Giving is as important an act as any other act in the fellowship. (2 Corinthians 8:7)
- e) Giving is love giving not law giving (2 Corinthians 8:8)
- f) Giving is a response to grace, the prime example being the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 8:9)
- g) Money given in the Lord's service must be properly administered. (2 Corinthians 8:19-21)
- h) If you give in grace you reap bountifully, if you give with a wrong attitude you reap sparingly (2 Corinthians 9:6)
- i) Giving is a reflection of your character. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- j) God has given unto us his indescribable Gift. (2 Corinthians 9:15)

4. Giving to the work of the Lord

- a) There are five reasons for giving to the work of the Lord.
- b) That God's work might be supported. (1 Timothy 5:17-18)
- c) That God might be glorified. (2 Corinthians 9:12)
- d) That needy saints might be provided for. (Acts 2:44-45, 11:29)
- e) That other Christians might be challenged. (2 Corinthians 9:2)
- f) That the giver's life might be blessed. (2 Corinthians 9:6)

5. Giving alms to the poor:

- a) In the Bible, almsgiving means giving to the poor.
- b) The Pharisees distorted the principle of giving by making a public display. The Lord Jesus rejected this pride. (Matthew 6:1-4)
- c) When we give alms we have to do it in secret, so that we honour God and not ourselves (Matthew 6:1-4).
- d) The giving of alms to the poor is encouraged (Luke 12:33; Acts 10:2,4,31), and will be rewarded (Matthew 6:1-4).

6. Tithes: There were three tithes in Israel:

- a) Tithe 1 - Annually for the maintenance of the Levites (Numbers 18:21,24). The Levites were equivalent to "civil servants" in a theocratic nation.
- b) Tithe 2 - Annually for national feasts and sacrifices (Deuteronomy 14:22-26)
- c) Tithe 3 - Every third year a third tithe was required for the poor of the land. (Deuteronomy 14:28-29). Equivalent to "social security".
- d) In (Malachi 3:8-10) it mentions tithes and offerings, the tithes to be brought to the storehouse or treasury. Offerings were freewill gifts in addition to tithes.

SUBMISSION

1. This means to humble oneself in willing service to another, with the connotation that it is for your good (Genesis 16:9, 1 Peter 5:6, Hebrews 13:17).
2. We must fully surrender ourselves to God (James 4:7, Romans 12:1-2). As the Lord made himself obedient unto death so must we (Philippians 2:18).

3. We are, in Christ to submit ourselves each to the other within the church. This involves putting the spiritual needs of others ahead of any personal interests (Ephesians 5:21).
4. Within the church believers are to submit to the teaching authority of the pastor as he preaches from the Word (Hebrews 13:17, 1 Corinthians 16:6, 1 Peter 5:5).
5. A wife is to submit herself to her own husband within their marriage. This involves respect for him as her spiritual leader and protector (Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 3:18, Titus 2:4-5).
6. Children also are to submit in love to their parents' authority under God (Colossians 3:20).
7. All believers are to be in submission to the laws of their land, unless those laws violate the clear command of God (Romans 13:1, 2, Matthew 22:21, 1 Peter 2:13-17; exception example: Acts 4:15-20, 5:40-42).
8. Workers are to be under authority of their employers and their managers (Colossians 3:22-25, Ephesians 6:5-8, Titus 2:9, 10, 1 Peter 2:18-24).
9. Those in authority have a special responsibility to treat those under them with care and respect (Colossians 4:1).

PARAPHRASE

“For this one, this person Melchizedek, King of Jerusalem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the defeat of the five kings, he is the one who spoke the blessing over Abraham. To this man Abraham gave a tenth of all he had won in the battle. His name means first, king of righteousness, also king of peace. He appears in the Bible record as a person without father, without mother, without genealogy, neither having a beginning nor ending to his life; indeed he is spoken of as if he were the Son of God, and as such lives forever as God’s king priest. Now really focus your minds on this, notice how great this man was, that he was spoken of in this way, how that even the patriarch Abraham gave him the god’s portion of the spoils of war. Now, you know the truth regarding tithes, how the sons of Levi, who receive by birth the office of priesthood, they have the commandment from God to take tithes from the people in accordance with the Law of Moses. (They take tithes from the sons of Abraham yet they also are sons of Abraham, so they do this only by God’s command). In contrast to them, this man Melchizedek, whose descent is not of Levi, received tithes from Abraham, yet it was Abraham who had received the promises of God! Now without any fear of contradiction the principle accepted by all peoples, is that the lesser pays tithes, and receives blessing from a superior. Under the Law men who die receive tithes, (contrast this with what we see in Genesis 14), for here we see Melchizedek receiving tithes, and he is spoken of as if he never died. Taking an accepted viewpoint concerning these things, Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek, for he was in the body of his great grandfather Abraham, and so was, in Abraham paying the tithe. For when Abraham met Melchizedek, Levi was yet unborn, within his great grandfather. (So we see that Melchizedek is proven superior to Levi).”

II. THE HIGH-PRIEST OF THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK PROVIDES BETTER ASSURANCE. VS. 11-19

HEBREWS 7:11-19

“ 11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. 13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang our of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. 15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, 16 who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. 17 For he testifieth, ‘thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.’(Psalm 110 : 4) 18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof; 19 (for the law made nothing perfect), but the bringing in of a better hope(did); by which we draw nigh to God.”

KEY WORDS

Perfection	teleiosis	completion, full reaching of the goal.
Received	nomotheteomai	perfect , passive, indicative; were given, received the law.
Rise	anistemi	present, middle, infinitive; to rise up. to be raised up.
Changed	metatithemi	present, passive, participle; changed, transferred.
Change	metathesis ginetai	a change takes place.
Pertaineth	metecho	Perfect , active, indicative; belongs to.
Gave attendance	prosecho	perfect , active, indicative; to give attention to, attend to, serve at.
Evident	Prodelos	before all things it is obvious.
Sprung	anatello	perfect , active, indicative; rising of the sun, moon and stars is the normal usage of the word. Hence the usage to describe the birth of a king.

Far more	perissoteros	especially more.
Evident	katadelos	quite clear for all to see.
Similitude	omoiotes	likeness.
Made	ginomai	perfect , active , indicative; made with lasting results.
Carnal	sarkinos	fleshly, of the soul rather than the spirit.
Endless	akatalutos	indestructible, not able to be destroyed.
Forever	ais ton aiona	unto the ages of history and beyond into eternity.
Testifies	martureomai	present, passive, indicative; keeps on bearing witness concerning the Lord.
Disannulling	athetesis	legal term for the annulling of a contract.
Going before	proago	present, active, participle; going beforehand, the preceding, former.
Weakness	asthenes	weakness, lacking strength in itself.
Unprofitableness	anapheles	uselessness; it had no ability to draw men towards God.
Made perfect	teleioo	aorist, active, indicative; to bring to perfection.
Bringing in	epeisagoge	to bring in a replacement.
Better hope	kreitton	better than the alternative of the past.
Draw nigh	eggizo	present, active, indicative; approach or draw near to.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Section 1. Because of the inability of the Levitical priesthood to provide lasting and complete salvation and revelation, the need was always there to eventually change both priesthood and Law. Verses. 11-12

- a. From priesthood of Levi to priesthood of Melchizedek (Christ).
- b. From Law of Moses to Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. **Romans 8:2 - 4**

The writer reminds the hearers in this section that the priesthood of the Levites was an integral part of the Law of Moses; a Law that was given hundreds of years after the meeting of Melchizedek and Abraham. The author here will argue, the Mosaic Law and all its system was simply an interlude of 1500 years between the arrival of Melchizedek and the full instituting of his priesthood through the person and work of Christ. The Law had a place, but it was to prepare for the coming of the greater/superior priesthood of the order of Melchizedek, in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Verse 11. If God's final goal had been contained within the Levitical priesthood there would have been no need for there to be another priesthood in any form! This argument is a compelling one, underlining the writer's thesis that the Mosaic Law was simply an interlude, a preparation for a greater thing that had already been prefigured in the person of Melchizedek. The reception of the Mosaic Law had eternal results, for it laid out all the detail of the coming Messiah; who he was and what he would do portrayed in every aspect of the Law. It existed to point to Jesus, and even when partly reinstated in the Millennium it will only look back to what Jesus did. He is central – the Law gets its meaning from him.

Verse 12. If the priesthood is changed, then because the two things are integrally related, there must also be a change of Law. Law and attendant priesthood are two sides of the same coin; and they cannot be separated. This is a challenge to those who want to have the Law without the sacrifices and priesthood; from the Jewish perspective of the time such a thing is not possible. God joined them together and man must not "put them asunder"!

Section 2. This change is evident when you consider that Christ was not of the tribe of Levi. **Verses. 13-14**

Verse 13. Jesus, of whom Melchizedek speaks by his person and work, was not of the tribe of Levi at all. Jesus was of the tribe of Judah, and none from that tribe ever served the Lord at the Altar of the Temple, for that was not their role under the instructions given in the Law of Moses. The priestly and kingly offices were separated firmly by the Mosaic Law, and any king who broke this separation died under God's judgement, because they offered sacrifices, or took any priestly role, when they are not entitled to. For example, Uzziah, **2 Chronicles 26:16-23**.

Verse 14. It is clear where the Lord came from according to his human genealogy, and that is from the tribe of Judah, and concerning that tribe Moses spoke nothing about priesthood. These two verses act as mirrors on each other, in the tradition of Hebrew parallelism, where one point is stated in two parallel ways, underlining the importance of the principle.

Section 3. It is also evident that His priesthood is based, not on physical requirement, (i.e., **Leviticus 21:16-24**), but by virtue of the power of an indestructible life, (priesthood not terminated by death) and by divine oath. **Verses. 15-17** (review **Hebrews 6:13-20**).

Verse 15. It is even more evident, the writer states, clear for all to see, that the Lord has come in the likeness of Melchizedek, rather than Aaron. The Lord is visibly different to the men of Levi in person and deeds, and this is deliberate, for the Lord is showing us that he is doing a new thing!

Verse 16. The Lord's power did not come from the Commandments of the Mosaic Law, but rather from the direct power of the Holy Spirit and commission of the Almighty God. The Mosaic Priesthood operated by tradition, He operated by birth right, victory, power and majesty. He operates by eternal power, the power of the Spirit and of an endless life. The writer has already noted that the sons of Levi die, and so the fact that the Lord has risen from the dead is in view

here, and demonstrates the total superiority of his priesthood. The perfect tenses used here underline the permanence of the changes the Lord brings about.

Verse 17. The Lord's eventual replacement of Levi by the Melchizedek order was prophesied in the period of the Law itself, in **Psalms 110:4**. This text is quoted in this verse reminding us that the plan of God did not have the replacement of Levi as a last thought or surprise, it was there all along, just not seen by those who were fixated on the Law as the be all and end all. The writer is, point by point, showing that the plan is bigger than the legalists have seen it to be, and the thing that they have focused on (the Mosaic Law and its priesthood) as ever-lasting has been replaced by the One who is truly everlasting. They should have seen this in the Melchizedek incident – but because it was 500+ years before the giving of the Mosaic Law they missed its eternal significance.

Section 4. Therefore, the now “useless and powerless” commandment (Law of Moses) is set aside, (not being able to provide lasting salvation) and has been replaced (as planned by God from eternity past) by a better hope, demonstrated by our ability to draw near in access to God. Building on the earlier points made in **Hebrews 2:17; 4:16; 10:22. Verses 18 - 19.**

Verse 18. In this verse he brings forward his conclusion so far. The Mosaic Law has been annulled; it has been set aside in favour of its replacement. This verse would have been shocking to the first hearers even though he has prepared them for it by his argument. The legal contract that God had made with Israel at Sinai (The Mosaic Law) was now over; it was formally finished with! The word used is a legal, technical term for a formal end of a contract's application. This was shocking enough, but he has more in store for them, by noting that the reason for its annulment is “weakness”, and “unprofitableness”.

These two words make clear the built in and eternally planned limitations of the Mosaic Law. Each limitation underlining a corresponding strength of the order of Melchizedek as activated by the person and work of the Lord Jesus the Messiah. The Mosaic Law had no power in itself, it was unable to provide men with the power to obey and fulfil its difficult commandments. Secondly it had no innate ability to draw men to God, it could only show who separated from God's righteousness men really were.

These two weaknesses were not problems before the Lord came for they prepared men for the Saviour, by showing them just how short they all fell from God's holy standards, but they made men hungry for the remedy and that comes in the new order established by the Lord. We can see where the writer is going here, can we not! Logic demands, once these points are accepted, that the people leave the old Mosaic Law behind in its entirety, as it has done its job, and follow after the Lord and his “Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus”. **Romans 8:1-9.**

Verse 19. The old law and the new are compared here, and compared very bluntly. The old perfected, or completed nothing, for it simply “prepared” Israel for the Messiah, and it has been replaced by what it looked forward to, by the Lord and his work and way of life for all mankind. In Christ we can have real confidence as we face forward towards eternity, for in relationship with Christ-Jesus all of mankind can be brought by the Holy Spirit to spiritual completion. The goal of the Plan of God is to bring saved mankind to spiritual completion and blessedness, and this was not done by the Mosaic Law at all, rather the Law prepared the way for the one who would complete the hope of salvation, and that one was Christ.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

This passage with its tightly woven argument, reminds us of the need to correctly “divide the word of truth”, to discern what applies to what period of history and identify when one teaching of the Lord is replaced by another, so that we are always correctly oriented to the time of history we live in.

The problem with the church at Jerusalem, was not their love for the Lord nor devotion to what they believed. The problem was they had not seen that the old had been swept away and they needed to let it go, and follow the new revelation.

How often do we cling to an old practise, maybe handed down from our fathers, and lift it up to “biblical” authority so that we are not ready to move on to a new way of doing things that the Lord may wish us to follow. Many churches have orders of service that have little to do with the will of the Lord and more to do with what their fathers did in that place, or within that culture.

This is a reminder to us not to “deify” or give spiritual significance to our culture, but rather to be careful in our Biblical exegesis so that we are ever ready to let go old practises to be of more use to the Lord where he wishes us to go.

B. PASTORAL

Do we teach as systematically through the Scriptures as we ought, so that the Lord's people really understand the different procedures and practises of each age of history? The whole plan of God for mankind has been revealed through the Word of God, and the Lord's people need to know where they stand within it, and praise Him for the part they are to play in their own day.

We are to understand the part played by others and why the Lord told them to do the things they were commanded to, but we are not to do the things commanded in other ages and to other peoples; we are to obey the Lord's commands for us! Do the Lord's people understand this from you Pastor?

How clearly do the people understand the role of the Mosaic Law, and do they see that it is annulled? Too many confused believers are wandering around out there with one foot in Grace and another in the old Mosaic Law, and they are in the same danger the church in Jerusalem was in! To be wrongly oriented to your period of history is to miss your role in your period of history! We also have an increasing number of Christians who are trying to be Jewish, rather than learning what it is to be "Christian".

To be living inappropriately in the Church Age is to fail to use the things the Lord has for you! It is to miss out on your opportunities for specific service, and to miss out on his blessings now and forever. Let us ensure the Lord's people know where they stand, and live and serve as those who follow the "Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus", rather than the old "law of sin and death".

DOCTRINES

LAWS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. THE LAW WHICH WE ARE NOT UNDER - THE MOSAIC LAW

Christ fulfilled the requirements of the Mosaic Law (Matthew 5:17). If the Holy Spirit has control over us we automatically fulfill the righteousness of the Law.

2. THE LAW OF LIBERTY

This law is directed towards oneself. Biblically speaking you have the right to do certain things that will not cause you personally to fail the Lord in any way (1 Corinthians 8:8).

3. THE LAW OF LOVE

This law takes other believers into consideration. In effect this law says that because of your love for the weaker brethren and in order not to offend or upset them you refrain from doing certain things which you have the liberty to do. You refrain not because they are wrong in themselves but rather you wish to help other believers rather than hinder them (Romans 8:1-9, 1 Corinthians 8:9).

4. THE LAW OF EXPEDIENCY

This law concerns the unbeliever. It is expedient that your life tells the world of Christ. The unbeliever has set up standards of conduct for the Christian. Therefore you refrain from or do certain legitimate things - not because they are wrong but because they may offend an unbeliever and prevent him from seeing the real issue that CHRIST DIED FOR HIS SINS (1 Corinthians 9:20-23).

5. THE LAW OF SUPREME SACRIFICE

This law is directed towards God. It involves the believer forsaking a completely legitimate function in life in order to more perfectly serve the Lord. Missionaries often function under this law when they live in primitive conditions on the mission field. This law can also operate under Australian conditions (Matthew 3:1-6).

6. PRINCIPLE:

As Christians we have liberty, but total freedom for ourselves may enslave others. We have to use our liberty in such a responsible manner that it does not infringe on the liberty of others. As Christians we must act responsibly (Ephesians 5:15).

PARAPHRASE

"If therefore the full reaching of God's goal within his plan, was achieved by the Mosaic Law and the Levitical priesthood that was part of it, then why was any other priesthood necessary? Why would the Lord have raised himself up within the priesthood of the order of Melchizedek, and not the order of Aaron? For the priesthood was definitely changed, and with that change there is of necessity a changing also of the Law itself. For the Lord, of whom all these things are spoken, belongs to another tribe than Levi, of which no-one ever served as a priest at the altar. For it is clearly evident that the Lord was from Judah, of which tribe Moses gave no instructions concerning priestly service, (for they had no such role within the Mosaic Law period). It is even more clear than that! For it was after the likeness of Melchizedek, that there arose another priest, who was not made a priest by commandment of the old fleshly law, (where the priests die), but was made a priest because of his resurrection life, for His power is that of one who lives forever. For David testified of him, saying, 'thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek'. See the truth clearly now! There is an annulling of the old law, because it was lacking the inner strength to perform the task, nor did it have the power in itself to draw men to God. For the Mosaic Law made no man complete spiritually, but the living confidence that the Lord's person and work brings into history, is the way we all can draw near to God."

III. THE PROVISIONS OF A BETTER COVENANT. VS. 20-28

HEBREWS 7 : 20 - 28

“ 20 And in as much as not without an oath he was made priest: 21 (for those priests were made without an oath, but this with an oath by him that said unto him, ‘The Lord sware and will not repent’, ‘Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek’.) 22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. 23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; 24 but this man, because he continueth forever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. 26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; 27 who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the peoples: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. 28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.”

KEY WORDS

Made	ginomai	Perfect , active, participle; made with lasting results. (Also vs 22, 23)
Repent	metamelomai	future, passive, indicative; to change the mind after experiencing great sorrow.
Surety	egguos	guarantee, legal bond paid as a promise that a condition will be met fully.
Suffered	koluo	present, passive, infinitive; because they were prevented by death.
Continueth	meno	present, active, infinitive; abiding.
Unchangeable	apaarabatos	not able to be passed on to another.
Uttermost	panteles	complete, to the end of things, for all time.
Ever liveth	pantote +zao	because he continually lives.
Intercession	entugchano	present, active, infinitive; to make on-going intercession for another.
Became	prepo	Imperfect, active, indicative; it was fitting.
Holy	hosios	separated out for God's service, pure and righteous.
Harmless	akakos	without any evil at all.
Undefiled	amiantos	stainless, without any thing wrong that disqualifies from spiritual service
Separate	chorizo	perfect , passive, participle; permanently separated from sinners due to his perfection.
Higher	upselos	comparative, higher than.
Needeth	anagke	of necessity.
Once for all	ephapax	once for all time.
Maketh	kathistemi	present, active, indicative; constituted, appointed.
Infirmity	astheneia	human weaknesses.
Consecrated	teleioo	perfect , passive, participle; made perfect, brought to their goal.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Section 1. These provisions are established on Divine oath. Verses 20-21 (Refer back to **Hebrews 6:13-20**, also to **Galatians 3:15-18**.)

Verse 20. In **Psalm 110:4**, the oath had been mentioned and the writer explores the significance of this word here. What does it mean that God gave his oath? The contrast between the two priesthoods is again in view. The Aaronic priesthood takes office under Moses, without the taking of any oath, for they are directed by the Lord to take up these duties and have commandments to follow.

The Lord's high priesthood within the order of Melchizedek, in contrast to Aaron, is established by God's oath. Such a unique establishment indicates both superiority and also, "last word", in the sense that this is the priesthood to end all others. The Mosaic Priesthood of Levi is an "interim" priesthood between the first Melchizedek and the last – Jesus Christ the Saviour, Lord and King.

Verse 21. God's directions were behind Aaron and Levi for a specific purpose and for a specific time. In contrast, God's promise and oath are behind the order of Melchizedek, and this lays the foundation for the realisation that the priesthood of Melchizedek is very different to that of Levi. In this verse two differences are highlighted again; this priesthood of Melchizedek is eternal, and this one will not be changed in any way, no matter what the apparent pressure or turn of later events.

God will not "repent" of the decision to establish this priesthood; there will be no changes in this at all. The priesthood of Levi/Aaron caused great grief to the Lord God due to the sins of the priests, and their final rejection of the Lord, and their active part in killing the Lord of Glory. The word for repent, is to change the mind after great suffering, and the writer indicates two things by the use of this word. God will not change his mind about the Lord's high priesthood, for there will be no grief with the Lord, for he is perfect and sinless. Also there will be no failure of any kind in this priesthood and so there will be no need for any replacements.

Section 2. To the degree that Divine oath is superior to physical lineage, Christ is a guarantee of a better covenant. Verse 22 (Based on the Cross and Resurrection).

Verse 22. Once again the writer uses a legal term to underline the formal and trustworthy nature of the promise/oath of God regarding the role and position of the Lord's high priesthood. The promises and oath of the Lord are absolutely guaranteed. The Lord stakes his character on this matter. This covenant is "better" than the old one; it is superior in all aspects of it. Our surety for this is the person and work of the Lord Jesus himself.

Section 3. Since death cannot terminate His priesthood (Verse 16), He remains a priest forever. Verse 24 (Also refer back to Verses 17,21.)

Verse 23. The writer returns to a previous point, reminding us that the deaths of the Old Mosaic Covenant priests is one of the indicators that that covenant is inferior, depending as it does on men who die, whereas the Lord's new priesthood rests upon the reality of his eternal life, and upon our own in union with Him.

Verse 24. A strong contrast is drawn here, between limited men who die, and the risen Lord-God who lives forever. The Lord ever abides to help us, he lives forever, and is the author of eternal life for us. The way the high priesthood was passed on was by death of one then the new one was appointed. If the Lord never dies then there is no transmission of the high priesthood to another. His high priesthood is not able to be passed to another, for there is no point in time or eternity where it can be, for He ever lives! He keeps on having and holding (present, active, indicative of the verb - echo) the high priesthood forever. We in union with Him have our role/destiny also secure in our relationship.

Section 4. Since He remains a priest forever, He is able to save man forever, and to make intercession on the basis of His completed work on the Cross. Verse 25 (Compare **1 John 2:1-2**, **Romans 8:32**).

Verse 25. As a result of his eternal priesthood, he is the eternal saviour, ever able to save and deliver. Because he lives forever, he is able at all times to intercede on the part of those who come to him for salvation and assistance once saved. He gives "complete" salvation with no help needed from anyone else. We have all we need in relationship with Him. This is the point the writer wants to sink in to the hearers of this letter. He desperately wants them to see they do not need to add in the Mosaic Law, or anything else, for what they have in Christ is all they need!

Section 5. Christ is suitable as our High-Priest because:

1. As God, He is totally free from sin. Vs. 26
2. As Man, He offered Himself for sins. Vs. 27 This was a once for all sacrifice for every need.
3. Therefore, on the basis of God's oath, the Son (His unique name - 1:4-5), is made High-Priest forever.

Verse 26. It was "fitting" that he became this sort of high priest, because it is this sort of high priest that man needs! Anything less than who Christ is, is not enough to save and keep us! He was perfect for the work and did it completely. He is:

1. Holy - separated out for God's service as a pure person acceptable for such service.
2. Harmless - There is no evil, self interest or malice in anything he does.
3. Undeified - Without any stain of sin that would disqualify from God's service.
4. Separated - Separate from sinners and sin by having defeated all temptations (perfect tense).
5. Higher - He has become higher than the heavens themselves - by his victory he has been raised beyond the limits of space and time (heavens and earth). As God the Lord always had such superiority but as man he wins this and opens the door for others from amongst mankind to enter with him into eternal life and blessing.

Verse 27. The high priests of the old covenant had to first offer sacrifices for themselves, as sinners, before they were fit to enter the second time to offer sacrifices for the people who they represented. The contrast with the Lord is absolute! He has no need to offer any daily sacrifice for his sins, for he is sinless, and also he has no need to offer the sacrifice for the sin of man again, for what he did has been perfectly accepted as it was the perfect and complete solution for the sins of mankind. His sacrifice was offered, "once for all", it never needs to be repeated, as it was 100% successful and our salvation and eternal life is absolutely secure in Him.

Verse 28. The Law of Moses appoints men to the high priesthood who are weak and will die, for its nature is inferior to the priesthood of Melchizedek. He has already identified that Melchizedek came before the Law, and the family that would become priests honoured him in their father's tithing, but now he makes the second point that in Jewish thought of his day was even more telling. Once the Law was established and had been running at least four hundred years, then the oath is made (Psalm 110) as a reminder to Israel that their Levitical/Aaronic priesthood is weak and temporary, and will be replaced by a more ancient, and totally perfect and eternal one. The significance of this priesthood is that it is formed, not of a man who is weak and dies, but of the "Son of God" who is strong, and eternal.

The word for "consecrated" is the perfect form of the Greek verb "Teleioo" - meaning he was made perfect but also, that the goal of the Old Law was met/completed in Him. He is the completion of the Mosaic Law, he fulfils it, and replaces it.

The objective of God's eternal Plan for salvation and for glory is met in Jesus' taking the high priesthood of Melchizedek. Refer back to **Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15; 5:5-10; 6:20**.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

There is much repetition of principles in this section, and at times such repetition is frustrating to read through, but don't allow any irritation to break your focus. This repetition is very important for our learning. We need the principles of God's Plan reinforced to us so that they are so well known as to be second nature for our heart and mind. The questions to ask ourselves here is, 'are we feeding on the Word of God to such an extent daily that this is true for us?' Or have we slipped backwards in our understanding of the divine plan for our life, because we have forgotten too much of the eternal plan?'

Do we know and feel the passion for that "better testament"? Do we see the reality of the eternal priesthood of the Lord? Is eternity in our minds at all? The early church gained its very power from its eternal life perspective. They saw the events of daily life, and the pressures that came upon them, as simply the events of time. All things were seen in the context of eternity, and so they were taken in the right perspective. We are often too obsessed with the details of daily life, and with the temporary successes of time that we strive for. These things do not matter in the context of eternity.

Have we praised Him today for who He is? That He is the Almighty God, the everlasting Saviour, the Prince of Peace! He is able to save to the end of time, the end of all things we see! All who come to Him have salvation! Once we are saved He then makes intercession for us constantly to help us with the battles of daily life. Have we praised Him for this today? He is high and lifted up and we are "lifted up" in fellowship with Him !

Our praise can be our protection from stupidity, for "stupid" is what we are when we chase after things that do not matter and ignore eternity and eternal reward. "Stupid" is defined as not seeing what is in front of your face and doing something that costs you the things that matter! We are all in danger of this label for ourselves when we forget the Word of God and go after the things of time that do not count in eternity!

B. PASTORAL

The Law of Moses was meant to be inferior to the Order of Melchizedek, and it was meant to look inferior. Its' priests were, because they were weak members of mankind, going to get sick, commit sin and all die. This was so that the people saw men just like themselves standing for them before God, and they saw constant sacrifices being offered; there was never enough that could be done to secure salvation under the Law.

The reason for all this was that it was a crucial part of God's plan, His plan to underline man's weaknesses, and sin's power over him, and amplify the need for a final sacrifice, a truly noble and mighty high priest who would end the cycle of sin and death. This longing was met in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us not go back to the old Law in any shape or new form! Let us stay with the revelation of completion that we have in Christ Jesus.

This passage is a constant challenge to every pastor-teacher to fully expound the living Word of God, so that all the Lord's people see the truth of the Lord's perfection; so that they see the truth of his replacement of the old with the new, and that they see that this was God's plan from the beginning.

The "good news", that He is able to "save to the uttermost", is to be heard every week we speak. We are to, "lift up his majesty", and praise His Holy Name at every service. We can be too dignified and sombre in our worship and fall short of the standard here, the standard of praise for his name and honouring of his person and work. He is our eternal high priest, and he has opened the door of heaven for us; let us enter his gates with praise, and let all who attend our services walk away saying, "how they love and praise Jesus!"

PARAPHRASE

"And remember this, it was with an oath that He was made priest, whereas the priests of the Levitical order were made without an oath! But in contrast to them, the Lord was made a priest with an oath of God, saying, 'the Lord has sworn, and will not change his mind, you are a priest forever', he said, 'according to the order of Melchizedek'. By so much different and more powerful a process was the Lord made a priest, underlining the legal nature of the guarantee of a better testament through his priestly order. Another contrast between the two priesthoods can be made by comparing the many priests of the Old Covenant, to the one priest of the New. The reason for this is clear, the Old Covenant priesthood was a priesthood of constant change, for the priests were simply men who died and needed to be replaced, whereas the Lord lives forever, and so has an unchanging priesthood. For all these reasons he remains able always to be the Saviour right to the end of all things, for he lives forever and is constantly making prayers for us all. Such a high priest was needed by mankind, one who was holy, without any evil of any kind, separated from sin and sinners, one who has become higher than the heavens themselves; beyond our limits of space and time. Because of who he was and is, he never needed to offer sacrifices for his own sin before offering the sacrifice for ours! He was perfect and his single sacrifice of himself, was both perfect and completely effective for our salvation. The Old Covenant appointed men with human weaknesses into the high priesthood, but the oath of God has appointed the Son as the New Covenant high priest, and he has an eternal appointment."

ADDITIONAL DOCTRINES**DOCTRINE OF PRIESTHOOD**

L. S. Chafer - Systematic Theology From: Vol III page 251, Vol IV page 65-68, and Vol VIII pages 256-57

- I. Similarities of New Testament and Old Testament Priesthood
 1. Based on Birth
 - A. O.T., family of Levi
 - B. N.T., family of Christ
 2. Priesthood based on cleansing - permanent
 - A. O.T., once for all ceremonial bath on induction to the priesthood Ex. 29:4
 - B. N.T., based on salvation, the washing of the Word. Eph 5:25 -26; John 13:10
 3. Function based on temporal cleansing
 - A. OT - the brazen laver
 - B. NT - confession of sin, I Jn 1:9
 4. The Priestly Sphere of Life
 - A. OT - In tabernacle (shadows of Christ) the priest not in the tabernacle wasn't functioning.
 - B. NT - In the Word (reality of doctrine). The Believer-Priest not living in the Word is not functioning in his priesthood.
 5. Prohibitions
 - A. OT - Priest forbidden to offer strange incense. Lev 30:9-or strange fire - Lev 10:1
 - B. NT - All things equivalent to the old false rituals, ceremony without meaning, substitution of emotion for the doctrines of the Word of God. Heb 2:1; 4:1-2; 3:12
 6. As the O.T. priest, though of the tribe of Levi, was disqualified if blemished (Lev 21:16-24); so the NT believer must be perfect(without sin in their life) to function. Spiritual maturity and spirit filled; see Heb 5:11-6:1).
 7. Every believer is born a priest, but function is based on growth/maturity. Function is spiritual worship – Romans 12:1
- II. Contrasts of New Testament and Old Testament Priesthood
 1. O.T. priesthood is an Aaronic or Levitical order; NT is order of Melchizedek. Hebrews 7:17
 2. In O.T. there was a royal family (Judah) and priestly family (Levi) In NT, we are a Royal Priesthood. I Peter 2:9

NOTES

CHAPTER 8

PART 7 - CHRIST HAS A SUPERIOR SANCTUARY TO THE OLD PRIESTHOODS

A BETTER COVENANT BUILT UPON BETTER PROMISES. CHAPTER 8:1 -10:39

We have a true tabernacle	8 : 1- 5
We have a new covenant	8 : 6 - 13
We have a true sanctuary	9 : 1 - 10
We have a superior sacrifice	9 : 11 - 10 : 18
We have the Lord's encouragement	10 : 19 - 25
5th Danger Warning- Beware of Despising	10 : 26 - 39

HEBREWS 8:1-5

“ 1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum; we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, 2 a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man. 3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices, wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. 4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: 5 who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle: for see saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. (Exodus 25 : 40, 9 : 23, 24)”

KEY WORDS

Spoken	lego	present, passive, participle; the things being talked about above.
Sum	kephalaion	“of the head”, used to mean a summary of a list, taken from the top to bottom.
Set	kathizo	aorist, active, indicative; has received/ taken his seat and sat down in the honoured place.
Majesty	megalosune	greatness above all else.
Minister	leiturgos	priestly ministry in a temple.
True	alethinos	true, genuine as against false/fake, or copy of an original.
Pitched	pegnumi	aorist, active, indicative; fixed, pegged out like a tent, fastened to the earth/ground.
Ordained	kathistemi	present, passive, indicative; is appointed, receives appointment.
Necessary	anagkaios	absolutely necessary.
Offer	prosphero	aorist, active, subjunctive; to offer, once for all.
If	ei men + en	second class conditional clause - if and it's not true.
Offer	prosphero	present, active, participle; who keep on offering.
Serve	latreuo	present, active, indicative; who keep on serving in the temple.
Example	upodeigma	pattern, copy of an original.
Shadow	skia	shadow that is a silhouette of the real thing.
Admonished	chrematizomai	perfect , passive, indicative; warned by God, told clearly the divine will, with everlasting results and consequences.
About to	mello	present, active, participle; he was about to be making.
Make	epiteleo	present, active, infinitive; to build construct, and bring to completion.
See	horao	present, active, imperative; keep on listening to this instruction!
Make	poieo	future, active, indicative; when you construct it ;it is made(this way).
Pattern	tupos	plan, architects drawing, the impression left by a seal = exact copy.
Shown	deiknumi	aorist, passive, participle; God did this and Moses received the information.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

BETTER PRIEST- BETTER TABERNACLE

The writer summarises the case so far, reminding us of the key point (the head of the list = sum), which is that the Lord is the one who is set up at the right hand of majesty on high, and that he is ministering in a better tabernacle than any Aaronic priest ever served in. The Lord's superiority to all who have gone before is the theme of the writer and in this chapter he brings the argument to a resounding close.

Verse 1. He is the possession of every believer. "We have" as a continuous, personal possession the Lord as our own great high priest. (The Greek verb "echo" - present, active, indicative = we keep on having). He has already

taken the honoured place at God's right hand, he has the superior position in the universe, he is not waiting for it, nor will he ever be replaced from his position, it is established("set"). His session in heaven has followed his Ascension, as the work of the First Advent was victorious totally - it is completed as He takes his place as King and Lord by conquest.

He is seated in God's Holy of Holies in Heaven; the significance of this is :-

- a. His work of justification has been accomplished. 1:13
- b. The strategic victory over Satan is won. 1:13 c/f Genesis. 3:15 gives the prophecy, Psalm 110:1 gives the promise. The Cross is the basis of all victory in the angelic conflict. Hebrews. 2:14-15
- c. The "right hand" is the place of power and authority. **Exodus 15:6; Deuteronomy. 33:2; Psalm. 17:7; 78:54; Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 25:33; Revelation 1:16.**
- d. This indicates the permanence of the Cross. 10:12
- e. This was the goal of His humanity. 12:2; **Philippians 2:5-11.**

Verse 2 He ministers in the true eternal tabernacle, of which the earthly one was simply a picture, or copy. The word used for "minister" (Greek - leitourgos) - is used of one who discharged a public office at his own expense, or one who ministers in regard to divine ordinances in a temple of the gods. **Romans 13:6; 15:16.** The Lord continues his work for us, but he does so from the seated position, and in the ancient world this meant only one thing, that he was king and lord of all he surveyed. No priest, pagan or Aaronic, ministered seated. The only "seat" in the tabernacle/temple was the "Mercy Seat" and that is the throne of heaven.

The writer also underlines the significance of the place of the Lord's service by using the word "true", which means genuine or authentic, as opposed to the earthly tabernacle which was simply a copy of the heavenly one. The inferior status of the Old Law is highlighted by this word. The writer is not saying the old was fake, or false, but reminding the hearers that the Mosaic Law was only ever a copy of an original, a reproduction, not a real thing in itself. The Mosaic Law pointed to a reality, it portrayed a reality, it could not stand alone, for that was not its designated purpose. It existed only because of the person and work of the One it pointed towards.

This is the point that he will take up throughout the following chapters. The Lord God of all "pitched the tabernacle of heaven", no man was involved, the work is God's alone. The superiority is again underlined. The Lord's work for our salvation is the work of God for man, not men's works to impress God. God's grace is superior to man's works every day, and this is another theme that the writer will build on later.

Verses 3-5 indicate that having been ordained a priest, He must have something to offer on behalf of man (review **Hebrews 5:1-5**), and he does. His perfect gift offerings for blessing saved mankind could not be offered in the imperfect Levitical system - which deals only with shadows and copies - not realities. His ministry in the heavens for the saved, involve - Intercession (**Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25**), Sustaining us (**Hebrews 7:24-25a**), and Advocacy (defence - **1 John 2:1-2**) in the face of Satan's accusations (**Revelation 12:10**).

Verse 3 Priests are appointed to offer sacrifices, and present gifts on behalf of their subjects. It is absolutely necessary that the Lord also has sacrifices to offer, just as the Aaronic priesthood did. This is again the Jewish way of arguing, stating a principle that all understood and then building from it to demonstrate a superiority.

Verse 4. If he was upon the earth, due to his being of the tribe of Judah, he would not be a priest at all, as these others would be doing the service. While the temple was in legitimate operation the sons of Levi were set aside to do the service. **Numbers 25:12.**

As he is from the tribe of Judah, **Hebrews 7:13, 14**, he cannot serve there, but can in heaven, **Hebrews 7:23, 24, 25.** Keep in mind the context of these words; he has a superior role, and place, as the one of whom their service spoke, to one they portrayed. He has no part in their work, for they serve Him!

Verse 5. The priests of Levi served following the example and pattern of the original in heaven. This is a vital point for the hearers to understand, for it indicates the replacement concept that he is trying to get them to see. The Law of Moses was given, based upon a heavenly pattern, to operate for a limited time, to point to the reality that was coming, and the Mosaic Law would be replaced by that reality once the one of whom it spoke came and completed his earthly work.

Moses was told of the importance of copying exactly what he saw on Mt Horeb in the vision God gave him. His job was to ensure the ritual of the Levitical system correctly followed the heavenly pattern. **Exodus 25:40.** The reason is clear to see on reflection, and that is what he wants the hearers to do, reflect on his words and see that what has happened is the end of the old system, for it has done its job, the reality is here. This will be taken up again in **Hebrews 9:23, 24.**

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Let us remind ourselves of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ for us this day; both his completed work on the cross and his present work in heaven of intercession for us. Review the doctrines of his work in the Bible Topic Book, and then praise his name today and every day, for all he has done and keeps on doing for you as his child.

B. PASTORAL

As pastors we often forget to teach the doctrines associated with the Lord's present work for the believer. We cover the cross and resurrection but omit his work now of intercession and advocacy. We are confronted in these verses again of the need to systematically teach the whole counsel of God's Word. We are the on-going recipients of his great gifts towards us all. It is grace all the way, God has done the work and keeps on doing it, and we are blessed every day and forever. Let us lead the Lord's people into daily praise for all he has done.

DOCTRINE**CHRIST: ASCENSION AND SESSION****ASCENSION**

1. Jesus in His resurrection body travelled from earth to heaven (John 20:17).
2. With Jesus Christ now in heaven, He has given His Spirit to indwell us on earth (John 7:37-39).

SESSION

3. Upon his arrival in heaven, God the Father said "sit down at my right hand" (Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 1:3,13).
4. The session of Christ indicates the acceptability of the first man, Jesus Christ, into heaven (Ephesians 1:20) and guarantees the acceptability of all believers (Ephesians 2:6).
5. The session of Christ declared Him superior to all angels (Hebrews 2:6-8, 1 Peter 3:22).
6. The session of Christ produced victory in the angelic conflict (Hebrews 1:3-13).
7. The session begins the subjection of His enemies "under his feet" (Psalm 110:1), fulfilled at the Second Advent (Colossians 2:15, Revelation 20:1-3)
8. The session completes the glorification of Christ (Acts 2:33, Philippians 2:9).
9. Seated at the right hand of the Father, Jesus now ministers as our great high priest (Hebrews 7:23-25).

PARAPHRASE

"Now concerning the things we have spoken of so far, this is the summary and key principle; we have forever, such a great high priest, who is established in his position at the right hand of the father in the heavens. He keeps on ministering on our behalf, serving in the heavenly Holy of Holies, the true tabernacle of God's holy presence, which was made by the Lord and not by men as the earthly temple is. Now, every high priest is ordained to serve and offer up sacrifices and gifts, in accordance with their instructions,, therefore it is obvious that the Lord, as our high priest also has service he continues to offer. Now remember, if he was still on earth he would not be a priest, seeing the priests of the Levitical order are the ones to offer sacrifices and gifts in this earthly temple. They all serve following the pattern of the heavenly reality, their actions being simply like a silhouette of that reality . Their system was established by Moses, who was told by God himself, to make all the things that were involved in the Levitical system an exact copy of the original, all things being done in accordance with the pattern he was shown by God while he was upon Mount Sinai."

HEBREWS 8 : 6 - 13

“ 6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. (Romans 8 : 3, 4) 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for a second. 8 For finding fault with them, he said, ‘ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: 9 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. 11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother saying, know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least unto the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. (Jeremiah 31 : 31-34) 13 In that he said, ‘a New Covenant’, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”

KEY WORDS

But now	nun+de	strong contrast to the situation described before; “but now!!!”
Obtained	tugchano	perfect , active, indicative; attained to, obtained with results that go on forever!
Excellent	diaphoros	comparative, in contrast to other things = far more excellent/perfect/right.
Ministry	leiturgos	priestly ministry in the temple of God.
By how much	oso	strong contrast continued.
Mediator	mesites	a go between, mediator, considered equal by both parties.
Established	nomotheteo	perfect , passive, indicative; enacted by (divine) law, with eternal results.
Faultless	amemptos	without fault, flaw, error, or blame.
Sought	zeteo+ ouk	imperfect, passive, indicative; would not (strong negative) have been sought out.
Finding fault	memphomai	present, middle participle; keeps on finding fault or blaming.
Make	sunteleso	future, active, indicative; will bring to completion, will ratify, accomplish.
Covenant	diatheke	solemn agreement, treaty, covenant, a legal document indicating a promise.
Made	poieo	arist, active, indicative; made, formed.
Took	epilambanomai	arist, middle, participle; when I took/grasped hold of, and plucked them out of.
Lead	epago	arist, active, infinitive; with the purpose of leading them out.
Continued	emmeno	arist active, indicative; remained/continued at that time(arist) to live/walk in.
Regarded	ameleo	arist active, indicative had not concern for, and neglected, at that time(arist).
Make	diatithemi	future, middle, indicative; will covenant, make a legal agreement with.
Put	didomi	present, active, participle; I will keep on giving, putting my laws(into their minds).
Minds	dianoia	thinking, reasoning, understanding part of the brain
Write	epigrapho	future, active, indicative; God will inscribe (cut into a tablet) the message.
Teach	Didasko	arist, active, subjunctive; teach, instruct.
Neighbour	Polites	fellow citizens.
Know	ginosko	arist, active, imperative; know, understand!
Know	oida	future/perfect, active, indicative; they will really know, with lasting results.
Merciful	ileos	fully of mercy and graciousness.
Unrighteousness	adikia	lack of the righteousness of God.
Sins	hamartia	sins, their falling short of the standard of God through acts of sin.
Lawlessness	anomia	rejection of God’s laws.
Remember	mimnesko	arist, passive, subjunctive; remember, call to mind.
Made	palaioo	perfect , active, indicative; declared old, obsolete, replaced, worm out, of no use now.
Decayed	palaioo	present, passive, participle; keeps on being decayed and old and useless.
Waxeth old	gerasko	present, active, participle; keeps on growing older and older, more and more decrepit!
Vanish away	aphanismos	disappearing, vanishing away from the face of the earth, compete abolition.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

WE HAVE A NEW COVENANT - HEBREWS 8 : 6 - 13

Verse 6 “But Now!!!” This section begins with a triumphant contrast of the work of the Lord with that of the old covenant. His superior ministry is that of Mediator of the New, better, and permanent Covenant. See Also: **1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15; 12:24**. The perfect tense reminds us that the results of his ministry go on forever. There are three “betters” in this verse to reflect upon. This is a verse of very strong contrasts, with the old being surpassed on all points by the new.

1. He has obtained (Perfect tense - with eternal results) a better ministry.
2. He is a mediator of a better covenant than the old - for it is reality, the old was silhouette.
3. He has officially enacted/established better promises (perfect - with eternal results) than the old could provide.

He is our "mediator" - one who stands in the middle; one equal to both parties. Christ the God-Man guarantees the interest of God (propitiation - **1 John 2:2; 2 Peter 2:1**), and the interest of man (reconciliation - **2 Corinthians 5:18-21**).

The "better promises" are delineated in Verses 8-12, which quote from **Jeremiah 31:31-34**. The key is that whereas the Law was conditional and therefore weak (**Romans 8:1-2**), the New Covenant is unconditional - resting on God's Character, promises, and actions alone.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW COVENANT. VS. 7-13 (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Verse 7. Had the first covenant been without fault, there would not have been a second one. This is a logical statement, and before we jump to defence of the Law or replacement theology, let us pause and hear what the writer is saying. The fault, he is going to say (verse 8) was with the people, not the Law, for it was God's perfect provision for them, based on his perfect plan shown to Moses in the Mountain of Sinai, as we have already seen.

We must beware of the extreme of "replacement theology" as we work through these verses. The Mosaic Law has been "replaced" by the Lord's New Covenant, but not because it was "no good"! It is inferior to Him, because all things are inferior to the King of kings and Lord of all lords. The Law is inferior only because it is the silhouette of the reality, and He is the reality – it played its part, and that part was to prepare for Him and His perfect work!

The correct concept of "biblical replacement" has already been given to us, in the analogies of chapter seven; as the builder goes beyond the foundations to build the house, and the soldier goes beyond the camp to win the battle, so we go beyond the Mosaic Law, to win the victory, and be part of the new plan of God, that is the house built upon the foundation that the Law laid.

Verse 8. While the Law is perfect for it expresses God's Plan and God's standards, it could not provide the power to fulfil its demands. **Romans 7:12, 14; Galatians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 1:8-11**. Even during the time when the Law was operational Jeremiah the prophet told the people that the day would come when it would be replaced by a New Covenant. It was during the dark days of the Babylonian invasion that Jeremiah spoke.

Only two times had the nation faced the fifth cycle of national discipline (**Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28:1-14**), and during the first Jeremiah spoke of the coming New Covenant, and as they face the second great national catastrophe, the New Covenant is instituted. The theme of the book of Hebrews is warning, and the very existence of the expected New Covenant, is a warning to the Jewish believers that they face national catastrophe. The New Covenant begins at Passover 32 AD, and the city/temple is destroyed August 70 AD, 40 lunar/prophetic years later – the time of grace over.

Verse 9. The New Covenant was prophesied by Jeremiah in a day of great rejection of the Word and Way of God, and that is why they went into Babylonian captivity, and the activation of the New Covenant comes at a time when the nation is about to be dispersed totally by the Romans. The writer reminds them that judgement is in the air! The generation that received the Law under Moses, was rescued from Egypt by the Lord picking them up and taking them out. They had forty lunar years (40 solar years from the start of Jesus ministry) of grace before all except Joshua and Caleb had died in the wilderness. The words the writer uses to describe the Exodus here emphasise God's gracious work to "pluck them out" of slavery. God took them by hand and led them out of Egypt; deliverance was HIS work not theirs!

The New Covenant is, "not like the Covenant I made with their fathers". The major contrast is that whereas the Mosaic Covenant was conditional (**Exodus 19:1-8; 24:1-8**), the New Covenant is unconditional and permanent. The Israelites fell far short of the requirements of the conditional covenant, failing to keep or "continue in it".

The result was judgement, under Babylon and in the writer's own day it will be under Rome. In accordance with the conditional covenant, the Lord withdrew his protection ("regarded them not") from the nation Israel, and they were judged, for under the old covenant, to disobey or ignore God's standards meant He would withdraw his face from you. The good news that emerges out of the people's failure is that God always had a plan to do away with the old conditional covenant, once it had fulfilled its purpose, and Messiah had come and completed His work – the role of that covenant was over. The conditional covenant prepared the way for the unconditional; the lesser making way finally, in accord with the divine plan, for the greater and more superior covenant.

Three further areas of contrast are outlined in Verses. 10-12.

Verse 10. The promise of the new covenant comes to the people, "after those days". The writer's clear point here is, "those days" have come; Messiah has come, the work is completed, that which the law prepared the way for is completed, the one of whom it spoke has come and gone, his work done! The new covenant is here, the writer is saying, "get with it!" The sign of the new covenant is that the Word of God is engraved on the heart and mind. The sign of the new is the Holy Spirit transformed lives of those who follow the Lord, not the rituals they practise by rote.

The transformation is of the mind (dianoia = thinking part of the brain), and the heart (kardia = emotion). "Hearts and minds", is still a phrase that we use to indicate the whole person, as it was then. Transformed life = encounter with the Lord and the new covenant. If the life is not transformed, then there has been no encounter! The result of meeting with

the Lord Jesus Christ is that you have a relationship with God, and he has one with you; it is a two way thing under the new covenant, a true relationship.

In contrast to being placed "before" man (**Jer 9:13; Deut 4:8; 11:32**), God's laws are under the New Covenant, "given into their minds" - replacing human viewpoint thinking with divine viewpoint thinking (**Proverbs 23:7; 2 Cor 10:5**), and the truth of the message is also "engraved on their hearts" - replacing humanistic functions of the emotions and feelings with the functions of true emotion and biblical spirituality (**Romans 8:4; Gal 5:16, 22-23**).

Verse 11. Does this sound like today's church? All too often this is very foreign, so much so that people refer this passage to the Millennial kingdom, saying that is when it must apply. Pause right there! If the Holy Spirit is given free reign within the life by a believer today under the New Covenant, is this experience here not present? When the Spirit of the living God, works upon the living Word, in the life of the born again believer, is this not the result?

This verse gives us the objective of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit within every believer, there is no need to spiritualise this passage. We still have pastors and teachers of the Word, yet when believers are growing they are not teaching each other they are encouraging each other from what the Spirit has shown them from the Word. This is meant to be the "normal Christian life" in this New Covenant Church Age. God's plan for mankind is that all who love Him might be equal, equal in their knowledge and fellowship with Him. Note the change in the tenses of the Greek verbs in this verse; they will know about (aorist - at that point in time), but then they will know (perfect tense) and the results will be transforming forever.

Verse 12. God desires to be "forgetful"; He desires to forget our sins, our foolishness, and disobedience, and put all such things into the past, and He does. **Psalm 103:8-17**. That is what this verse reminds us of; God is a God of transformation, and once a person has crossed over into the new the old is, in His sight, gone forever! In contrast to the judgement that comes with the old covenant, and this is sadly coming in the very days the writer is recording this, and any who reject this warning and stay in Jerusalem will die! The Lord is however merciful to all who enter the New Covenant and place themselves under it's provisions. **Romans 3:19, 5:20, 21, Galatians 3:19, Colossians 2:14**.

Verse 13 Once again, simple logic is drawn on to underline the point that the old is to go, built upon by the new. When-ever you say something is new, it is automatically a contrast to what is now seen as "old". In case you want to work around this verse and keep the law as "new" he makes it clear in the last half of the verse that the old is to go! The words chosen are clearly "replacement" words; the words for old are many in the Greek language, but here he chooses a word that is best translated "decrepit" (perfect tense in this verse makes it clear that this is "forever" in significance). It is not a polite word, and was clearly chosen to shock the hearers; the Law is old and tired, worn out and on it's last legs! This is not a "nice" thing to say; rather it is blunt and to the point – it is truth the church at Jerusalem must hear.

"The law is replaced, wake up church in Jerusalem and get with the truth, and get out of the city!" In case they missed that word he ends the verse with a word that indicates the complete disappearance of the old covenant altogether. The old will not be seen any more, it will be completely obliterated, abolished; the very site of the temple scraped clean. The temple and all that was within it were indeed "abolished" in 70 AD by the armies of Rome, but praise God, before then the believers who received this letter heard it's words and left the city to it's fate. The writer is moving quickly to the place in the letter where he will call them out of the faith, of the law and from the city itself. The writer is being direct for the days of grace are nearly over and the temple will be swept away, until the days just before the end. **Daniel 9:24-27**.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

"But now"! What a contrast is demanded from us. How totally we ought to be transformed in our lives, words, and deeds. We stand within the provisions of a better covenant than the patriarchs, kings, and prophets enjoyed, yet often we live at a lower level of spirituality. The people were found fault with, because of their disregarding of the Laws of God, and they were judged.

How much more will we be disciplined for falling short of a greater covenant, within which there is greater power to enable us to follow it? Are we using the ministries of the Holy Spirit today to empower ourselves to keep the Lord's commands, or are we being slack? We have such great promises and provisions; but are we using them?

God is the God of grace. His desire is that our sins might be dealt with and forgiven. Once they have been confessed they are forgiven (**Psalm 103:8-16, 1 John 1:5-10**), and His desire is that we see these things from his perspective rather than ours. Forgiveness is a subject that should empower our worship; does it for you believer?

When we see the picture drawn in verse eleven, of the believer being taught directly by the Holy Spirit, do we look upon it as a Millennial promise, and write it off for today? When we consider the work of the Lord, and the present work of the Holy Spirit within our lives, what more do we need for these words to apply to today? All is present except our devotion to the Lord and His Word, and our heeding the ministries of the Holy Spirit.

Let us be members of the Lord's church and daily let us open ourselves to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Let us leave behind any attachment we may have to legalistic systems and truly walk in the Spirit daily before our Lord, the Lord of the New Covenant, in which we are meant to find our life and purpose.

B. PASTORAL

How well do we teach the distinctions between the Law of Moses and the Old Covenant, and the New Covenant? Do our people hear the truth or do they still long for the, "days of simplicity", the days of legalism, of the Law? We must always remember that the natural longing of man is for systems that are easy to follow without committing the heart to them. The old covenant could be fulfilled by tenacity and human strength, and as such could make a religious person feel smug and arrogant.

God hates such smugness, and it is this smugness that pervades many legalistic churches who fail to make the distinctions that are here. God does not want smug, self satisfied legalists, He wants grace oriented, loving, Christ like people, who trust and depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit, rather than the power of man.

The old has gone, let us ensure all the Lord's people hear these words and apply them to their spiritual lives. The New Covenant is without flaw or fault, because it depends solely upon God. The Old Covenant was faulted because it depended upon the works of men, and mankind failed, but it was a perfect provision to point to its replacement – the New Covenant we enjoy today.

God does not fail, and his purpose in bringing in the old Covenant was to bring people to the place where they saw that they needed God's direct intervention to save them, and that is exactly what the Lord's coming was all about. Let us proclaim the truly "good news" for man, and it is news about what God has done for us, not what man has done for God.

DOCTRINES**LAW OF MOSES [See page 69 above]****LAW OF MOSES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

All of the Ten Commandments, given in Exodus 20, are quoted in the New Testament. This indicates that the PRINCIPLES of righteousness, obedience, respect, etc which underlie the Law still do apply in our lives.

1. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30, Luke 10:27)
2. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." (Acts 15:20-29, 21:25, Romans 1:18-32, 2:22, 1 Corinthians 10:7,14, Galatians 5:20, Colossians 3:5, 1 John 5:21)
3. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." (Matthew 12:31-32, Mark 3:28-29, 7:22, Luke 12:10, Colossians 3:8)
4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Romans 14:5-6, Galatians 4:9-10, Colossians 2:14-17). It should be noted that the New Testament commands freedom from any obligation to the old Jewish Sabbath.
5. "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Matthew 15:4, 19:19, Mark 7:10, 10:19, Luke 18:20, Ephesians 6:2, Colossians 3:20, 2 Timothy 3:2)
6. "Thou shalt not kill." (Matthew 5:21, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20, Romans 13:9, James 2:11, 1 Peter 4:15, 1 John 3:15)
7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." (Matthew 5:27-32, 19:9,18 Mark 10:11-12,19, Luke 16:18, 18:20, Romans 2:22, 13:9, Galatians 5:19, James 2:11)
8. "Thou shalt not steal." (Matthew 19:18, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20, Romans 2:21, 13:9, Ephesians 4:28)
9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." (Matthew 15:19, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20, Romans 13:9)
10. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's." (Mark 7:22, Luke 12:15, Romans 1:20, 7:7, 13:9, 1 Corinthians 6:10, Ephesians 5:3-5, Colossians 3:5, 1 Timothy 3:3, 1 Thessalonians 2:5, Hebrews 13:5)

LEGALISM

1. There are some areas of God's law which the believer would never violate because it is his area of strength.
2. No two people have the same area of strength, no two people have the same area of weakness in their human nature.
3. Violation of one part of the law makes a person a sinner just as another part of the law - all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).
4. Legalism and self righteousness is prone to forget that all sin comes from the sinful nature.
5. Everyone has a sinful nature. Violation of law demonstrates its existence.
6. The legalist emphasises the commandments he keeps. The honest person recognises the commandments he breaks.
7. Doctrine removes legalism and self righteousness on the basis of grace.
8. Legalism minimises the weakness or besetting sin of the sinful nature while emphasising the weakness or besetting sin of someone else.
9. Legalism condemns those who fail in their own area of strength but legalism does not recognise that all have sinned.
10. Sometimes legalism is so strong that it fulfills both categories of 1 John 1:8, 1 John 1:10.
11. To be guilty, one only has to sin once not the thousands of times one does (James 2:10).

COVENANTS

1. A covenant is a contract or agreement between God and man.
2. Some covenants are unconditional - God will fulfill them, irrespective of man's obedience. Other covenants are conditional upon man's obedience.
3. Christ is central to all of the covenants in Scripture:
 - a) EDENIC - Christ is the second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45-47).
 - b) ADAMIC - Christ is the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15).
 - c) NOAHIC - Christ is the greatest son of Shem (Luke 3:36; Genesis 9:23-27).
 - d) ABRAHAMIC - The seed to whom the promises were made (Genesis 22:18).
 - e) MOSAIC - He fulfilled this covenant (Matthew 5:17).
 - f) PALESTINIAN - He lived as a Jew in the land and will inherit the land
 - g) DAVIDIC - Christ is the King of the Jews and will rule forever (Luke 1:31-33; John 19:19-22).
 - h) NEW - Christ's sacrifice is its foundation and focus in the Millennium (1 Corinthians 11:25).

EDENIC COVENANT

1. The covenant in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 1:28-30; 2:8-17).
2. Main points:
 - a) To be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28).
 - b) To subdue the earth (Genesis 1:28).
 - c) To have dominion of the animal creation (Genesis 1:28).
 - d) To eat the herbs and fruit (Genesis 1:29).
 - e) To till and keep the garden (Genesis 2:15).
 - f) Not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17).

ADAMIC COVENANT

1. The Adamic covenant deals with the fall and restoration of mankind and creation. When Christ returns creation is removed from its bondage. (Romans 8:21)
2. Satan's means of bringing sin into the world, the serpent, is cursed (Genesis 3:14) and goes from being the most beautiful of God's creatures to the most repugnant. The brazen serpent raised by Moses in the wilderness (Numbers 21:5-9) becomes a picture of Christ being made sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21), the brass representing judgment; the serpent sin.
3. The promise of a redeemer (Genesis 3:15). The seed of the woman descends through Seth (Genesis 5:3-7), Noah (Genesis 6:8-10) Shem (Genesis 9:26,27) Abraham (Genesis 12:1-4) Isaac (Genesis 17:19-21) Jacob (Genesis 28:10-14) Judah (Genesis 49:10) David (2 Samuel 7:5-17), ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Isaiah 7:9-14; Matt 1:20-23).
4. The judgment on the woman (Genesis 3:16) in four areas:
 - a) Increase in sorrow and pain regarding conception.
 - b) Sorrow in relation to children
 - c) The woman would be attracted to the man
 - d) The woman would be subject to the man (1 Timothy 2:11-14, Ephesians 5:22-25, 1 Corinthians 11:7-9)
5. The judgment on man (Genesis 3:17-19)
 - a) The ground is cursed
 - b) Sorrow is inevitable in this life.
 - c) Man is to work for a living rather than having it provided (Genesis 3:17-19)
 - d) Man will eventually die (Genesis 3:19)

NOAHIC (EVERLASTING) COVENANT

1. The covenant with Noah never to flood the earth again (Genesis 8:20- 9:27).
2. The relation of man to the earth is confirmed (Genesis 8:21).
3. Seasons, day and night and harvesting confirmed (Genesis 8:22).
4. Human government introduced (Genesis 9:1-6).
5. A curse is given to the Hamitic races (Genesis 9:24,25).
6. The Semitic races will be the source of spiritual wealth (Genesis 9:26,27).
7. The Japhetic groups will be dominant (Genesis 9:27).
8. The earth will never be judged with water again (Genesis 8:21; Genesis 9:11).
9. The rainbow given as the sign of the promise.

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

1. Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) founds the nation of Israel.
2. It is confirmed with Abraham with emphasis on the land (Genesis 13:14-18), the spiritual seed (Genesis 15:1-6) and its everlasting quality (Genesis 17:6-8).
3. It is an unconditional covenant - God will fulfill it. (God caused Abraham to fall asleep as He ratified the covenant alone Genesis 15:12-18)
4. The seven-fold covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) is fulfilled as follows:-
 - a) PROMISE "And I will make of thee a great nation.
FULFILLMENT Jews (Genesis 13:16; John 8:37), Arabs (Genesis 17:20), In Christ (Romans 4:16-17, 9:7-8; Galatians 3:7,29).
 - b) PROMISE "I will bless thee".
FULFILLMENT To Abraham (Genesis 13:14-17, 15:18-21. 24:35), To believers in Christ (Genesis 15:6; John 8:56).
 - c) PROMISE "And make thy name great.

FULFILLMENT Abraham is renowned, not only in Christianity but also in Judaism and with the Moslems.

d) PROMISE "And thou shalt be a blessing.

FULFILLMENT With the work of fulfillment of Abraham's seed, Jesus Christ, he was a blessing (Galatians 3:13,14).

e) PROMISE "And I will bless them that bless thee.

FULFILLMENT This is seen in the rise of many nations eg Britain in the 19th century, the rise of the USA.

f) PROMISE "And curse him that curseth thee.

FULFILLMENT The decline of nations such as the Spanish Empire after the Armada, the fall of Nazi Germany, the fall of the Czars of Russia, the decline of Egypt at the Exodus.

Scriptural examples: (Deuteronomy 30:7; Isaiah 14:1-2; Joel 3:1-8; Micah 5:7-9; Haggai 2:22; Zechariah 14. 1-3; Matthew 25:40-46).

g) PROMISE "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

FULFILLMENT The whole world can be blessed through Jesus, the son of Abraham (John 8:56-58; Galatians 3:16).

5. It is clear that we should support the Jew as it is a sure means of enjoying divine blessing.

PALESTINIAN COVENANT

1. The Palestinian Covenant deals with the Jews controlling an area of land in the Middle East which was unconditionally given to Abraham. It should be noted that the Jews have never possessed the land as specified, but will do so during the Millennium. (Deuteronomy 30:1-9, Isaiah 11:10-12, Jeremiah 23:3-8, Ezekiel 37:21-25).

2. The Palestinian Covenant gives:

- a) Dispersion for disobedience (v 1) (Deuteronomy 28:63-68).
- b) The future repentance of Israel (v 2).
- c) The return of the Lord (v 3) (Amos 9:9-14; Acts 15:14-17).
- d) Restoration to the land (v 5) (Isaiah 11:11,12; Jeremiah 23:3-8; Ezekiel 37:21-25).
- e) National conversion (v 6) (Romans 11:26-27; Joel 2:14-16).
- f) Judgment of Israel's enemies (v 7) Joel 3:1 -8).
- g) National prosperity (v 9) (Amos 9:11-15).

3. It is unconditional - God will fulfill it.

DAVIDIC COVENANT

1. Israel will have a king forever 2 Samuel 7:8-17.

- a) A descendant of David in the Davidic line (v 12)
- b) He will have a kingdom to rule over. (v 12)
- c) God will provide a throne. (v 13)
- d) The throne will be forever. (vs 13,16)
- e) The Davidic Covenant is restated in (v 16)

2. The covenant has one condition - disobedience will be rewarded with discipline but will not cause the cancellation of the covenant. (2 Samuel 7:15; Psalm 89:20-37)

3. Discipline came with the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam. (1 Kings 12:16-20)

4. Discipline continued with the captivity of Samaria in 721 BC and Judah in 586 BC.

5. Since then the only King of David crowned in Jerusalem has been crowned with a crown of thorns. (Matthew 27:29).

6. The Davidic Covenant was confirmed to Mary. (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:29-31).

7. The Davidic Covenant will be fulfilled at the Second Advent of Christ when He will commence His everlasting rule with the 1,000 year reign of the Millennium. ((Luke 1:32, Acts 2:29-30, Revelation 20:4-6)

MOSAIC COVENANT

1. The covenant between God and Israel, given through the Law of Moses (Exodus - Deuteronomy)

2. It was a conditional covenant - it depended on man's obedience (Deuteronomy 28:1,15)

3. It had three main parts:

- a) Section 1 - The Commandments - proves that no man can keep the Law. All men are proven sinners, and therefore need a Saviour.
- b) Section 2 - The Tabernacle and Sacrifices - Pictures Christ as the Saviour, the only sacrifice which can pay the eternal penalty of sin.
- c) Section 3 - Social Code - Laws to preserve the nation Israel - law, hygiene, morals, taxation, etc.

NEW COVENANT

1. The New Covenant guarantees eternal blessing under the Abrahamic Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-37, Hebrews 8:7-9).
2. It is unconditional - God will fulfill it. "I will" (Hebrews 8:10,12) rather than "If ye will" (Exodus 19:5).
3. The New Covenant is said to be better than the Mosaic Covenant. (Hebrews 7:19; Romans 8:3,4).
4. Obedience is from a willing heart (Hebrews 8:10) whilst that for the Mosaic Law was fear (Hebrews 2:2; 12:25-27).
5. In the New Covenant all shall know God, from the least to the greatest (Hebrews 8:11).
6. The sins are forgotten under the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:12).
7. The New Covenant relies on the completed sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:11-12).

GRACE

1. Grace is all that God is free to do for man on the basis of the cross. Therefore Grace is unmerited favour from God.
2. Grace depends on the character of God therefore Grace depends on who and what God is. Grace is what God can do for man and still be true to his own character.
3. The believer must recognise the difference between legalism and grace. Legalism is man's work intruding upon the plan of God.
4. The greatest thing God can do for the saved person is to make him exactly like His Son Jesus Christ. This is accomplished in three stages of sanctification.
5. Positional Sanctification: At Salvation every believer enters into union with Christ. (Hebrews 1:2-4) Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father and is therefore superior to all angels in his humanity. At the point of salvation we are entered into union with Christ thus we are positionally higher than angels. We are positionally seated with Christ at God's right hand.
6. Experiential Sanctification: During the Christian's life on the earth the time spent under the power of the Holy Spirit. During this time we produce the character of God in our lives - gold, silver, precious stones. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)
7. Ultimate Sanctification: When the believer receives a resurrection body he loses the sin nature and all human good. At this point the believer is physically superior to all angels. He remains in this perfect state eternally.
8. All believers have tasted of Grace at least once (1 Peter 2:3). This refers to the point of Salvation at which the believer receives at least 34 things which he did not earn or deserve. (Ephesians 2:8, 9) Disorientation to grace is the believer's greatest occupational hazard in his Christian life. (Galatians 5:4, Hebrews 12:15)
9. The divine attitude to grace is expressed in (Isaiah 30:18, 19) God is constantly waiting to pour out his blessing on all believers in the Christian life.
10. Grace in salvation is expressed in many ways. It is always the same - believing in Jesus Christ (Psalm 103:8-12, Romans 3:23-4, Romans 4:4, 5:20, Ephesians 2:8, 9)
11. There are many ways in which the Christian life expresses GRACE:
 - a) Prayer (Hebrews 4:16)
 - b) Suffering (2 Corinthians 12:9, 10)
 - c) Growth (2 Peter 3:18)

- d) Stability (1 Peter 5:12)
- e) Lifestyle (Hebrews 12:28, 2 Corinthians 1:12)
- f) Production of Divine Good (1 Corinthians 15:10, 2 Corinthians 6:1)

12. Grace is the correct attitude in relation to giving. (2 Corinthians 8 & 9)

13. Grace is the only means of coping with suffering in the Christian life. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) Through Grace God is able to bless the believer in the midst of the pressures and adversities of life. (1 Peter 1:6,7)

14. Implications of grace:

- a) God is perfect, his plan is perfect.
- b) A perfect plan can only originate from a perfect God.
- c) If man could do anything in the plan of God the plan would no longer be perfect.
- d) A plan is no stronger than its weakest link. Grace therefore excludes all human merit, all human ability.
- e) Legalism, human works is the enemy of Grace.
- f) The works of human righteousness have therefore no place in the plan of God. (Isaiah 64:6)

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY [See page 121 above]

PARAPHRASE

“But, in contrast to the past, right now, he has everlastingly obtained a far more excellent high priestly ministry. Also he has, with his priestly ministry become the mediator of a much better covenant than the old one. It has been established upon the legally binding direct promises of God. Now, think about this; if the first covenant had been without flaw or possibility of fault then there would never have been a place in the plan for a second covenant to come into operation. God found fault with the people, and said to them, ‘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, but not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day I plucked them out of Egypt, because they did not keep obedient to that covenant, and so as a covenant consequence I withdrew my presence from them, saith the Lord.’ ‘For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days are over, saith the Lord.’ ‘I will put my laws into their very thoughts, and engrave my laws upon their hearts, and I will be to them a God and they will be to me a people in relationship with me.’ And then, they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least unto the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Note again, that he says, ‘a new covenant’, and by so doing he has declared the first covenant an ‘old’ one. It is that old covenant which today has grown truly old and in need of replacement, indeed it is just about to disappear altogether!”

NOTES

CHAPTER 9**PART 7 [continued] - WE HAVE A TRUE SANCTUARY VERSES 1- 10.****HEBREWS 9 : 1 - 5**

“ 1 Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2 For there was a tabernacle made: the first, wherein there was the candle-stick and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. 3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all, 4 which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant, overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5 and over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.”

KEY WORDS

Ordinances	Dikaiomata	that which is demanded by righteousness; regulations.
Service	Latreia	worship, religious service to God.
Worldly	Kosmos	material/earth - bound, compared to spiritual.
Sanctuary	Agion	holy place.
Made	Kataskeuazo	aoist, passive, indicative; outfitted with all that was needed for it to function.
Lampstand	luchnia	the seven branched Menorah candlestick.
Shewbread	prothesis ton arton	the setting out of the loaves.
Sanctuary	agia	holy place.
Holy of Holies	agia agion	Holy of the Holies.
Censer	thumiaterion	the altar of incense.
Ark	kibotos	the box, chest, ark.
Overlaid	perikalupto	perfect , passive, participle ; having been covered around with gold.
Pot	stamos	pitcher, jar, pot.
Budded	blastano	aoist, active, participle; sprouted, budded.
Tablets	plax	flat stone tablets.
Cherubim	cheroubim	the carriers of divine glory (shekinah).
Shadowing	kataskiazoo	present, active, participle; overshadowing; one at either end of the ark leaning over towards the middle area - the mercy seat.
Mercy seat	ilasterion	the place of propitiation - the mercy seat where the blood was sprinkled.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

This passage is the “holy ground” of Hebrews, for here we speak of the “blood of Christ” shed for us and discuss what it means. We are reminded of many principles relating to worship, that all too often in our modern churches are forgotten, or have never been learnt. Let us pause, pray and go slowly here, for we are on holy ground.

The first point we confront is the reference to the “ordinances” of the worship during the Old Covenant period. The Lord laid down very specifically rules and regulations to order the worship services of Israel. The reason? They all spoke of the spiritual reality that would come in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so the worship had to be a perfect picture of the reality to come. The priests had to get it right or there were serious penalties for them to face for any errors in their service. As we go through these verses let us ask ourselves about our own obedience to what the Lord has revealed to us.

Verse 1. The worship of Israel was very “earth bound”, it was physical actions organised to teach and worship, and occurred in only one place, in the tabernacle or temple. It was very carefully regulated, and each and every sacrifice was carefully explained and every step the priest was to take spelt out clearly. It was a physical and earth bound service, in contrast to the spiritual and heavenly calling of the believer today, but it was carefully laid down.

The Lord cares about details! The Lord cares about obedience to revealed things! The writer now “zooms in” as if with a camera, on the structure and contents of the ancient tabernacle. His purpose is to come to the altar and remind the people of the blood sacrifice that stood at the centre of all their worship. He wants them to see the specifics and the detail of those specifics, so they pause and reflect upon their attitudes on the day they hear these words read.

Verse 2. He ignores the outer court of the tabernacle and begins his “tour” with the tent of meeting itself. The reason; in the outer court people and priests waited or served at the altar, and that is not his subject, for it is where the blood shed is to be offered that he wants to discuss. He moves directly to the Holy Place within the first chamber of the tabernacle, where there are three items of furniture that he wants to discuss.

Each one speaks of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was the lampstand, the Menorah, or seven branched candlestick, speaking of the Lord as the “light of the world”. (Refer the BTB doctrine on the “Tabernacle” for a discussion of each item in the tabernacle and their significance, also the doctrine of “Light”).

The next was the table with the “shewbread” upon it, one loaf for each tribe of Israel, reminding us that the Lord is “the bread of life”. **Leviticus 24:5-9**, and also refer to, **Matthew 12:1-7, 26:26 -32, Mark 2:26, Luke 6:4**. The old table was set every Sabbath, and the old bread was eaten by the priests, but the Lord contrasts this with the new covenant, where he is the bread of life and all are invited to share the intimate fellowship with the Lord at all times, every day a Sabbath Feast with the Lord, walking, worshipping and witnessing.

Verse 3. There was a second curtain or veil that barred the way from the courtyard altar to the Holiest of Holies. **Exodus 26:31 - 37, 36:35 - 38**. This was the veil that was torn completely in two from top to bottom at the point of the Lord’s death. **Matthew 27:51**. The inner place was the place of meeting with God for the High Priest once a year when he came with the blood offering on Yom Kippur. The day that the writer is drawing attention to is Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, and the items he describes take their significance from that day and it’s significance.

Verse 4. He does not mention the golden altar of incense (outside the second veil), but the golden censer (a container to carry the hot coals from the altar of incense through into the Holy of Holies. Refer to **Exodus 30:6 - 10, Leviticus 16 : 12 - 18, 1 Kings 6:22**. It is the act of going through the veil with the censer smoking that the writer has in view; and in this act the High Priest was illustrating answered prayer. As the smoke of the incense filled the chamber it reminded the High Priest that his prayers for the people and himself were answered, because of the acceptable blood sacrifice offered, and so all knew that fellowship with God was restored. The censer was filled with sweet smelling incense reminding him that fellowship with God, achieved through the blood, was indeed the sweetest thing on earth, and to be savoured. **Revelation 5:8, 6:9-10, 8:3-4**.

The next item of significance for the writer’s purpose is the Ark of the Covenant. He gives a very basic description of it, reminding the hearers that the ark was both wood and gold, symbolising the Lord’s perfect humanity and deity, and that it’s lid was a separate part, and contained the two cherubim, and the Mercy Seat; the place where no-one sat, but where the Lord’s justice and righteousness met the sin of mankind and dealt with it all.

The Ark was “lost” by Israel at some time before the Babylonian captivity, yet it is described as being in the Lord’s temple in heaven, **Revelation 11:19**. The Ark was a pregnant picture of Christ carrying within it the message of fulfilment of the Law and the Lord’s perfect provision for His people for sin and all the details of daily life.

Within the Ark were two items that illustrated the Lord’s deliverance of Israel and His power to work miracles of preservation and provision. There was a golden container of manna from the wilderness wanderings, reminding them that the Lord had fed the people supernaturally throughout their entire desert wanderings for forty years.

There was also Aaron’s rod that budded before the rebels, **Numbers 16:41 -50, 17:1-13**, (but this was not the staff that turned into the snake before Pharaoh), it was a special small rod made by Moses to teach the people who it was that the Lord had determined to make the high priestly family, and to settle the complaining and moaning about leadership.

The reference to the budding of the rod is significant for this passage, as it highlights the rebelliousness of the nation Israel under Moses and Aaron, and reminds the people of the writer’s day that the Lord was the one who supernaturally chose who it was that was to lead and rule the people. The hearers of this letter are “rebellious” just as some of the priests were in Moses day, for they have not followed the Lord’s direction and come out from the old covenant.

The last item in the ark were the tablets of stone upon which the Mosaic Law was carved by the hand of God. This was the symbol of the covenant the very source document of the Law itself. The two tablets of stone represented man’s sin, but they were firmly placed within the Ark (speaking of the perfection of the Hypostatic Union of the Lord Jesus Christ), reminding us that He met all the demands of the Law in his person and work, and that the Law is now fulfilled and surpassed.

Even in Israel’s day the Law was not seen, only the blood on the lid (mercy Seat) of the Ark was seen, and that only by the High Priest one day a year. Even in Israel’s day, while the Law was operational the picture was here that it would be fulfilled and replaced by the Blood of Christ.

Verse 5. The lid of the Ark was the “place of meeting” within the “tent of meeting”, and was the focal point of the Holy of Holies. It was here that the blood was sprinkled on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). God’s presence was here symbolised by the two cherubim; for it was here, where the blood was sprinkled, that the Lord’s justice and righteousness met the sin of man with mercy and forgiveness through the blood shed. **Psalms 103:8-14**.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Each item in the tabernacle of old spoke of the Lord’s perfect provision for the sins of mankind, and his on-going provision for their fellowship with Him, and the requirements of daily life. Do we rest in the provision of God for us, and do we praise his holy name for all He has done, is doing, and will do for us, in Christ Jesus?

The Lord’s person was the perfect fulfilment of all that the Holy Place and Holy of Holies spoke of. He was perfectly both man and God, and being found without sin, he offered the acceptable sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. All of this is pictured here in the tabernacle, but finds it’s fulfilment in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This fact is what the writer wants his people to see, and so to leave behind the shadow and walk in daily fellowship with the reality. This remains our challenge also; have we left behind religious systems and are we in daily fellowship with our Lord?

Do we live in the Holy of Holies with the sweet savour of living fellowship with Him constantly our experience? The high priest of Israel entered this place once a year and left; through his perfect sacrifice the way is opened for us to enter into moment by moment fellowship with the Lord. This is the standard for us, and this is our privilege and responsibility.

B. PASTORAL

We are the Lord's under-shepherds as his pastors, and we must be sure that we are teaching the full counsel of God's word, and serving him in holiness and truth. Do our people know about the tabernacle of old and see that it spoke of Christ? Do they see its significance and praise God for His plan? If not, we have fallen short in our teaching plan.

DOCTRINES

TABERNACLE

1. The Tabernacle was set up as the basic system of worship in Israel and was a part of the spiritual code of the Mosaic Law portraying the person of Christ, the unique High Priest, the unique person, the unique Saviour.

- a) The tabernacle also speaks of the human body in a tent or temporary storage place for the soul.
- b) The tabernacle also portrays God's dwelling place and portrays God's dwelling with man in grace.
- c) The tabernacle is also the place where man meets God and as the tabernacle represents the Lord Jesus Christ this shows that God meets people at the cross.
- d) Only the priest was able to enter the tabernacle and only the believer today has fellowship with God.
- e) The tabernacle was given in fine detail and shows that God plans things down to the finest detail.
- f) The tabernacle was divided into two parts - the outer area which represented the earth and the inner which represented God's domain.
- g) The inner area was divided into two, the holy place in which the Levitical priests functioned, the Holy of Holies in which the high priest functioned once a year. The holy place represents heaven, the Holy of Holies representing the throne room of God where our High Priest Jesus Christ constantly intercedes for us.

2. The Tabernacle was located in the centre of the camp. All around the tabernacle were the tribes of Israel, three to each cardinal compass point.

Principle: Everybody starts on the outside, only those who enter the tabernacle (i.e. are born again) have fellowship with God.

3. The specifications which start in Exodus 25 commence with the Holy of Holies. This is to show that salvation starts with God and not man. All blessing comes from God.

4. The tabernacle is a perfect rectangle 100 cubits by 50 cubits, 175 feet long, 87 1/2 feet wide and 8'9" high. It was always that way and never changed - God is unchangeable (Exodus 27:9-15).

5. The side of the tabernacle was supported by 60 brass pillars on the outer court, 60 brass sockets. Brass judgment, Pillars - cross. On the top of the pillars was a silver chapter. Silver - redemption. Twenty on the north and south side and 10 on the east and west sides (Exodus 27:9-15).

6. The outside of the tabernacle was of fine white linen - representing the righteousness of God (Exodus 27:9).

7. There was one door into the tabernacle - there is only one way to God - through Christ. The door was blue in colour and 35' wide. Once you had passed through the door you were inside the tabernacle representing imputed righteousness. The large width meant that all could pass through, the material was very fine showing that minimal faith was needed to enter in (i.e. weak people could push the material aside). There were four layers of material. In order they were blue, purple, scarlet, white:-

- blue - deity of Christ,
- purple - Kingship of Christ,
- red - redemptive work of Christ,
- white - total righteousness of Christ. Thus by the time you had fully passed through the door the white righteousness of Christ encompassed you completely (Exodus 26:36).

8. The pillars supporting the doors were of acacia wood overlaid with gold - the unique person of Christ. 5 pillars: 5 = grace, gold - deity, wood - humanity (Exodus 26:37).

9. The floor of the tabernacle weighed 6 1/2 tonne.

10. The roof had four layers: (Exodus 26:1-14)

- a) Outer: Badger skin - Humanity, Ram's wool dyed red - Redemption, White Goat's hair - Sinlessness
- b) Inner: Fine linen - Righteousness

11. There were seven articles of furniture in the tabernacle:

- a) The brazen altar outside the door
- b) The brazen laver near the door
- c) The table of shewbread
- d) The golden lampstand
- e) The golden altar near the veil
- f) The mercy seat
- g) The ark of the covenant.

The veil was between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies; the golden altar was associated with the Holy of Holies.

12. **THE BRAZEN ALTAR** (Exodus 27:1-8)

This was situated adjacent to the entrance into the tabernacle. Brass represents judgment. You could not enter into the Holy Place unless you had sacrificed on the brazen altar. Fire burnt the sacrifice. Fire judgment.

Application: You cannot enter the plan of God unless you have trusted in Christ at the cross.

13. **THE BRAZEN LAVER** (Exodus 30:17-21)

The brass bowl filled with water. This was also situated outside the tabernacle. Prior to entering the tabernacle the priest washed his hands representing confession of sin. Brass - sins judged on the cross. Water - cleansing.

Application: Before we can have fellowship with God we have to confess our sins. In the Church Age we are all priests, we have to confess our sins before we fellowship. Our brazen laver is 1 John 1:9

14. **TABLE OF SHEWBREAD** (Exodus 25:23-30)

This was in the Holy Place, constructed of acacia wood overlaid with gold. Laying on top of the table was the shewbread, 12 loaves, one for each of the tribes except Levi. The loaves were made of fine flour without leaven baked with frankincense and baked in fire. Bread - fellowship, Fine flour - righteousness of Christ. No leaven - no sin. Frankincense - propitiation. Fire - judgment. The priests ate the loaves after they had been exhibited for 1 week. Eating represents intake of Bible doctrine. Each loaf was placed under a crown showing the Lord Jesus Christ is the King of Israel. No leper priest allowed to eat, neither a stranger.

15. **THE GOLD CANDLESTICK** (Exodus 25:31-40)

This was also in the Holy Place constructed of gold - the candlestick represents Christ as the light of the world. There were seven candlesticks with a central stick, the other six branching off the central stick, three on either side. Six is man's number, seven is God's number - the perfect number.

Analogy - Man is made perfect in Christ.

The candlestick was the only light in the Holy Place. The fuel in the candlestick was oil. Oil represents the Holy Spirit. Oil in the centre stick represents Christ being empowered and relying on the Holy Spirit during his incarnation. Oil in the other lamps shows the Christian way of life walking in the Spirit (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23). The six candlesticks branching off the central stick represents the Christian in union with Christ and fellowship between Christians.

The candlestick weighed 48 lbs. (21 kg) and was beaten out of one piece of gold. It was very valuable and shows the preciousness of Christ. The candlestick was fashioned by beating and represents Christ suffering for the sins of the world. On the top of the centre candlestick they had knobs or pomegranates representing the eternal life and perfection of Christ. There were also almond buds opening up representing Christ being the fount of all life.

Flowers occurred on all seven candlesticks. The flowers represent the beauty of the character of Christ which we produce when we are filled with the Spirit. Each lamp had a wick which drew the oil up through the lamps. The wick has to be soaked in oil before it burns otherwise it emits smoke. Light - divine good or production. Smoke - human good or production.

Application: If the believer is empowered by the Holy Spirit he produces works which are noticeably different from the unbeliever. The burnt wick represents work for the Lord Jesus Christ. The priest used to collect the burnt wick and put it in a snuff box. God remembers our works for Him. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)

An alternate interpretation of the candlestick likens the seven stems as the seven spirits of God as found in (Isaiah 11:2, Revelation 1:4). The spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

16. THE GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE (Exodus 30:1 -10)

This is located just outside the Holy of Holies and represents intercessory prayer. The altar was made of gold overlaying wood and was in the form of a crown. The priest would go to the brazen altar, pick up coals, pass through the holy place and place the coals into the crown. Incense was then sprinkled onto the coals and the fumes coming up from the incense represented prayer to God. By taking coals from the brazen altar it showed that the basis for effective prayer is the death of Christ. The unbeliever cannot pray effectively except for accepting Christ as saviour. The only person who could obtain the coals was a priest representing a believer.

The crown is also significant. The cross must come before the crown, the crown also speaking of Christ the King priest after the order of Melchizedek. Fire spoke of judgment, the judgment of the cross being the basis for effective prayer. The Incense which was put on the altar contained four ingredients which speak of the work of Christ:

- a) Stukti - liquid from a gum tree representing the Father who is the recipient of prayer.
- b) Onoika - a ground-up shell (representing judgment). The burnt shell gave off a perfume (propitiation).
- c) Galbanin - the fat of a plant showing prosperity and representing the resurrection of Christ.
- d) Frankincense - a white gum used in crowning kings - representing the session of Christ.

17. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT AND MERCY SEAT (Exodus 25:10-22)

Located in the Holy of Holies the mercy seat was of gold. Over the seat were two golden cherubs which covered the mercy seat with their wings and looked down at the top of the mercy seat. In a box under the mercy seat were three objects representing sin, the tables of the law representing -transgression against moral laws, the pot of manna showing rejection of provision and Aaron's rod that budded showing rejection of authority. This was the ark of the covenant. Once a year on the feast of the atonement, blood from a sacrifice at the brazen altar was brought into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled on the mercy seat. The blood from the brazen altar represents the death of Christ. The cherubs, one representing the righteousness of God, the other the Justice of God look down, see the blood and are satisfied. The sin of the human race is removed by the death of Christ.

BLOOD SACRIFICE

1. Ever since the earliest recorded time God has required a blood sacrifice for sin. It is implied by the coats of skin provided by the Lord in the garden after Adam and Eve had attempted to clothe their nakedness with leaves. Abel brought an acceptable animal sacrifice, unlike Cain's who brought an unacceptable bloodless offering.

2. The requirement for blood sacrifices was continued with Noah after the flood; (cf. the near sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham); and was established as a requirement not only by the Passover lamb but also in the Levitical offerings.

3. When recording the will of God for Israel in the matter of food and the abstinence from eating "any manner of blood" Moses states "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

4. It is clear from the above that the life of an innocent victim (the animal sacrifice) acted as a shadow until the once and for all payment was paid with the true sacrifice of Christ.

5. There is an absolute necessity of the unique sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ as indicated by the phrase "the blood of Christ". (Romans 3:25, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 9:22)

6. Up to the time of the once and for all sacrifice the sins of believers were set aside adjacent to them (Gk. para) but since the cross they have been taken fully away.

7. The twelve elements of grace which involve the blood of Christ:-

- a) The New Covenant (Hebrews 8:8, 9:20-21).
- b) The blood is the life (John 6:53).
- c) Purchase and Redemption (Acts 20:28, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 1:18-19).
- d) Propitiation (Romans 3:25).
- e) Justification (Romans 5:9).
- f) Sanctification (Hebrews 13:12).
- g) Cleansing (Hebrews 9:14, 1 John 1:7, Revelation 7:14).
- h) Victory (Revelation 12:11).
- i) The blood of sprinkling (Hebrews 10:22, 1 Peter 1:2).
- j) Made nigh (Ephesians 2:13)
- k) Peace (Colossians 1:20).

l) Boldness to enter (Hebrews 10:19).

8. It is of interest that the resurrection body consists of flesh and bone but apparently no blood.

OFFERINGS: LEVITICAL OFFERINGS REPRESENT CHRIST

1. The Levitical offerings and sacrifices were a picture of the work of Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 10:1)

2. There are five offerings in Leviticus 1-6

- a) Burnt animal offerings Chapter 1 The work of Christ.
- b) Cereal offerings Chapter 2 The person of Christ.
- c) Peace offering Chapter 3 Reconciliation.
- d) Sin offering Chapter 4 Unknown sins.
- e) Trespass offering Chapter 5-6 v7 Known sins.

3. **Burnt animal offerings** (Leviticus 1)

An innocent perfect animal was killed for the sins of the offerer. A representation of Jesus dying for our sins on the cross.

- a) Bullock v2-9 Offered by the rich person:
 - Bullock is a male without blemish = Jesus Christ as a perfect person.
 - Offering is on the brazen altar = The death on the cross.
 - Offered voluntarily = Faith in Christ is on the basis of free will.
 - Sinner, (offerer) puts his hand on animal's head for an atonement = Sins laid on Christ on the cross.
 - Christ died for the sins of humanity. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - Killing of the bullock = The death of Christ
 - Blood covering the altar = Total cleansing from sin.
 - Flaying of animal to check that there were no inner blemishes = Jesus was perfect and free from sin both outwardly and inwardly.
 - Wood burnt = Human good removed. (1 Corinthians 3:12, 15)
 - The head is burnt = The perfect mentality of Christ
 - The fat is burnt = The outward perfection of Christ.
 - The gut washed with water from the brazen laver = Cleansing from sin. (1 John 1:9)
 - The legs washed = Cleansing from sin allows for service.
 - Bullock is burnt = The solution to the sin problem at salvation and during the Christian life has been accomplished at the cross.

b) Sheep v10-13 Offered by the middle class.

c) Birds v14-17 Offered by the poor.

4. **The Cereal Offerings** (Leviticus 2)

- a) The Gift Offering = the gift of Jesus Christ:
 - Fine flour = Perfection of Christ
 - Oil = Holy Spirit
 - Frankincense = Satisfaction to God the Father
 - Salt = Preservation
 - Leaven (not included) = Sin
 - Honey (not included) = Human Good.
 - Take a handful of the mixture = Appropriating salvation personally by faith.
 - Burnt on the altar = Judgment of Christ on the cross.
 - Oil = Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - The priest eats the remainder = the priest is sustained by the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit.
- b) The Oven Offering:
 - Unleavened bread = Christ had no sin.
 - Baked offering hidden from man's view = Godward side of the Cross. Golgotha shrouded in darkness during the period of judgment of the sins.
 - Fire = Justice of God
 - Offering = Perfect humanity of Christ
 - Oven = Cross
 - Oil = empowerment of Christ.
 - Frankincense = God is propitiated or satisfied.
- c) The Flat plate Offering:
 - Fine flour with oil = Perfection of Christ
 - Unleavened = No sin or sin nature

No frankincense = No propitiation until God judged the sins of the world.
 Part into pieces = Crumbled - something completely destroyed - Christ's body broken for us. Crushed with our sin (Isaiah 53).
 Oil poured onto crumbs = Oil of appointment - Messiah or given one. God the Father appointed God the Son to go to the cross cf. dove at baptism.

- d) The Frying Pan Offering:
 Partly closed, partly open - Unseen = Godward, propitiation. Seen = manward, reconciliation.
 The offerer gives offering to priest who takes it to the altar, takes part as a remembrance (memorial) for (judgment) = compare with Lord's Table remembrance
 rest eaten by the priests - how we appropriate Christ - faith.
- e) Rules of Cereal Offerings:
 Prohibited leaven = sin or evil
 Honey = Human good or human sweetness
 Garnished with salt = a contract between God and man.
- f) Cereal offerings were made at the:
 Passover (with burning = judgment = cross)
 Firstfruits (without burning = resurrection)
 Day of Atonement (with burning = judgment = cross).
- g) The Memorial Offering:
 Green corn = Christ in resurrection
 Dried = Roasted by fire, Judgment
 Beaten = Bruised or crushed
 Full ears = Perfection of Christ
 Put oil on = Messiahship appointment
 Frankincense = Propitiation, satisfaction
 Burnt = Reference to the cross
 Memorial = Lord's Table of the Old Testament.

5. **Peace offering** Chapter 3 Reconciliation.
 Similar to the burnt offering, with both male and female animals sacrificed.

6. **Sin offering** Chapter 4 Unknown sins.
 Confession and repentance from sin, equivalent to 1 John 1:9 (and cleanse us from all -unknown sins - unrighteousness)

7. **Trespass offering** Chapter 5 - 6 v7 Known sins.
 Confession and repentance from sin, equivalent to 1 John 1:9 (forgive our - known/confessed - sins)

PARAPHRASE

“For in truth, the first covenant had also regulations or ordinances setting out how worship was to be conducted, and that was for an earth bound sanctuary. For there was a 'tent of meeting' made by Moses: the first room of it, wherein there was the seven branched candlestick, the Menorah, and the golden table, and the shewbread; this room was called the sanctuary, the Holy Place. And after the second veil, the second room of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all, which had the censer, and the ark of the covenant, overlaid round about with gold. In the Ark was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and over it the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; (there is much that could be said of all these things, but we cannot now spend more time discussing them.”

Notes

HEBREWS 9 : 6 - 10

“ 6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7 But unto 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: 8 the Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing; 9 which was a figure for the time then present in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation.”

KEY WORDS

Ordained	kataskeuazo	perfect , passive, participle - genitive absolute; they were used temporarily, with lasting results, but it is past, over.
Went	eisiasin	present, active, indicative; kept on going in.
Accomplishing	epiteleo	present, active, participle; performed, completed the rituals.
Without	Charis	not without (blood).
Offered	prosphero	present, active, indicative; year after year he kept on offering sacrifice.
Errors	agnoema	sins of ignorance.
Signifying	Delo	present, active, participle; making clear for all to see.
Manifest	phaneroo	perfect , passive, infinitive; to make plain (everlasting results).
Standing	echo+stasis	genitive absolute = retaining it's status, during it's time of operation.
Figure	parabole	parable, symbol, figure for teaching/instruction purposes.
Time	Kairos	time/age/season/epoch.
Present	enistemi	perfect , active, participle; to be present at that time (lasting results).
Could not	dunamai	present, middle, participle; not being able, having the power to.
Perfect	Teleioo	aorist, active, infinitive; to bring to completion, perfection.
Service	latreuo	did the worship, performed the religious duties.
Which stood	monon + epi	(with the dative) in the matter of.
Carnal	sarkos	according to the flesh.
Ordinances	dikaiomasin	regulations.
Imposed	epitithemi	present, middle, participle laid upon them as a burden/responsibility to be borne.
Reformation	diorthesis	the time of setting right, improvement, setting straight that which is crooked.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Verse 6. The tabernacle/temple system was authorized and established by God, and so is legitimate. It was looking forward to the last perfect sacrifice, and so certain things kept on being done within it regularly. These things spoke, every time they were done, of the coming perfect work of Christ, and the significance of the blood sacrifice drew attention every day to the cost of sin for mankind. The writer wants to take the people who hear this letter first through the things that they could still observe in the Temple of their day, but then get them to see the present ritual from the Lord's perspective. All things here were "ordained" (perfect tense) and had eternal significance – and the real tabernacle is not "lost", for it remains in heaven for all to see. Mankind only ever saw the copy made by Moses.

The priests had to, every year enter the Holy of Holies and conduct the ritual as it had been laid down from the days of Moses. They kept on doing what was ordained/ordered, and the results were lasting during the Age of the Law, but the practise was temporary; it was designed to be replaced. It had, "built in obsolescence"; it's legitimate operation was only until the Lord came and then the great veil was torn in two. The people who first heard this letter knew the veil had torn, yet sadly and wrongly were still taking part in the sacrificial system that the torn veil had indicated was "OVER!!!"

Verse 7. The Old Covenant was exclusive, and involved very few in it's inner workings. The High Priest alone went into the Holy of Holies, and that only once a year. He only approached the second chamber of the tabernacle with blood, first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people. The whole ritual underlined the sinfulness of the people involved, and their need for the blood to cover their sins, but it also showed that the process was incomplete, for the sacrifice needed to be renewed every year.

Verse 8. The writer makes it plain that this sense of "incompleteness" was deliberate. The Holy Spirit himself, made it clear for all to see, that this constant offering signified something, and that was, that the way through for all into the presence of God (the Holy of Holies) was not yet opened up; it was closed to all the people except the High Priest. This opening up would occur with the perfect sacrifice of Christ being offered on the cross.

Verse 9. The significance of the constant yearly going in, and the need for the high priest to offer a sin offering first for himself is now given. The very fact that the priest had to offer sacrifice first for himself tells us, the writer indicates, that his sacrifice was not complete, for his sins needed to be constantly dealt with before he could serve each and every single year. His conscience was never clear before God, he always was aware that he was a sinner in need of grace, mercy, and forgiveness, before he could serve the Lord. The contrast between the old and new is being made systematically by the writer, point by point, reminding them of the superiority of the new covenant blessings, when

compared to the old covenant rituals; rituals that could never deliver the full spiritual reality. It was a system of ritual that could never deliver the perfect and final goal, for it was intended only to lead to that goal, and that goal was Christ.

Verse 10. Here the writer brings his last point to its logical conclusion. The whole Old Covenant was designed to point to the reality, the perfection, to come. It was about “meats and drinks”, “baptisms and rules”, for each aspect of the Law was designed to point to the person and work of Christ, and that is what it did so well. It was never meant to be a permanent institution and way of spirituality, for it did not “produce the goods”, it only opened, and pointed, the way.

The time it prepared for is referred to as the, “time of reformation”, the time of setting things right. The term chosen here was used in civil engineering, when a road had been surveyed and was seen to be crooked, or out of its best alignment, and it was then straightened. It is a good analogy for the Law. The Old Covenant Law showed that men were on a “crooked path”, but it did not straighten their path, for it lacked the power to achieve that; it was waiting for the coming Saviour who would make the path’s straight, who had the power to effect the changes the Law could only identify needed to be made.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

We are forgiven only through the blood of Christ. Every time we take the Communion emblems we are to remember the sacrifice that the Lord made “once for all” for our salvation. The old legal system of the Mosaic/Aaronic Law could never achieve what the Lord did on the cross, for the old was meant to point to the work of the Lord, not achieve it.

Once this point has been grasped, the believer will not go back into the Law as a system of spirituality. It was never designed to be a “thing in itself”, it only ever pointed to Christ. He alone is the goal of the Law. When we see this point we are permanently set free from the error of legalism.

We do not need to return to any old legal system to achieve spiritual status, for the way the Lord has opened up is, “occupation with Him”! It is a Christ-centred life that “delivers the goods” for the believer today, and that is the life we are to strive for, in the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit !

B. PASTORAL

How clearly do we preach, as pastors, about the past role of the Old Covenant Law so that the people know its past glory, but see that it was simply a light to shine on man’s crooked path. Only the Lord was able to straighten the path itself, and He did that. Once we see the truth that is behind these verses we are able to let go of any legalistic desires and focus on the truth for this new covenant age.

Today the call is to grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be occupied daily with thoughts of Him. The Christ centred and Holy Spirit filled life is what we are called to preach and live out before all men. Do the Lord’s people hear this from us?

We must beware of the temptation to replace the Mosaic Law with laws and codes of our own. Too many today have their own legalistic “hedge around the gospel”, which they put in place for “good motives”, but in fact such legalism is always an evil, for it detracts from Christ. The only security and stability for the believer in this new covenant age is daily to walk close to the Lord in living spiritual fellowship.

PARAPHRASE

“Now while these legal requirements were still required as part of divine worship, the priests went every day the same, into the first tabernacle, performing the designated sacrifices as service of God. But unto the second went the high priest alone once every year, and never without the required blood sacrifice, which he offered first for himself, and then for the sins of ignorance of the people: the Holy Spirit, by this ritual, making it clear for all to see, that under this old covenant, the way into the holiest of all was not yet open and able to be used by anyone, and this remained true, while the first tabernacle was still legitimately in operation; for its ritual was a teaching parable for the time under the old covenant. During the whole time of the old covenant, there were offered both gifts and sacrifices, but they could not make even the one that did the service spiritually complete; it could never heal the conscience of sinful man, only keep him waiting for deliverance. The old covenant was a system of rituals of offerings of meats and drinks, and various baptisms, and earth bound regulations, which were imposed on Israel until the time should arrive when the problems of sinful man that the old covenant highlighted would be set right.”

HEBREWS 9:11-17

“ 11 But Christ being come as high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your sins conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new covenant 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. 16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.”

KEY WORDS

Being come	paraginomai	aoist, middle, participle; having appeared.
More perfect	teleiateros	comparative = more perfect/complete than the old.
Building	ktisis	creation.
Entered	eiserchomai	aoist, active, indicative; he entered in.
Once	ephapax	once for all (time).
Obtained	eurisko	aoist, middle, participle; found, obtained, secured.
Eternal	aiionias	unto the ages(that outlasts the ages of time)
Redemption	lutrosis	redemption = releasing of a slave by payment of a fixed price.
Sprinkling	rantizo	present, active, participle; sprinkling of the ashes of the red heifer(Numbers 5:).
Unclean	koinoo	perfect , passive, participle; those being defiled, therefore being ceremonially unclean.
Sanctifieth	agiazō	present, active, indicative; keeps on purifying, sanctifying, making clean for worship.
Purifying	katharotes	purify.
Offered	prosphero	aoist, active, indicative; offered up.
Without spot	amomos	without any blemish that would disqualify the sacrifice.
Purify	katharizo	future, active, indicative; shall purify.
Serve	latreuō	present, active, infinitive; to serve/minister religious service.
Transgressions	parabasis	breaking of a law.
Called	kaleō	perfect , passive, participle; called (with eternal results)
Receive	lambano	aoist, active, subjunctive; at the point in time receive(potential only = subjunctive mood)
Necessity	anagke	legally necessary.
Be	phero	present, passive, infinitive; to come in, or probably, be registered legally.
Force	bebaia	is legally valid, applies, is firm and guaranteed.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The “but” that begins verse eleven is a strong contrast, and it is meant to be. The way of life that the Lord brings in is totally superior in all aspects to that which the Law provided. In this section the writer will move his case further along, pointing out that the covenant of old had promises within it that could only be fulfilled when the Lord came and died. That as He was giver of the old covenant, and the legal “testator” of the new covenant, then all is changed by His death, and the New Testament becomes operational.

Verse 11. The Lord has come! The Messiah has come to end the old and establish the new! All is changed by Him! He is the one who alone can bring in perfection/completeness of salvation for mankind, for He alone can take away our sins. There are a number of superiorities that the writer draws attention to in this section. Firstly, He brings in “good things”, in contrast to the “bad news” of condemnation under the old covenant. Secondly He brings, a better sacrifice to a better tabernacle. The tabernacle of heaven, where the Lord went to deliver his report of the completion of the work of salvation, is a greater tabernacle than any of earth. The contrast the writer has drawn throughout this chapter, is between the “earthly”(carnal), and the heavenly; the old covenant (earthly) and the new covenant(of heaven).

Verse 12. The next contrast is stated boldly here. His sacrifice was far better than the ones the high priest brought under the Old Covenant. He came with his own blood, the perfect and complete sacrifice for sins, rather than the offering of the blood of calves and goats, which had significance only in so far as they looked forward to the real blood offering for sin that would come with Messiah’s sacrifice.

The Lord entered at that time (aoist tense) into the heavenly Holy of Holies and offered the sacrifice “once for all time”. At that time he obtained our eternal salvation; the payment to set us free from the slave market of sin was paid completely. Truly, “it is finished”, just as He said, **John 19:30**. Redemption is a settled thing; it is completely provided, and is a completed transaction for us to rest secure in. We can live the “faith-rest life” because of the stability of salvation.

Verse 13. Under the old covenant the blood sprinkled did work for those obedient to it, and the sins of the believers were dealt with and their lives were purified for godly service. It worked because it was ordained by God, and

their obedience to God's righteous demands was honoured by forgiveness. The grounds of the forgiveness that came through the blood of bulls and goats was only there, because each one of those sacrifices spoke of the final efficacious sacrifice that they all pointed towards. The blood of the animal stood for the blood of Christ, and it was Christ's blood that gave forgiveness finally. All else looked forward to that day – it was as though all the Old Testament believers were "saved on credit", the bill being picked up in full and paid at the Cross!

The writer also mentions here the ashes of the red heifer. This sacrifice was required to produce a suspension of ashes and water that was used to sprinkle the high priest before he was even deemed holy enough to offer the sacrifice for his own sins. The ashes of the red heifer were the foundation of the priesthood; without them the priesthood could not function, for it was not deemed ceremonially "clean", and therefore able to offer the sacrifice for sin.

By mentioning the red heifer the writer reminds the first hearers of the letter that the entire sacrificial system was built upon the unworthiness and sinfulness of the priests as men, in contrast to the new covenant priesthood that is built upon the only perfect sinless high priest. The old covenant system was fragile, built upon sinful men, and the ashes of the red heifer. The new covenant is robust and strong for it is built upon the holy one, who has offered the perfect final sacrifice already, and it has been accepted, and with its acceptance all ritual sacrifice is at an end. Read, **Numbers 19, Ezekiel 36:16 - 38, Luke 20:18, John 9:39.**

Verse 14. Strong contrasts are drawn in the words of this verse between the old and new covenants. The blood of Christ is put up against the blood of bulls and goats, and there is no contest, the Lord's sacrifice is superior by far! He offered himself, without needing the red heifer, for he had the required moral purity within himself, and lived always in the power and purity of the Holy Spirit.

On two counts this indicates superiority of the new over the old. Firstly the Lord brings himself as his own perfect sacrifice, for he needs no priest nor other sacrifice to mediate, and secondly he comes in the purity of the Holy Spirit, spiritually acceptable to God without needing to be purified by the ashes of the red heifer as the Aaronic priests were.

The writer is stronger still when he contrasts the old covenant with the new in terms of, "dead works of dead men", against the work of the "living God". Dead men, both morally dead through sin, and physically dead through their mortality, cannot truly ever serve and meet with the "living God", for they exist on different planes. Only Christ can bring the two together, and in the new covenant he does. **Matthew 26:28, 1Timothy 2:5 - 6.**

Verse 15. It is for this reason that the Lord is the mediator of the new covenant. It is because of his superiority that he is our mediator, and his death is the redemption price for us all, for those under the old covenant, and for those born after it ceased to operate. His sacrifice covers all of mankind, for he is the transition between the two covenants, as he was the author of both.

The eternal inheritance is provided for all through the promises of God as recorded in the scriptures, made from the first days of mankind's existence right through until the Lord's sacrifice. Everlasting life was God's promise through the ages for obedience to Him, and in Christ we literally see what it really means in his resurrection body. **Genesis 2:9, 16, 17, 3:22, 9:16, 13:15, 15:7, Galatians 3:6 - 4:7.**

Verse 16. The writer now uses the play on words that is possible with the Greek language of the Septuagint and the common usage of his day. The word for covenant, "diatheke", can mean both a covenant and a will or testament. A will becomes active only after the death of the testator, and so he uses a number of legal words in this verse and the next to indicate that the Lord's death has significance in a legal sense for the various covenants.

The Lord's words of promise throughout scripture are in the form of a promise tied into the sacrificial system, and so the promises become fully functional only after the sacrifice is offered, and the Lord is dead. (The promises are only securely known to be actively true by his resurrection.)

Verse 17. While the testator of a will is alive the will is not active, but once she/he has died all its provisions are now active. Death is a necessity for a will to become active and functional. Just so, Christ's death makes active all the promises contained in the scriptures relative to our redemption from sin, and our reception of eternal life.

A will is one sided, where-as most covenants are two sided. The new covenant is in a sense, two sided, in that man must respond to it, but when examined the new covenant depends totally on the work of God on man's behalf. It is Grace all the way with the new covenant, and so it resembles a will, where the beneficiaries gain great wealth from their benefactor simply on the basis of their relationship to the one who died. Just so we gain from the Lord's death by our relationship with Him through faith.

Even the older covenant made with Abraham, recorded in **Genesis 15:7-21**, was really one sided, with God alone passing through the sacrifice and confirming the promises made to Abraham. Our God is a God of grace, and greater grace replaces great grace in God's plan for man's redemption. The Mosaic Law was "great", but the work of the Lord on the Cross and Empty Tomb was "greatest". The great looked forward to the greater, and the greater replaced it, by going up a notch, not avoiding or rejecting the holiness demanded – rather providing the power to achieve Moses' standard.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Do we have the heavenly focus that we see expressed in this letter in every section? Constantly the writer draws our eyes heavenwards, identifying that the focus of our minds and hearts ought to be heaven, where our Saviour waits, and our reward awaits us. Do we see this today or are we distracted by the cares of time; by the mortgages, the worries about work, money, children, and property?

Have we accepted the settled and sure transaction of redemption? Have we seen that what the Lord did for us worked; that our redemption is won? All too often believers live as if their salvation is unsure, and without the "helmet of salvation" firmly on our heads protecting our thoughts, we are in chaos in our daily life. The Lord has paid the price and the result is a "settled thing"; we are saved and delivered from our sins. Have we praised his holy name for these things today?

Greater grace is ours in Christ Jesus; so let us praise his name. The Eternal Plan of God for us is secure and complete, with no detail left out. We are the recipients of his greater grace in Christ. Our salvation and deliverance from pressures in time is as certain as his death and resurrection from the dead.

B. PASTORAL

The certainties of the plan of God, and the surety of our salvation must be constant themes of our preaching. We have a great saviour, and his work is certain, in the past, in the present trials we face, as it will be in our future. The Lord's death and resurrection open the door to blessing, and our accurate preaching on these spiritual realities opens the door of understanding for the Lord's people, and makes the blessing available to them to claim.

Too many believers are living non-victorious lives because they have never heard the full truth about the Lord's work for them! Let us ensure that the judgement of God is not upon us for any failure to make his plan known, so that all may enter into it's blessing!

DOCTRINES**DELIVERANCE**

1. We are delivered from spiritual darkness Colossians 1:13
2. We are delivered from sin 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 6:7
3. We are delivered from death Hebrews 2:14
4. We are delivered from judgment Romans 8:1

SALVATION [See page 59 above]**ETERNAL LIFE [See page 24 above]****PARAPHRASE**

"But in contrast to this, Christ having appeared as high priest of good things to come, by a greater, more perfect and complete tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this earthly creation; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once for all into the heavenly holy of Holies, and has securely obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of the red heifer sprinkling the unclean person and thing sanctified it for spiritual service in the old tabernacle: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself, without any spot of sin, to God, cleanse away your sins, and deliver your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God? And for this reason he is the mediator of the new covenant. It was so that by means of his death, he gained redemption for all. His redemption covers all of the transgressions that occurred under the first testament, in order that all who are called might receive the promise of eternal life and all the Lord's inheritance that goes with it. For where a testament or will, is, there must of legal necessity be the death of the testator. For a will or testament is of force only after men are dead: until then it has no application at all."

HEBREWS 9 : 18 - 28

“ 18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop and sprinkled both the book and all the people, 20 saying, ‘this is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you’. (Exodus 24 : 8) 21 Moreover he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. 22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. 23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25 nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement; 28 so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

KEY WORDS

Dedicated	egkainizo	perfect , passive, indicative; introduced a new thing, with permanent results.
Spoken	laleo	aoist, passive, participle; after it had been spoken.
Took	lambano	aoist, active, participle; having taken.
Enjoined	entellomai	aoist, middle, indicative; commanded.
Almost	schedon	almost all.
Purified	katharizo	present, passive, indicative; are purified and made fit for religious service.
Shedding	aimatekchusia	the pouring out of blood.
Remission	aphesis	releasing, forgiveness, forgiving.
Patterns	upodeigma	pattern, copy, representation of an original.
Entered	eiserchomai	aoist, active, indicative; entered into.
Figures	antitupon	antitype - copy, answering to the type, like the original.
Appear	emphanizo	aoist, passive, infinitive; to become visible, to appear before/in the presence of.
Offer	prosphero	present, active, subjunctive; to offer himself again and again.
Others	allotrios	belonging to another.
Suffered	patheo	aoist, active, infinitive; to have suffered.
Once	apax	once for all.
End	sunteleia	consummation, time of the completion of the plan.
Put away	athetesis	with the goal of putting away.
Appeared	phaneroo	perfect , passive, participle; he manifested himself, permanent results.
Appointed	apokeimai	present, middle, indicative; it keeps on being true that man has laid up for him.
Offered	prosphero	aoist, middle/passive, participle; after having offered himself.
Look	apekdechomai	present, middle, participle; to those who keep on expectantly waiting/looking.
Bear	anaphero	aoist, active, infinitive; with the purpose of taking up and carrying away.
Appear	orao	future, passive, indicative will appear, be seen.
Salvation	soteria	deliverance.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Everything that relates to our sin requires blood to deal with it. Sin is that serious! From the beginning of time the Lord has made it clear that all our sin is the most serious thing of all! We down play sin, but God underlines it's danger by stating again and again throughout history that blood is required to deal with it, for it is rebellion against his holy plan and person, and deserving of death! This section begins with the reminder that blood was shed to start the first and second covenants, but the section ends with the deliverance from sin, and the end of this age itself.

Verse 18. The first covenant was begun with animal sacrifices. Blood was required to cover sins, and the hearers are reminded that the issues before them are of utmost seriousness, touching as they do on man's rebellion against God's holy standards. The writer has two objectives here. The first is to underline the importance of the blood of Christ as the final sacrifice, but his second is to underline the seriousness of their present rebellion against the new covenant, by continuing with sacrifices that were relevant only under the old.

Verse 19. The writer now describes the ritual of purification that occurred at the time of the giving of the Mosaic Law. Moses proclaimed the Ten Commandments, Exodus 20, then read out the civil code, Exodus 21 - 23, and then called on the people to respond. The people responded to the words by promising obedience. **Exodus 24:3.** Moses then wrote everything down (**Exodus 24:4-8**), the required sacrifices were offered, and blood was taken from the sacrifices and sprinkled on the altar and the people, and the writer to the Hebrews says also he sprinkled the book itself, that all might be sanctified by blood. The Lord wanted the people to see that all things needed to be set aside for His work, that all people, from least to greatest, needed to be obedient to Him.

Verse 20. “This the blood, that God commanded”. This bold quote from **Exodus 24:8**, reminds us that the heart of Judaism is blood sacrifice, and that by blood alone the people are cleansed before God, and able to serve Him.

Verse 21. Every article of furniture, and every utensil used for the sacrifices was sprinkled with blood also. Almost every thing had to be purified by blood. The picture was complete; everything is tainted by sin after the fall, and the whole creation “groans” under this burden awaiting the day of redemption. **Romans 8:22**.

Verse 22. There were some exceptions regarding the blood sprinkling; but each involved washing with pure water, another purifying symbol. The clothes were washed, rather than blood sprinkled, **Exodus 19:10**, but the principle of unclean/clean remained. After releasing the scapegoat the man had to wash himself, **Leviticus 16:23-26**, so the principle of uncleanness is followed here also. Those who burned the sin offering had to bathe and wash their clothes afterwards, **Leviticus 26:28**. Touching unclean things, **Leviticus 22:6**, meant washing with water was required.

After a battle, and the elimination of all the adult enemy, the warriors were told to purify themselves. As they had shed blood they were not purified by blood, but by washing and prayer. **Numbers 31:19-24**. Refer to the Jewish New Testament Commentary, David Stern, pages 697 - 700 for a very full and informative discussion of the blood sacrifices and their rituals within Judaism.

The bold statement that this verse ends with is a reminder of the penalty of sin and the cost of it's removal. Without blood there is no remission of sin. Releasing of man from the burden of sinfulness comes only through the blood of the cross of Christ.

Verse 23. It was a necessity for the earthly system to be sanctified with sacrificial blood, as that underlined for all mankind to see just how serious was the sin problem, and how seriously God took it's removal. The blood of the Lord had to be shed for us, or there was no forgiveness. If the temple and tabernacle on earth had to be purified with the blood of animals, then the writer argues the heavenly tabernacle, (of which the earthly is the copy), must also have been purified, or at least set apart (sanctified) for it's eternal purpose; and it was, but by more excellent sacrifices than were ever offered on earth in the Temple!

Verse 24. This verse opens the door, letting us see into something that occurred in heaven after the Lord's sacrifice on the cross. This must have been revealed to the writer as he wrote this passage, as it is only to be known directly through the Holy Spirit's ministry upon the writer. He tells us here that the Lord himself entered into the heavenly tabernacle, and sat down there as the king and high priest forever. The indication is that he did what no earthly high priest could ever think of doing; He made the heavenly Mercy Seat His throne!

The significance of these words would not have been lost on the first hearers of these words. Everything that the earthly items in the earthly tabernacle stood for were fulfilled in Christ Jesus; they spoke of him and he completed the picture by doing all they spoke of and then sat down amongst them in the heavenlies.

Verse 25. He did not offer himself “often” as the earthly high priests had to offer sacrifices, but he entered **once** only, for that was all that was required. The high priests on earth entered into the tabernacle year after year and brought the blood of “others”; animal blood that stood for the one who would come. The writer is underlining that the Lord's work is so superior to all this, as had been prophesied in the Mosaic law, and the Lord's work is complete and final. Over the Adamic penalty of sin and death, we write after the Cross – “Paid In Full – Wiped away forever”.

Verse 26. The Lord's suffering was “often” through the ages of history, but his sacrifice for sin was “once for all”. The pain of the man's sin hurt God many times throughout history; indeed history can be seen as man's constant rebellion, and the Lord God's constant pain and grief at man's sin!

We get a glimpse here of the Lord's view of man's history, and it is the story of pain and grief. When we tell our nation's history we glorify the exploits of those we call “great”, but God sees the sin of all and is grieved with us all. We must see history God's way not glory in the acts of sinful men, but only ever glory in the person and work of the Lord of glory, who alone lived a life worthy of glorying. The Cross, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, are the consummation of human history, according to the writer of this letter. The Lord's people are challenged to live in the sphere of operation of the Lord's victories, not in the sphere of operations of the Mosaic law that looked forward to His ministry and victories.

Let us pause and reflect on this. All leads to the cross and empty tomb, and all significance in history flows from these events. According to the writer we are living “after” the first focal point of history! (The second is His Second Advent). The sacrifice of himself ends the first phase of the redemptive history of mankind! Since the cross we have all been living in a time of grace, with the sacrifice for sin made, redemptive history over, and the end of all earthly things being set up. All that awaits now is the Lord's return, His rule and His final judgement of all, based on His completed work!

The work of God for man's redemption is complete, and now we all await the Lord's return to judge and rule. While there are other events to come in prophetic history, what the writer is saying is true; the last things are simply the working out of some loose ends in history, the final curtain can fall at any time now, these days are days of grace, days after the work of salvation is 100% done and successful.

The whole tone of this section is one of urgency; in the days remaining we have things to do, and cannot just sit and be comfortable. The church in Jerusalem has become comfortable and they are being reminded of the stage of redemptive

history in which they live! They have only a day to flee when the opportunity comes, and they take it and flee to Pella and are safe. Alertness and Obedience keeps us safe, they alone keep us safe.

Verse 27. There is one thing that is clear for us all. We live once, die once, and then we are judged. The reality of our accountability is what the writer is emphasising to these people and to us! We are going to be held accountable for how we have lived by our holy creator. What will we say on that day? Will we be able to plead the blood of the lamb or will we not? What have we depended on for our salvation and deliverance?

This is the question for the first hearers, for they have been continuing to offer animal sacrifices in the temple. What are you trusting for your salvation, the writer asks, the Lord's perfect blood shed for you, or the animals? He is the judge! The writer is saying to these people, "face the judge now, as you will then and change your behaviours!"

Verse 28. This verse sums up the section, emphasising the main point again. The Lord died for all sins; once for all time. The Lord is referred to as "the Christ", reminding us that the Lord is the unique person of the universe, the Messiah. He is the Saviour, and not only is he the solution to sin, he is the one to whom we look for deliverance for the future.

Note the tenses of the verbs in the verse; the aorist tenses remind us of the once for all, point in time, action of the Lord to win our salvation. The present tense of the verb "look" reminds us that the Christian life is to be lived in on-going expectation of the Lord's Second Advent; we are to keep on looking forward to his coming. The hope/confidence of his Second Advent is to be the empowering joy of the believer through their time upon the earth.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

To come before the Lord requires purity. We need to be careful in our confession of sin every day that we do not separate ourselves from fellowship with God. Sin is ugly before God, it is abhorrent and an insult to God's holy character. Do we see our sins as God see them? We are too often ready to excuse ourselves or our friends for sins that the Lord requires blood to cover under the old covenant, and sins for which the Lord died in the new! Let us ensure the seriousness of sin is clearly understood by all.

Is our hope the hope of the Second Advent or heaven? This was the purifying hope of the early church, and ought to be our own if we are true to the teaching of the apostolic church. Let us stand with our spiritual ancestors in these matters and see sin as God sees it, and see history as He sees it, waiting expectantly for the Lord's coming for us. Don't argue about the timing of Rapture, Tribulation, Second Advent – focus on the key point – "He is Coming!" Purify your heart for that!

B. PASTORAL

The doctrine of the Session of Christ is very rarely preached about, yet the Lord's work in heaven after the cross and resurrection has great significance for believers today. The "blood of Christ" is such a powerful and meaning-filled phrase and yet in the modern age so many shy away from it, for it is too awful and offensive to many a modern ear. The use of blood was deliberate by the Father to underline the sinfulness and awfulness of sin and the need for drastic measures to deal with it.

Blood is meant to disgust, and be seen to be awful, for that is what God wants us to see; sin is that awful, and the cross had to be that awful to deal with the sin of man. God went that far to save us! The awesomeness of this is to be clearly proclaimed by all who claim to be pastors of the flock of God. Let all praise God's holy name for the distance He went to win our salvation.

The Second Advent of the Lord is another under-taught reality of the future. Yet we ought to be reminded every Communion Service, **1 Corinthians 11:26** – "until He comes". In the communion service we sometimes say, "until He comes", but how many even understand what that means and the reality behind the words. It is our role as the Lord's under shepherds to make this truth known and to proclaim the truth, that the Saviour is coming back as King, and that soon for you, whether at death, the Rapture or the Second Advent – He is coming – purify your heart for that!

DOCTRINES

DEATH

1. In essence, death means "separation".

2. Types of death:

a) Physical death - is the separation of the soul from the body (Genesis 35:18).

b) Spiritual death - is separation from God, having no relationship with God (Ephesians 2:1,12, Genesis 2:17,3:8).

- c) The second death - this is the Great White Throne judgment followed by the lake of fire for unbelievers - separation from the presence of God, punished forever (Revelation 20:12-15, 21:8).
- d) Positional death - Christians are identified with Jesus Christ in His death (separation from sin) and in His resurrection (living in righteousness) Romans 6:3-14 Colossians 2:12-14.
- e) Sexual death - inability to procreate (Romans 4:17-21, Hebrews 11:11-12).
- f) Operational death - faith without works is non operational (James 2:26).
- g) Temporal death - a carnal believer, out of fellowship with God (Romans 8:6-8,13, Ephesians 5:14, 1Timothy 5:6, James 1:15, Revelation 3:1).

3. Reasons for death:

- a) The work is finished (John 19:30 cf. Luke 23:46, 2 Timothy 4:7).
- b) For the glory of God - martyrdom (John 21:19, Acts 7:55-60).
- c) The sin unto death - extreme discipline for believers with hardened hearts against God (1 John 5:16).
- d) Suicide - superimposing your will over God's will for your life (1 Samuel 31:4, Matthew 27:5).
- e) The unique death of Christ - committing His own spirit to the Father (Luke 23:46).

JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST [See page 80 above]

JUDGEMENT: GREAT WHITE THRONE [See page 117 above]

HELL AND HADES

1. HELL is from the Greek GEHENNA. This was a place where children were burned as offerings to Molech (2Chronicles 33:6, Jeremiah 7:31). Molech was a huge idol with outstretched paws on which the children were tied prior to being burnt to death.
2. HELL is the same as the Lake of Fire where the lost spend eternity (Revelation 19:20, 20:10).
3. Hades (Gk) in the New Testament is often translated HELL. SHEOL (Hb) is the Old Testament equivalent. Hades and Sheol are in the centre of the earth, cf. Saul, Samuel (from Paradise or Abraham's Bosom) and the Witch of Endor (1Samuel 28:7-19). Hades or Sheol is the place of the souls and spirits of people who died while awaiting the resurrection. Hades is also the place of imprisonment of a certain group of angels - TARTARUS.
4. HADES is divided into three sections, one section being divided from the other two by a "Great Gulf Fixed" (Luke 16:19-31).
It should be noted that the story of Lazarus is a true story, and not a parable, because it mentions proper names (Lazarus) and a geographical location (Hades).
 - a) Abraham's Bosom or Paradise - The abode of the saved until the ascension of Jesus Christ. The Lord said to the repentant thief - "This day shall thou be with me in Paradise (Luke 23:43).
 - b) Torments - The abode of the unsaved, reserved until the last judgment at the end of the millenium. This is a place of great sorrow and suffering (Revelation 20:13).
 - c) Tartarus - The prison of fallen angels who kept not their first estate. These are fallen angels from Genesis 6. This is a place of imprisonment (2 Peter 2:4).
5. Since the ascension of Christ - Paradise has been empty, with the saved being transferred to the Third Heaven (2Corinthians 12:1-4, Ephesians 4:7-10).
6. Those who die now as believers go directly to the Third Heaven ("at home with the Lord"), with soul and spirit but no resurrection body (2 Corinthians 5:8).
7. Those in Hades (Torments) will be brought before the Great White Throne after which they will be thrown into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:13-15). This is the Last Judgment.

8. Hades is in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12:40; 1 Samuel 28:7-15).
9. There are no degrees of punishment in the Lake of Fire.
 - a) Degrees of punishment tend to deny the literal lake of fire. Nothing to indicate the temperature of the lake of fire is not constant.
 - b) Degrees of punishment is contrary to the doctrine of unlimited atonement. Christ died for every sin that has ever been committed. Man is not judged on the basis of his sins but human good (Revelation 20:11-15).
 - c) Degrees of punishment destroys the principle of salvation. Its concept is that one rejecter of grace gets less fire than another rejecter of grace. The unsaved are unsaved because they reject grace.
 - d) Degrees of punishment is based on the theory that for a thesis there is an antithesis and when they come together you have synthesis (the Hegelian fallacy).
 - e) False concept:- One person commits a bad sin, one person performs a marvellous good work. Obviously there must be different degrees of punishment in eternity.

CHRIST: FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS

1. Old Testament saints had difficulty in distinguishing between the two advents of Christ. (1 Peter 1:10,11)
2. Old Testament prophecy has Christ coming as a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. (Isaiah 53:7)
3. Old Testament prophecy has Christ coming as the conquering King and Lion of the tribe of Judah. (Isaiah 11:1-12)
4. Jesus commenced his ministry announcing the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. (Matthew 4:17) This connects the First and Second Advents.
5. Old Testament Prophecy showed that the Messiah would:-
 - a) be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14)
 - b) be of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10)
 - c) be of the house of David (Isaiah 11:1, Jeremiah 33:21)
 - d) die as a sacrifice (Isaiah 53:1-12)
 - e) be crucified (Psalm 22:1-21)
 - f) be resurrected from the dead (Psalm 16:8-11)
 - g) return to earth at his Second Advent (Zechariah 8:3)
 - h) be seated at the right hand of God (Psalm 110:1).
6. It should be noted that the return of Christ for the Church (the Rapture) as given in (1 Thessalonians 4:14-18) was not revealed in the Old Testament - it is a mystery doctrine of the Church (Colossians 3:4-6).
7. The day of the Second Advent is characterised by supernatural darkness
 - a) When Christ returns every eye shall see him (Matthew 24:29-30) Christ is the light of the world and he will return to a world covered in darkness (symbolic of sin).
 - b) The darkness is similar to the darkness of the day of our Lord's crucifixion which hid the Lord Jesus Christ from man's sight whilst he was bearing our sins. (Mark 15:33)
 - c) The Second Advent delivers the Jewish believers besieged in Jerusalem by the King of the North. (Daniel 11, Zechariah 12:1-3, 14:1-4)
 - d) Other passages indicating that the day of the Second Advent is a day of total darkness on the earth. (Isaiah 13:9-10, Ezekiel 32:7-8, Joel 2:10-11, Joel 3:14-15, Amos 5:18, Zechariah 14:6, Matthew 24:29-30, Luke 21:25-27, Revelation 6:12-17)
8. Heralds of the Two Advents of Christ
 A herald is a person who preceded' a King in ancient times to announce his arrival. The King that we study is the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a) First Advent
 - i) Human herald - John the Baptist (Matthew 3)
 - ii) Angelic heralds - Angels (Luke 2:1-15)

b) Second Advent

- i) Human heralds - Moses, Elijah (Revelation 11)
- ii) Angelic herald - The mighty angel (Revelation 10)

SANCTIFICATION

1. Sanctification means to be made holy - to be set apart unto God. One who is sanctified is called a saint.
2. We are sanctified (made holy) in Christ Jesus (1Corinthians 1:2).
3. Sanctification is in three stages:
 - a) Stage 1: At salvation - union with Christ - positional sanctification (1Corinthians 12:13, Romans 1:1-7).
 - b) Stage 2: Christian way of life - filling of the Holy Spirit - spirituality (Romans 16:2; 1Corinthians 1-2).
 - c) Stage 3: Resurrection body - In heaven - Ultimate sanctification (1John 3:2).
4. Our position in Christ entitles us to share Christ's righteousness. It therefore:
 - a) protects us from divine judgment (Romans 8:1)
 - b) qualifies us to live with God forever
 - c) makes us a new creature in Christ (2Corinthians 5:17)
 - d) guarantees eternal security for every believer (Romans 8:38, 39).
5. However, because we still have the old sin nature, we will still sin during this life (Romans 7:21). When controlled by his carnal nature however, the believer is positionally sanctified but experientially carnal.
6. When we receive the resurrection body, we no longer sin - our sanctification will be complete (1Corinthians 15:56, Philippians 3:21, 1Thessalonians 5:23).

BLOOD SACRIFICE [See page 165 above]

PROPITIATION [See page 58 above]

REDEMPTION [See page 59 above]

CHRIST: ASCENSION AND SESSION [See page 151 above]

PARAPHRASE

"For the first testament was not introduced and dedicated without blood sacrifice. For when Moses had spoken every part of the law to all the people, then 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 of the law and all the people, saying. 'this is the blood of the testament which God hath commanded unto you'. (Exodus 24 : 8) Also he sprinkled in the same manner, with blood, both the tabernacle, and all the vessels used in the ministry. And almost all things were by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no forgiveness of sin. It was therefore clearly necessary that these copies of the heavenly realities should be purified with blood; but the heavenly things themselves were to be sanctified with better sacrifices than the blood of animals. For Christ has not entered into the holy places of earth, buildings made with hands, which are only the copies of the heavenly reality; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor does he offer himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place every year with the blood of animals. For it is true, that he has suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once for all, at the end of this age has he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And it is appointed to men once to die, but after that there is their judgement; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and to them that keep on expectantly looking for him, shall he appear at his second advent not to deal with sin, but to deliver."

CHAPTER 10

(SECTION 7 CONTINUED)

We have a superior sacrifice	9 : 11 - 10 : 18
He has replaced the old with the new	10 : 1 - 10
The evidence and benefits of the permanent work of Christ.	10: 11-18
We have the Lord's encouragement	10 : 19 - 25
We are the Royal Family and we are in His plan.	
We have a new home vss 19 - 21	
We have a new perspective on life vss 22 - 25	
5TH DANGER Warning - Beware of Despising	10 : 26 - 39

HEBREWS 10:1-10

“ 1 For the Law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then they would not have ceased to be offered, because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. 5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, ‘Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God’. (Psalm 40: 6 - 8) 8 Above, when he said, ‘Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings, and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein;’ (1 Samuel 15 : 2, Psalm 50:7-15, Hosea 6 : 6.) which are offered by the law; 9 then said he, ‘Lo I come to do thy will O God’. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

KEY WORDS

Having	echo	present, active, participle; having, being caused to have.
Shadow	skia	outline, shadow, silhouette of another object projected onto a screen/wall.
To come	mello	present, active, participle; about to be caused to come.
Good things	agathos	intrinsically good thing, good in itself.
Image	eikon	the real object that casts the shadow, compared to the shadow itself.
Things	pragmata	the real thing, the facts, the things done.
Offer	prosphero	present, active, indicative; they keep on offering, (year after year).
Continually	Eis to dianekes	without interruption.
Comers	Proserchomai	present, middle, participle; the ones coming again and again, who continually draw near.
Purged	katharizo	Perfect , passive, participle; purged.
Perfect	teleioo	perfect , complete, bring to the set goal.
Ceased	pauomai	aoist, middle, indicative at a point in time ceased.
Offered	prosphero	present, passive, participle keep on offering.
Purged	katharizo	perfect , passive, participle received an everlasting cleansing from sins.
Remembrance	anamnesis	remembering, constant reminder.
Not possible	adunatos	NOT possible, no power, unable.
Take away	aphaireo	present, active, infinitive; to take away, to remove.
Wherefore	Dio	for this reason.
Cometh	eiserchomai	present, middle participle when he came.
Saith	Lego	present, active, indicative; he said, he quoted (Psalm 40:16-18).
Wouldst	thelo	aoist, active, indicative ; you did not have as your will.
Prepared	katartizo	aoist, middle, indicative have prepared (for me).
Pleasure	eudokeo+ouk	aoist, active, indicative; not pleased, take no pleasure, have no delight.
I come	Eko	present, active, indicative; I have come, I have arrived.
Written	grapho	perfect , passive, indicative; it stands written, with permanent results.
Said(vs9)	Lego	perfect , indicative; he said (with everlasting results).
Taketh	Anaireo	present, active, indicative takes up to remove away completely, abolish or eliminate.
Establish	Istemi	aoist, active, subjunctive; in order that he might(subjunctive), set up in place, establish.
Sanctified	Agiazoo	perfect , passive, participle; we are set apart permanently.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The heart of the problem that the Jewish members of the Jerusalem church was their unwillingness to depart from their traditional practise to embrace the new reality. They clung to the familiar, even though they were simply “visible shadows”, which could be seen without faith, for the change to the invisible truths newly revealed meant casting aside all they had ever known, and things that were central to their identity as Jews. (**Hebrews. 2:1-4, Ephesians. 3:4-6**).

The new revelation about the Lord’s work was accepted by them, but they clung to the old, rather than fully embrace that which only the eyes of faith could see (**Hebrews. 11:1**). Before they are challenged to lay aside these hindering attitudes (**Hebrews12:1**), the issue of shadow versus reality must be clarified, so they can see that casting aside the old does not mean they are “casting aside” their Jewishness, their cultural, racial, and spiritual identity. They are simply recognizing these things were made by God and given to point to a reality that would then lead to the old being laid aside for the new.

THE ARGUMENT

Point 1. Shadows (animal sacrifices) never could do, and can't now, do the work of the reality (Christ).

- a. The Law was a shadow (image) of the coming good things (spiritual realities in Christ), but was not itself that reality. Verse. 1a
- b. The Law and its sacrifices couldn't save. Verse. 1b Compare, **Romans. 9:30-33; Gal. 3:10-14, 21, 24-25; and 1 Timothy. 1:9-10**. They delivered salvation “on credit”, paid in full on the Cross.

THE EVIDENCE.

That which must be repeated is not fully effectual. Verse 2. God’s purpose for the Law.

Repetition reminded many generations of man’s on-going need for redemption. Verse 3.

THE CONCLUSION.

Animal sacrifice cannot provide redemption, only picture it, and point towards it. Verse 4.

Point 2. The reality (Christ) formally abolishes the need for the shadows (Animal sacrifice). Verses. 5-10

Psalm 40:6-8 quoted as the declaration of Christ when entering the world.

- a. Animal sacrifice cannot result in the propitiation of God’s holiness. Verses 5a, 6, 8a (Propitiation(Refer BTB study) is the Godward work of the cross whereby the Father's righteousness/justice is satisfied in regard to the penalty of sin having been paid).
- b. The work of salvation demanded the incarnation of Deity into humanity. Verse. 5b . Compare **Philippians 2:5-8, John 1:14**.
- c. The coming of Christ fulfilled both the word of God and the will of God. Verse. 7
- d. The "will of God" is seen in **Hebrews 9:11-28**
 - i. Redemption - purchased and freed from the slave market of sin.
 - ii. Reconciliation - The removal of the sin barrier, and therefore the hostility, between God and man. Romans. 5:8-10
 - iii. Propitiation - The permanent work of the cross satisfying the righteous and just demands of a Holy God.
- e. Therefore, the first (ritual of shadow worship under the Levitical priesthood) is abrogated and replaced by the second (spiritual realities of the High-Priest of the order of Melchizedek). Verse. 9
- f. The result is that the offering of Jesus Christ sanctifies (makes holy) once for all. Verse. 10 His perfect work never needs repetition. **Hebrews 9:25-28**.

Verse 1. The writer starts by explaining again the nature of the Law; that it was the shadow of the reality we now see in Christ Jesus perfect person and completed work. He has been very repetitive over the last few chapters and deliberately so. We often shy away from repetition, but the writers of scripture never do, for human beings need to be constantly reminded of facts before they sink in, and become a part of their thinking. This is the writer’s objective.

The Mosaic Law was the shadow, the silhouette of the real thing cast by the light of revelation on the cave wall of man’s existence. It was the foretaste of the good and great things that were to come. Note the verb for “come” here, for it’s form makes it clear that the Eternal Plan of God has always been for the Lord to come, and the Law was simply the ground breaker, the curtain raiser, which by every detail was pointing towards His person and work. The use of the perfect

tense of the verb to “complete” (teleioo) reminds us that the Law did have everlasting results, for it completely fulfilled its purpose in pointing to Jesus person and work. It was not complete in itself; it was always tied to the Lord’s later work. The Law was never a “thing in itself”, it drew it’s very being from the one, whose person and work it prefigured. It was not ever the “eikon” of reality, it was the “skia” (shadow). In the Greek language this made the contrast very clear indeed. Law was silhouette, or picture, the Lord was the one who cast the silhouette; He was the reality behind the picture, and so once he came there was no need for the shadow to be the focus, the reality should be the focus.

Once this point is seen clearly, the response can only be to move from the picture to the reality. As if to underline this point the writer points out that the Law was never able to perfect or complete those who came with sacrifices, for it’s very value rested not on itself, but upon what it signified, upon the person of whom it spoke and His work. The Mosaic Law revealed sin, and revealed in all it’s rituals the way of salvation, but the “way” was acceptance of the person and work of Christ. All the Law pointed to Him, and what He would do and what we would then receive.

Verse 2 If the blood sacrifices of the Temple services had resolved the sin problem then the sacrifices would have ceased, but they did not! If the sacrificial system had worked there would not have been a conscience problem for the people either, but all the hearers of this letter, as the readers today also, know that their conscience is, as unbelievers in Christ, not right before God.

The reason the Law did not solve the sin problem, nor resolve their guilty consciences was because that was not it’s job! The purpose of the Law was that it might highlight sin and strain the conscience, so that guilty people might be focused on the one who was to come, of whom the whole Torah spoke, who would take away all sin, and finally open the door of blessing where each and every one who bowed before Him might have a clear conscience in their saved relationship with Him.

Verse 3. The cross is literally the “crossroads” of history. The daily sacrifices were meant to be the “constant reminder” of sin, and the “purging” of sin achieved by them was always incomplete and needed repetition. It was, as we have noted “saving on credit” that would later be paid in full by the Cross. The symbol of the Cross and Empty Tomb, are meant to be the constant reminder that sin is now fully and everlastingly solved, and conscience is resolved in the Lord’s person and work. Sacrifices needed repetition but the Cross needs no repeats – it was perfect and complete for all.

Verse 4. It is not possible that the blood of animals could ever “take away” man’s sins, for we are different to the animals, but they could picture the reality that was to come, and from the Garden of Eden they did! Reflect on how many times the writer has used the word, “impossible!” He is really underlining this point so that the first hearers were repetitively confronted with the truth of the centrality of the final nature of the Lord’s sacrifice.

Verse 5. For this reason, when the Lord entered this world (kosmos = reference to it’s fallen nature), there was a prophecy that foretold of what it would mean. The writer now quotes **Psalm 40 verses 6 - 8**, a Psalm that reminds us that from the cradle the Lord Jesus was holding the worlds together, for He was, and is always the Holy and Mighty God. The Lord came as a “body”; he was formed in a perfect human body, in order that he might become the perfect sacrifice for man’s sin. He was truly man in his incarnation, just as he had always been truly God.

Verse 6. The Lord never took delight in burnt offerings in themselves, for they were “sweet savour” to Him only because they reflected the obedience of the men who offered them. Burnt offerings spoke of sin and so they stank and they appeared absolutely awful! What God delights in, is the perfection of the person and work of the Lord, who took away the stain of sin. The whole sacrificial system was awful to look upon and smell indeed, with blood, guts, flies and the stench of death – but it was meant to be disgusting – it was about sin! Sin disgusts God! God wanted man to be disgusted with sin equally and not need to bring the sacrifices, because they defeated sin! In Christ that is our challenge.

The will of God was not expressed in it’s true form by burnt offerings, for they were put in place to highlight the sin that separates man from God, and God’s will was and remains to remove that separation and restore the fellowship that was lost in the Garden of Eden. On the Cross the cause of that separation was removed once and for all.

Verse 7. This verse reminds us that the events of the Lord’s incarnation were not random, nor chance, but had been prepared from eternity past, and were written hundreds of years before in the words of the prophets. The Lord consciously dedicated himself to be the Messiah, the Saviour-King, by first dedicating himself to be the living sacrifice for the sins of mankind. “I have come!” This announcement was dramatic and final, for it meant the work was about to be done and completed for sin. The Lord came to do the will of God, fully and finally, and so complete the work required to be the sin bearer.

Verse 8. The principle of the Lord’s lack of satisfaction with the burnt offering system is repeated before the blunt and shocking conclusion is given in the next verse. They were only ever intended to point to the one who was to come to replace them, but well before the Lord came, the Lord was disgusted with what men did to the sacrificial system, and how it was perverted and abused. **1 Samuel 15:22, Psalms 50:7-15, 51:16-17, Hosea 6:6.** Moses gave them a powerful godly system, with a good and righteous purpose, but fallen men and women pervert all good things.

Verse 9. Bluntly the truth is now stated for the first hearers of this letter to confront their error, in not seeing this before. How this must have rocked the church in Jerusalem! They had not seen it this starkly, for they had not wanted to see it, they had hoped to combine the old and new, but as the writer points out, that is not God’s purpose in bringing in the new. God’s purpose is that the old be swept away, not with disgust, but with thankfulness for what it did, and

gratitude that the sacrifices are now over! The Lord has established/set up completely, the new and long expected way of spirituality and cleansing from sin.

The writer uses the term here that would also be used of setting up of a flag or altar, so that all the people might gather to it and rejoice in the Lord there. The writer wants all the hearers of this letter to gather around the new covenant that the Lord has set up rather than stay within the bonds of the old.

Verse 10. The purpose for the Lord's coming was that he might offer himself, the perfect sacrifice, once and for all, for all mankind's sins. The result is the sanctification of all who come to Him. The verbal form of the word for "sanctify" is in the perfect tense reminding us again of the permanent results of the Lord's work for us. Through his sacrifice we are able to be set apart for the service of the Lord, declared cleansed forever of the stain of sin by the sacrifice of his body.

This is the will of God for us all; that we might be cleansed from the stain of sin, and be set apart for the worship and service of God. Through the perfect sacrifice of Christ for our sins, through our union with Him by faith in Him, we have our conscience cleansed from sin, and we are set apart for His service. We are now free to serve and worship in the filling of the Holy Spirit, and are forever set free of the old systems of the Law that pointed to Jesus. We have the One pointed to by the Law, why would we go back to the pointer? It has no more significance, once the one it pointed to has come, other than to demonstrate the power of the plan of God.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

All of mankind seeks to find the "cure" to their bad conscience relating to their sins. Even the most avowed atheist will at times of honesty speak of a primal sense of "sin". We all know deeply within our selves that we stand as sinners before a holy God. The only question of note is, what can I do to deal with my bad conscience, to take away the sense of my sin, and make me feel and know I am forgiven? That answer, centres in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

There is no sense of "completion" or finality with any system of legalism, yet all too often we seek after systems that will "enhance" our spirituality, or "keep one more securely", yet no system can ever do these things. Only a moment by moment relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ will achieve the results we seek. Let us draw near to the Lord today; in all we do and say let us ensure He is on our minds, hearts and before our eyes. Practising the presence of Christ is how some theologians of others ages referred to this, but by what ever way we refer to it, this is what each of us require every day to live in the sphere of life where sin is defeated.

His incarnation was prophesied and He came to take away our sins. Every day is to be a time for worship for who He is and what He has done for us. If He came to take away our sins, then we ought not to walk in the paths of sin in daily life! We keep away from sin and fear, and all else that is earth bound, by staying close to Him. Let us meditate upon Jesus Christ and speak with him in prayer every moment of every day, and so taste heaven's glory daily.

The Lord came to "do the Father's will", and so are we set the example to follow for our lives after salvation also. The sole reason we are left here after salvation, rather than be taken directly to heaven, is that we might serve the Lord on the earth and win glory for the Lord and crowns of reward for ourselves, that we might worship even more powerfully in heaven after we arrive. His will not ours!

Have we grasped the significance of that for today? What issues do we face today, that we need to ask the Lord, "what is your will here?" We are sanctified by his sacrifice in order that we might serve, and fulfil His will for our lives here. Let us find and do the will of God for us, for that place of obedience is the only safe one in the midst of satanic attack. **Romans 1:5, Ephesians 2:8-10, Philippians 2:12-13.**

B. PASTORAL

We are to be ministers of reality, not servants of the shadow! We speak of the real person and work of Christ, not the silhouette of the Mosaic Law. Have we made this issue clear to our people? Is there any chance that any person may think that any system of legalism is the "Christian way of life"? The Lord's people who we teach must know clearly from us that no system of legalism, no matter how appealing to the natural man, is able to achieve any spiritual goal in life. All legalism will add to the person fooled by it, is self righteousness if the system is achieved, or frustration if it is not.

The Lord has declared obsolete the first system replacing it with the one the first pointed towards, and there is to be no mixture between the two by stupid man. Let us reverse the marriage vows here; "whatever God has kept apart let no pastor bring back together!" We are not to mix grace with law, for they do not belong together; law pointed to Grace and once the day of grace dawned the Law had done its job and was obsolete.

We live and walk now in the power of the Holy Spirit, or we are not living the Christian way of life! It is not the spirit of man that works out sanctification it is the blood of Christ shed for sin, and the Holy Spirit empowering within that makes the Christian life liveable and obedient to the Lord. "Trust and obey", is the example our Lord sets us. This is the example the pastor too must set the flock. The Lord's people follow us as His under-shepherds, and we are obliged because of this to set the example of obedience to the Word of God. If we fall short, or are unworthy, we fall short of God's standard, and that is the one we are judged by.

We may have passed all the church growth markers, and be praised by our denomination for our work, yet fall short of God's standards because we fall short of obedience, or because we have fallen into legalism. Let us focus on the Father's stable and certain "well done", rather than the praises of fickle men that are so often followed by criticism.

DOCTRINES

GRACE [See page 159 above]

LEGALISM [See page 155 above]

BLOOD SACRIFICE [See page 165 above]

THE CROSS

The work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross is:

1. Punitive - It was a payment, a judgment Jesus took on Himself, the judgment of all sin Galatians 3:13, 2 Corinthians 5:21
2. Substitutionary - Jesus Christ died in our place. Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be wounded for our iniquities and bruised for our transgressions. Isaiah 53:5,6, Leviticus 1:4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24
3. Voluntary - Jesus knew the plan of the Father and He went willingly to the Cross (John 10:18). Isaiah says that He set His face as flint Isaiah 50:7
4. Redemptive - "Redeem is exagorazo. Agorazo means "to buy in a slave market" Ek means "out". When Jesus Christ entered this world we were in the slave market of sin. He walked in, paid the price for all of us, and opened the gate so all who wanted to could go free. Galatians 3:13, 4:15
5. Propitiatory - It satisfied God's righteous demand for a perfect sacrifice for sin; Christ was the perfect sacrifice. Romans 3:25, 1 John 3:2
6. Reconciling - By it we are restored to a relationship of peace with God. Romans 5:1
7. Efficacious - It is effective. When anyone puts faith in the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, that work accomplishes the salvation. Romans 5:9, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:13, Hebrews 9:11-12
8. Revelatory - It reveals much about God, His love, His compassion, His mercy and grace, His condescension, and more. John 3:16, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:9-10

PARAPHRASE

"For the Mosaic Law was created as the silhouette of the truly good revelation that was coming; it was not that good thing, but only the silhouette. That is why the old Law could not by it's yearly sacrifices offered continually, ever bring those who brought them to the desired spiritual goal. If it was any other way, would they not have ceased to offer the sacrifices? Had the sacrifices offered "worked" (and brought them to the goal), then would they have had no conscience over their sins,(for they would have been forgiven, and known forgiveness), having received ever lasting cleansing from sins. But, in these constant sacrifices, there is a constant reminder of sin year after year. It keeps on being impossible, that the blood of bulls and goats could ever take away sins! For this reason, when he came into the world, he said, quoting from Psalm 40, 'sacrifices and offerings were not your will, but a body you prepared for me. You took no pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sins. Then I said, behold, I have arrived, in the scroll of the book is stands written concerning me, that I have come to do the will of God. As above, the scriptures stated, 'sacrifices and offerings for sin, you did not have as your will, nor did you delight in them, even though they were offered in accordance with the Law. Then he put on permanent record, saying, 'I come to do your will O God'. He takes away the first, in order that he may establish the second. By this same will of God, we are permanently set aside for the service of God, by means of the offering for sins of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, once for all mankind."

“ 11 And every priest standeth daily, ministering and offering often times the same sacrifices which can never take away sins: 12 but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever sat down on the right hand of God; 13 from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 15 Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more’. (Jeremiah 31 : 33, 34). 18 Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.”

KEY WORDS

Standeth	istami	perfect , active, indicative; here the perfect has the meaning of, work still to be done, service still to be rendered. (Westcott). The lasting results of their standing service – it stands for truth forever – their sacrifices were not final.
Ministering	leitourgeo	present, active, participle; continually ministering service to God, day by day.
Offering	prosphero	present, active, participle; continuing to offer sacrifices.
Never	oudepote	Never
Take away	periaireo	aorist, active, infinitive; take from around and remove utterly.
For ever	eis to denekes	forever = eternally effective.
Sat down	kathizo	aorist, active, indicative; took his own seat.
Henceforth	to loipon	from that time onwards, for the rest.
Expecting	ekdechomai	present, middle, participle; to wait for in readiness to act when the time comes.
Made	Tithemi	Aorist passive subjunctive – are placed
Footstool	upopodium	the practise of having an enemy placed as a footrest for the victorious general.
Perfected	teleioo	perfect , active, indicative; he has completed, brought to perfection/completeness.
Forever	eis to denekes	forever!
Sanctified	agiazō	present, passive, participle;; those being set apart for the service of God.
Witness	martureo	present, active, indicative; the Holy Spirit keeps on bearing witness.
Said before	Pro-lego	perfect , active, infinitive; said, with lasting results, beforehand, with a purpose.
Make	diatithemi	future, middle indicative, I will make a treaty , agreement, covenant.
Put	didomi	present, active, participle; giving, putting, placing.
Hearts and minds		the way to say “the whole person”, emotion, volition, and thinking.
Write	epigrapho	future, active, indicative; inscribe deeply, cut into the rock; can't be washed off.
Remember	mimnesko	future, passive, indicative; I will not then receive remembrance.
Remission	aphesis	forgiveness.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE AND BENEFITS OF THE PERMANENT WORK OF CHRIST. VS. 11-18

Point 1 Evidence of Christ's superior High-Priesthood. Vs. 11-12

The daily standing of the Levites emphasises unfinished work, whereas Christ is seated at the right hand of God as evidence of perfect salvation. Whereas the Levitical offerings could never take away sins, Christ offered Himself as the one perfect sacrifice for all time.

Point 2. The Benefits of His perfect work. Vs. 13-18

Victory over His enemies. Vs. 13 The cross won the strategic victory of the Angelic Conflict. Compare **Hebrews 1:13, 2:14-16, Colossians 2:15**

The believer is complete in Him. Vs. 14 - see: **Colossians 2:10**

The New Covenant is assured to Israel. Vs. 15 - see **Hebrews 8:8-12**

Perfect forgiveness is ours through expiation, (removal of penalty). Vs. 15, 17 - see **Colossians 2:14**

There is no more offering for sin. Vs. 18 Any attempt to continue animal sacrifice is evident rejection of the reality.

Verse 11. The Levitical priesthood is compared to the new royal priesthood (below and **1 Peter 2:9-10**) in these verses, so that by contrast the superiority of the victory won by Christ might be seen clearly. The perfect tense of the verb “stand”, is iterative, which means the action is on-going, yet has lasting significance in and of itself. They keep on standing and serving, they do not sit down on the job, for they are not allowed to. Their job was never over, never did they offer the last sacrifice – for all their work pointed to the One who would offer the “Last Sacrifice” and then sit down.

They stood before the majesty of God and his holy demands to portray the sinfulness of mankind, and the holiness of God. They kept on standing, for the reason that they were never finished until the Lord came. They stood humbly as men

before God, they stood reverently, they stood with a conscience seared by their own sins, but they stood expectantly, awaiting the time when they would be redundant. The writer's message is, that time has now come!

What a contrast is here in this verse between the old covenant and the new. In the Temple no-one sat down, the people came and brought sacrifices, and they stood until the offering was made and then left. Neither the priests nor the people sat during worship. The only seat in the temple was the "Mercy Seat" where the blood was sprinkled, speaking of the completed work of the Messiah. They stood for the reading of the Word, and for all else. The church is so totally different and it was, and is meant to be. The only one standing to minister is the pastor who stands to feed the flock of God with the Word of God. The pastor stands because they are the "keruz", the herald of the King of all kings, speaking the King of Glory's words. This makes a very powerful point about how biblical all preaching should be! God's Word not ours!

We as congregation sit, which is the privilege of royalty, and we can sit in the presence of God because, in Christ Jesus, we have become members of the Royal Family of God for Eternity. **1 Peter 2:9-10**. We rest, rather than stand, because the Lord has done the work. We stand only to praise His holy name for all he has done. The sin barrier is torn down by the precious blood of Christ, praise his holy name! The minister is not a special priest, for in Christ we are all priests, he/she stands as the servant of the congregation, serving them the food of the Word of God.

Verse 12. Jesus sat down because he had completed his work and the payment was made perfectly. Animals blood was intended to teach man, but it could never take away the sins, only the blood of Jesus could do that. He did the job and salvation is ours in and through faith in Him. He sat down to demonstrate to us that it is OK, He has paid the price for our sins, we are forgiven by his grace, through faith.

Verse 13. From the time he sat down a new phase of history begins, no longer looking forward to the cross, but now looking forward to his second advent; his return to rule. He will defeat the enemy totally, it is only a matter of time, His timing! There isn't any chance for Satan to win; he is doomed. It is not a close run thing, it is a settled thing since the Victory of the Cross and Resurrection! He is coming again as King and Lord, and his enemies **will be** under his feet. The only question for all of mankind is, where will you be?

Verse 14. By means of one unique sacrifice, he has perfected, or completed (in the sense of salvation) all of those who are sanctified. At the point of salvation every believer is "complete"; nothing is lacking for salvation, and nothing is missing, so that we have all the spiritual resources we need, that we might enter His service for the rest of time, and throughout all eternity. Salvation is a "forever" thing. The gifts that God gives us are perfect, complete, and forever. His plan calls for us to enter into eternity, and so all he provides last forever.

Verse 15. The writer gives us another reminder of the eternal plan of God here, by introducing the next Old Testament quotation. Each quote confronts us with the plan of God, reminding us that all things were foreseen by God, are part of his plan, and the outcome is certain. (Refer to the BTB) This means that we are facing certainties in this world, not chance actions, or possible things. All the Lord's work has been prophesied and as the events of the First Advent were literally fulfilled, just so will the Second Advent will be literally fulfilled. As the promises for space-time are real, just so the promises for eternity are also real. The Holy Spirit, through the Word, keeps on bearing witness to all these things, and we are to keep on reading and believing them, and personally trusting the Lord of all.

Verse 16. Before even looking at these verses, go back in your bibles to **Jeremiah 31:31-34**, and read the passage there slowly, even reading some commentaries on the passage. The context of this passage was the Babylonian captivity. The nation was there because of sin, and disobedience, in exactly the same way as the people of Jerusalem of the days of Hebrews, were in a place of total rejection of the Lordship of Jesus. The emphasis of these verses is on deliverance. They had been delivered from Egypt, and then given the Old Covenant. They will be delivered from the Anti-Christ as they accept the New Covenant.

The Lord had saved them and then provided for them. The Lord was like a husband or master over them, and he cared for them totally. The contrast between the two covenants is spelled out here; the old was engraved on stone, the new is to be engraved on the heart of all who believe/receive it. The Lord makes it clear through Jeremiah that the greatest blessings will come upon these people through their relationship with Him; it is only through close heart to heart relationship that each person really knows the lordship and fellowship of the Lord. It is personal and eternal in scope.

In Chapter 31 Verse 34 Jeremiah introduces the Millennial kingdom, which is the natural end of the promises of the New Covenant and the Old. All history is moving forward, and it finds its end in this time period when the Lord will rule on earth, and saved mankind will experience in that time, the joys that Adam and Eve were created for. Turn back to and now re-read Verse 16 of Hebrews 10.

The writer strongly asserts, "this the covenant", emphasising that the change brought about by the Lord's First Advent has brought in the fulfilment of the Jeremiah passage. After the days of captivity and testing, in the midst of troubles the Lord has come and ratified (in that it was given to Jeremiah), and instituted (this is the time for it to begin operating), the New Covenant.

God's policy is clear, his will is that, for each of us, his words might be an integral part of our "hearts and minds". This phrase was the way of saying, "the total person", in the ancient world. The thinking, emotion, belief centres of the person are all to be saturated with the living Word of God. The Holy Spirit takes the Word and applies it deeply within us, and as we accept the Word within we are changed.

Verse 17. The result of reception of the New Covenant, is salvation, and with that there is cleansing from all sin. God does not remember our sins once they are dealt with, for they are covered by the Blood of Christ, and all the Father sees is the perfect blood shed for us. This is the vision the writer wants us to hold to; the vision of sins forgiven, of a new way opened and a new life of close fellowship with the one who gave his all for us.

Verse 18. There are only two places in history. There is the place of sin and there is the place of forgiveness. The writer urges the hearers of his day, and ourselves now, to see the truth and stand in the right place before these events of history. We are to stand in the place of remission/forgiveness, with Christ, not in the place of animal sacrifices, which cannot do anything other than obscure the truth. For the first hearers of this letter they are confronted again with the need to withdraw from the Temple and all it stood for and take their place outside of all legalistic systems, trusting in Christ alone, and walking with Him.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

The Lord offered himself once for all, and we are to ask ourselves each day, do we walk as if this is true for us? We have our sins covered by the precious blood of Christ, and the Father sees them no more, rather he sees only the blood shed for us. Do we live in the spirit of thankfulness that is the appropriate response to this fact of redemption and remission?

The New Covenant's entry into history begins a new phase of world history, a phase when the next major event is the Great Tribulation leading to the Lord's return to earth and he will end history with a time of triumph over evil totally. Do we see the events of each day as a prelude to the end of time? Do we see our troubles in terms of eternity?

This is the challenge of these verses; it is the challenge to see the present in terms of the end, and from the end give meaning and significance to the present. The cross is the terminus of history, and as all roads led to it, so now all roads lead towards the return of the Lord. We are meant to reaffirm this message at the Comunion Table weekly – when we say aloud as a congregation, "Until He comes". **1 Corinthians 11:26.**

Does God's prophetic program give you guidance each day into what is or is not important? If not, it is because you have not seen the plan of God for what it is; the framework for meaning of everything. The significance to all we do comes from it's importance in relation to the second advent of the Lord. He is coming! What does that do to your worries, your plans and your dreams?

We are again challenged regarding legalism in this passage before us. There is no room for legalistic systems in the Christian life. We are to have the Word engraved on our hearts by the Holy Spirit, not drummed into us by legalism of any sort. Let us ensure we take the Word of God in often and savour it in our souls so that we might truly serve the one who gave his all for us.

B. PASTORAL

As pastors we are again challenged about the content of our teaching in this passage. Have we made the Eternal Plan of God clear? Do we teach in such a way so that the Lord's people see the plan of God and their lives in terms of it? Once people get an eternal life perspective on the issues of daily life they will live in a totally different way. It is only as we see the Lord's plan that we see what is important and what is not. Let us ensure we teach in such a way as to confront the Lord's people with these issues.

We have a perfect provision for sin and sanctification, and finally to bring us home to heaven with rejoicing. Do the Lord's people know it? Look at the first letter of John again. Note how many time John say, "and we know"! The strength of our faith is built upon the certainty of what we know about Him and his plan. We are to teach in such a way as to deliver this message every time we speak, so that the people to whom we minister might have the same strength these early believers had.

Legalism is a plague and is to be fought, and taught out of the church when-ever it rears it's head. The truth must be taught so that the lies do not get a toe hold in any saint's life. The once for all sacrifice of the Lord is the centre of the faith, and the second advent the end point of this phase of the plan. The significance of both these events is to be fully understood by all who would serve the Lord in strength.

DOCTRINES

RESURRECTION [See page 116 above]

CHRIST: ASCENSION AND SESSION [See page 151 above]

SECOND ADVENT

1. Israel under dispersion no longer represents Christ on this earth.
2. Israel is replaced by the Church, the Body of Christ. (Acts 2:47, 1Corinthians 12:12-14, Ephesians 1:22,23,2:16, 4:4, 5, 5:23, 24, 30-32, Colossians 1:18, 24, 2:19)
3. The Body of Christ is being completed by entering every believer of the Church Age into union with Christ. (Colossians 2:10, Hebrews 2:10)
4. When the Body is completed, the Rapture of the Church occurs. (1Thessalonians 4:13-18)
5. Then the Body becomes the Bride, and is prepared for the Second Advent.
 - a) The Bride receives a resurrection body like Christ's (1Corinthians 15:51-57, Philippians 3:21, 1John 3:1,2)
 - b) The Bride's old sin nature is removed (Philippians 3:21)
 - c) The Bride is cleansed from human good (1Corinthians 3:12-16).
6. The Bride returns in triumph with Christ at the Second Advent (1Thessalonians 3:13, Revelation 19:6-8).
7. Then follows the conquest:-
 - a) Satan imprisoned (Revelation 20:1-3)
 - b) Demons removed from the earth (Zechariah 13:2, 1 Corinthians 15:24, 25, Colossians 2:15).
8. The removal of the demons changes the environment of the earth and causes perfect conditions during the Millennium.
 - a) Religion removed.
 - b) False doctrine removed.
 - c) Perfect environment restored.

FOOTSTOOL

1. General scripture: (Psalm 110:1; Hebrews 1)
2. The footstool was set up so that the enemy of the conquering Roman general passed under it in complete submission.
3. Israel under the dispersion no longer represents Christ on this earth.
4. Israel is replaced by the Church, the Body of Christ (Acts 2:47; 1Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:16; 4:4,5; 5:23,24, 30-32; Colossians 1:18,24; 2:19).
5. The Body of Christ is being completed by entering every believer of the Church into union with Christ (Hebrews 2:10; Romans 11:25).
6. When the Body is completed, the Rapture of the Church occurs (1Thessalonians 4:13-18).
7. Then the Body becomes the Bride and is prepared for accompanying Christ to the judgment at the Second Advent by:-
 - a) the Bride receiving a resurrection body like Christ's (1Corinthians 15:51-57; Philippians 3:21; 1John 3:1,2).
 - b) The Bride's sinful nature being removed (Philippians 3:21).
 - c) The Bride cleansed from human good (1Corinthians 3:12-15).
8. The bride returns in triumph with Christ at the Second Advent (1Thessalonians 3:13; Revelation 19:6-8).
9. Then follows the Footstool:
 - a) Satan imprisoned (Revelation 20:1-3)
 - b) Demons removed from the earth (Zechariah 13:2; 1Corinthians 15:24,25; Colossians 2:15).
10. The removal of the demons changes the environment of the earth and causes perfect conditions during the Millennium.

- a) Religion removed (1Corinthians 10:20,21).
- b) False doctrine removed (1Timothy 4:1).
- c) Perfect environment restored.

11. The final footstool is at the Last Judgement when all the unbelievers are judged and cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15).

SALVATION [See page 59 above]

SANCTIFICATION [See page 178 above]

PLAN OF GOD [See page 25 above]

PARAPHRASE

“And so every priest is always standing there, fulfilling their ministry, and offering sacrifices day after day, but these things can never remove completely the sins of mankind. But this one, Christ, having offered one eternally effective sacrifice, sat down, (on the throne he had earned), at the right hand of God. For the rest of time, he sits in readiness there until the time when his enemies are made the footstool of his feet. By this one offering he has eternally completed the work of sanctification (for all believers). The Holy Spirit bears witness of this, for he said well before these events (through the prophet Jeremiah in chapter 31:33,34), that after this (the announcement would be given). ‘This is the covenant that I will covenant with them after those days’, says the Lord. Giving my doctrines into their hearts, and inscribing indelibly my words into their minds. In those days I will not recall to memory any of their sins or rebelliousness. Where there is (such a) forgiveness of all sins, there is no longer any (further) offerings for sins!”

HEBREWS 10:19-25

“ **19** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, **20** by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say his flesh; **21** and having an high priest over the house of God; **22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised. **24** And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: **25** not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

KEY WORDS

Having	echo	present, active, participle; keeping on having.
Boldness	parresia	boldness, confidence, assurance, character strength through experience.
Enter	eis ten eisodos	for entrance into.
Holies	ton agion	the Holy of Holies.
New	prosphatos	freshly slaughtered, referring to a sacrifice = newly made, still active as sacrifice.
Living	zao	present, active, participle; living and active, in the sense of fellowship.
Way	Odos	way, road, a going, a progress down a road, a journey.
Consecrated	Egkainizo	aoist, active, indicative; inaugurated, dedicated (used of the Temple 1 Samuel 11 : 14).
Veil	Katapetasmatos	reference to the large and heavy curtain that covered the entrance to the Holy of Holies.
Flesh	sarkos	the flesh, the physical part of a body.
Draw near	proserchomai	present, middle, subjunctive ; let us draw near(maybe we will maybe we will not – subjunctive mood is both hortatory (“let us”) and the mood of potential - volition).
Full assurance	plerophoria	complete assurance of a truth.
Sprinkled	rantizo	perfect , passive, participle; having had our hearts sprinkled(eternal results).
Washed	louo	perfect , passive, participle; have had our bodies washed/cleansed (eternal results).
Hold fast	katecho	present, active, subjunctive; let us keep on holding firmly without letting go.
Confession	omologia	statement of the truth, what we believe.
Hope	elpis	Confidence in what is expected.
Wavering	akline	not lying down, not reclining, leaning on anything else for support, not tired.
Faithful	pistos	dependable.
Promised	epaggello	aoist, middle, participle; the one who committed himself by promising.

Consider	katanoeo	present, active, subjunctive; let us really apply our minds to this!
Provoke	paroxusmos	irritate, excite, stimulate, incite.
Forsaking	egkataleipo	present, active, participle; lurching away and abandoning others, leaving them to their fate.
Assembling	episunagoge	assembling together in the synagogue.
Exhorting	parakaleo	present, active, participle; encouraging to press on.
Approaching	Eggizo	present, active, participle; drawing near.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

THE PARENTHESIS OF EXHORTATION. VS. 19-25

The writer is exhorting the believers here to enter into the riches of grace that the Lord has opened up for them; he shows that the Church Age believer has access into the heavenly Holy of Holies in the heavenly temple of God. **Hebrews 8:1-2, Ephesians. 2:18.** The late Dr J Vernon McGee used to joke of the writer's language here saying it was a "salad section", with lots of "let us" (Lettuce). It is certainly a trumpet call section designed to fire up the believers to advance in their faith to the place the Lord has opened up for them rather than stay in the temple courts of legalism.

SUMMARY OF THIS SECTION.

Point 1. The believer-priest of the church age can have boldness. Verses. 19-21, refer, **1 Peter. 2:5-9**

[a] This boldness/confidence is based on the Blood of Christ(the Lord's perfect work on the cross). In his resurrection and ascension, He became our forerunner (4:14 -16, 6:19-20).

[b] When the body of Christ was offered on the Cross, the veil in the temple was rent, (**Matthew. 27:51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45**) this signified that the way was open for the believer priests to enter also.

[c] We are to follow our High-Priest into the presence of God which is where we are to offer our priestly service.

Point 2. The four-fold service of the believer priest towards God. Verses. 22-25

[a] As priests our first service is our fellowship and spirituality each day. Just as the Old Testament priest went through many physical washings (**Exodus. 29:4, 40:30-33, Numbers. 8:7**), so the believer is prepared for service by the cleansing of confession and spiritual growth. **John 13:10, Ephesians. 5:26, John 17:17, 1 John 1:9.**

[b] Our second service is the confession of our confidence/ hope in Christ's Second Advent. **Hebrews 4:14, 2 Corinthians. 5:17-21.**

[c] The believer priest is concerned about the spiritual well-being of other believers. (**1 Corinthians. 10:24, Galatians. 6:2**). We are to stimulate one another to love (as produced by the Holy Spirit). **Romans. 5:5, Galatians. 5:22, Ephesians. 2:10.**

[d] As believer priests we are meant to function in fellowship with God and our brethren. There are no solo Christians. The church meeting is the time for the training, encouragement of the army of the Lord, upon the earth, the time for the ambassadors to receive their instructions from the Lord's under-shepherds. To stop gathering together is to deny the fellowship of the faith! Genuine believers celebrate their family of faith. **Ephesians. 4:11-16, 1 Corinthians. 12:1-21.**

Verse 19. The normal situation for the believer's life should be "boldness". Hebrews 4:16. We are to be characterised by being confident in all things! How is this possible? Because of the Lord's work! He has gone through the veil, and so can we! Believers are to be characterised by spiritual strength and confidence. If we do not have this characteristic in daily life we have not seen this principle and applied it!

We may enter the heavenly Holy of Holies, into the place of direct fellowship with the Father, through the blood of Christ. His work has opened this way, and the purpose of opening is that it might be used. That which the old Testament saints dreamed of we have! Let us use it, the writer urges; ENTER IN!, he says. Be bold, be assured, because that is why the Lord shed his blood for you.

The veil of the Temple was enormous. It was sixty feet high, thirty feet wide and almost one foot thick! It's weight was significant. It was impossible to tear this fabric from bottom to top (how men would have had to do it), let alone from top to bottom. The Talmud tells us that it took 300 priests working with military precision to lift and place it into it's position. Only God could have torn the veil, and He did so, at exactly the time the Lord died.

Verse 20. The Lord has dedicated this new way, and it is "living"; it is active forever more. The barrier is down permanently, and we are called to enter into the place the Lord has gone before into. Where He is we are to be. We are His, he is our Lord, and He is our life; so we must be with Him where He is! Note the key words in this short verse. It is a new way, a way recently opened when the writer penned these words, but now opened for 1990 years. It is a living way. This means it is ever active, and able to be used. It will not grow old and tired and fall into disuse through age; it is ever new!

He dedicated this new way, as the temple itself was dedicated, “opened for business”. We enter through the veil, but it is through his body given for us. This is not a reference to communion being the “way of salvation”, but a bold reference to the fact of his physical offering of himself. He had to be a man, and as a man he had to offer his body to atone for the sins committed in our bodies. His sinless body was offered up for our sin defiled ones. This was a real sacrifice, and it worked. He went this far to save us, and we are to go with him through into the place he has opened up for us. To fail to follow him is to undervalue, and misunderstand what he did.

Verse 21. We have, in Him, a great High Priest in the house of God. The old system had limited men as their high priests. Even the best of them were limited men, they sinned and they all died. We have the great high priest of all history, and we should be following him, as the ancestors of these people followed their earthly priests.

Verse 22. How do we approach such a place as the Holy of Holies? With a “true heart”, “full assurance”, “hearts sprinkled”, “bodies washed”. Let us look at the significance of each of these.

1. **True Heart.** - A “true” heart is a consistent attitude, a dependable nature and character. We are to be consistent in our walk with the Lord, being true to Him, as a married couple are to be true to each other. Our heart and mind is God’s and we worship no other.

2. **Full assurance.** - Certainty in our understanding of Bible doctrines. We must be sure of the Lord and His Holy Word. Study of God’s Word in the power of the Holy Spirit must produce a strong confidence in the principles of the Word, so that we lean on them, and apply them.

3. **Hearts sprinkled.** - The sprinkling was the sanctifying, or setting apart of an object for holy service to the Lord. Our heart, our character is to be set apart for God, with no distractions leading astray our thinking, our emotions, our volition. No side tracks, just focused service for the Lord. Perfect tense here – permanent results of God’s work for us!

4. **Bodies washed.** - Purity of the body was essential for the priest to function. His garments and body had to be physically and ceremonially clean. Just so with us. We must have all sin in our lives dealt with by confession of sin, so that when we bow in prayer to approach God, we come first and deal with any sins that have separated us from our Lord. God will not hear if sin is left unconfessed in our life. Perfect tense again – permanent results (**John 13:10-17**).

Verse 23. Let us hold fast, and guard the truth! We are all called to stand for the truth of Christ Jesus, his person and work. There is to be no compromise in the teaching of the Word of God. The Christian Hope is the second advent, and that is a not negotiable doctrine. We expect the Lord to return, and He will! We are to be boldly confident about the truths of the Christian faith. This is what we stand upon. We must all be sure of these things. He is faithful, and He is the one who is behind all the promises of scripture; we can depend on His words, and it is upon him that our assurance rests.

Verse 24. We know that we love Him because we love our brethren! The apostle John was unbending on this principle. **1 John 3:11,14,16,17,18,23, 4:7,10,11, 13, 20,21.** There is no way around these verses. To fail to love and be practical in concern for your brethren proves you do not know the Lord!!! We are to be constantly looking for opportunities to encourage our brethren to love each other and to be active in good works towards each other. Notice the practical emphasis here, much like the words of James, in **James 1:22-27, 2:14 -20.** Real faith will always work out in action; only phoney faith does not work out in the life. The writer calls these people to be genuine.

Verse 25. Exhorting each other! This is the pattern for the church age, the pattern of mutual encouragement and corporate worship. We are made to function in community, and within that community there is to be mutual encouragement and constant exhortation to advance to more and more mature service and worship. The only stagnant believers are rebellious ones. We are to be moving forward spiritually, moving forward together in worship and service.

The word used to describe the “forsaking” of the assembling together, is a powerful one that was used to describe desertion under fire of an assigned army position. It was the word used for the worst sort of cowardice, the cowardice of the person who ran away during an attack and left their friends and comrades to their fate at the hands of the enemy. It was worthy of the death penalty under Roman and Jewish Law. Not attending church is this serious! When the church gathers it demonstrates it’s unity before the enemy, and it engages in training and encouraging each other for the tasks that are given to the church; evangelism and ambassadorship.

The habit of church attendance and the habit of encouragement are meant to go together. We are to be in the daily habit of joining together with believers at any time we can, and in our heart and mind is to be the desire that we might encourage them in their spiritual walk. This is even more important as we see the end of all things drawing nearer. The writer uses a phrase from the Attic (ancient and high language) Greek to introduce these words. We are to see our role here as that of soldiers under orders, and community in the army team is paramount as the end draws near.

It is almost as if he is underlining the high seriousness of what he is about to say; the end is closer now than before! While this statement is always true, until the end comes, it draws our attention to the way the earliest believers lived. They lived in the constant expectation of the end. They lived with an eternal perspective on everything. This is the way to live for all temptations and decisions are then in perspective.

APPLICATION**A. PERSONAL**

How bold, how confident, how assured, and strong are you believer? We are called to be bold, yet so many believers do not act or speak in a confident manner. What is the reason for this? Is it that we do not know enough of what the Lord says? Or is it that we do not believe what he says? Let us examine our hearts in this matter. Do we know enough of the Word of God to be obedient and confident in our lives? Or is it that we have forgotten what we have been taught, or have failed to apply what we know? Let us set these things right today, for the days rush by towards His Coming for us!

Our home is the heavenly Holy of Holies as believers today. We have instant entry into fellowship with God; when we bow before God and say "Our Father...", we are there! Does our daily life reflect this reality? Do we walk in awesomeness? Do we walk carefully and avoid temptations to sin? We are inhabitants of the Lord's throne room, and our behaviour should be appropriate to such a high position.

Is our heart and our body clean, or have we grown slack concerning confession of sin? Let us not forget 1 John 1:9, and ensure it is used whenever the cloud of sin passes between us and the living God.

How confident are we in the doctrines of the Word? We rest upon the Lord and His Word; how confident should we be? The dynamic assurance spoken of in this passage is to be the "normal Christian life" for us! We have every ground to be assured and confident in every matter of life, so let us remove anything that slows this process of growth down! We are to be growing more assured and confident daily in our Lord and Saviour and in His plan for us.

Does your faith work out in your life? The world will know that we are His disciples because we love one another. This must work out practically in life, with simple acts of love and kindness towards our fellow believers. We are to be like Onesiphorus, we are to often times refresh our brothers by our good company, fellowship, and practical deeds of loving support and encouragement. **2 Timothy 1:7, 16 - 18**. Our "sound" mind will always be expressed in acts of love.

Do we maintain the eternal life perspective, seeing all decisions in life and all temptations in light of the Lord's coming for us? The awareness that the Lord was coming kept the early church focused on eternal realities, and the church went into apostasy at every time in history that this truth was lost.

Test yourself against this standard believer! Is every decision made in terms of eternal reality, is every temptation met by the thought of meeting the Lord later that day? Once we get to this place habitually we will see the Holy Spirit's full power let loose through our lives.

B. PASTORAL

The truths in this section are so central to a dynamic and powerful Christian life, that it is staggering that we do not hear this passage covered more often at communion service times. The major doctrines covered and the mental attitude that weaves through these verses are powerful aspects of the power filled Christian's life. We could call this section, "secrets of spiritual power"! Let us ensure these things are regularly taught, lest the Lord judge us severely for failing to train His people as we are commanded!

DOCTRINES

MATURITY [See page 108 above]

WORSHIP AND PRAISE [See page 10 above]

SECOND ADVENT [See page 186 above]

HOPE [See page 130 above]

CONFIDENCE

1. The source of confidence (Jeremiah 17:7).
2. The results of confidence:-
 - a) Protection (Proverbs 3:25-26)
 - b) Strength (Isaiah 30:15)
 - c) Blessing (Jeremiah 17:7).
3. Examples of confidence:-
 - a) in God's provision (Genesis 22:18)
 - b) in God's sovereignty (Genesis 50:20)

- c) in God's deliverance (Daniel 3:17-18)
- d) in God's power (1 Kings 18:36-39)
- e) in God's presence (Psalm 71:5)
- f) in extremity (Job 13:15).

4. Confidence relating to prayer:-
 - a) confident access (Ephesians 3:12)
 - b) confidence to draw near (Hebrews 4:16)
 - c) confidence to enter (Hebrews 10:19-22)
 - d) confidence to ask (1 John 5:14-15).
5. Confidence in the day of judgment (1 John 4:17).
6. Confidence to complete His work in the believer (Philippians 1:6).
7. Exhortation to maintain confidence (Hebrews 10:35-39).

PARAPHRASE

“(For these reasons) we keep on having therefore confident assurance and boldness to enter into the Holy of Holies by means of the blood of Jesus, who has opened up this fresh and ever active way. He has spiritually dedicated this way for us, through the curtain that separated us from the Holy of Holies, that is to say, he opened this way up through his own body(his death on the cross). And so, having such an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near to worship, with hearts full of complete assurance (in our Saviour’s acceptance of us), with our hearts sprinkled and cleansed from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed clean with pure water. Let us also keep on holding strongly to our confession of faith, without any tiring or leaning upon anything else, for He is dependable, and He is the one who made all the promises that we can depend upon. And also let us really concentrate on others, and stimulate each other to deeds of love, and good works of all kinds. Let us not stop gathering to worship together, as some have started to do! Rather, let us encourage each other, and even more so let us do these things, as we see the day (of his return) drawing nearer.”

BEWARE OF DESPISING - (THE 5TH WARNING PASSAGE)

HEBREWS 10:26-31

“ 26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 but a fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 of how much more sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, where with he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, ‘Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord’. And again, ‘The Lord shall judge his people.’ (Deuteronomy 32 : 35, 36). 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

KEY WORDS

Sin	amartano	present, active, participle; keep on sinning.
Wilfully	ekousios	Willingly with the will/volition actively choosing evil and sin.
Received	lambano	aorist, active, infinitive; infinitive of purpose, there was purposive receiving of doctrine.
Knowledge	epignosis	full knowledge, both understood and accepted as truth.
Remaineth	apoleipo	present, passive, indicative; there is left behind , there remains after this In Numbers 15:31, and many other passages, there was no sacrifice for wilful sin against God.
Fearful	phoberos	fear filled, knowing that judgement has fallen.
Looking forward	ekdoche	certain or sure expectation.
Judgement	kriseos	legal and righteous judgement.
Fiery indignation	tupos zelos	literally “zeal of fire”. The fires of Hell are referred to.
Shall	mello	present, active, participle; to be about to.
Devour	esthio	present, active, infinitive; to eat up so that none remains.
Adversaries	upenantious	those who oppose.
Despised	atheteo	present, active, participle having continually set aside, annulled, rejected.
Mercy	oiktiomon	without “heartfelt compassionate feelings”.
Much more	pusoo	how much?
Sorer	cheironos	worse than the other.
Thought	axioo	future, passive, indicative; considered worthy of.
Punishment	timoria	punishment given to criminals after just and fair deliberation.

Trodden	katapateo	aorist, active, participle; trample, stomp upon, treat with utter contempt with violence.
Counted	egeomai	aorist, middle, participle; considered it.
Sanctified	agiazō	aorist, passive, indicative; to be set apart for God's work.
Unholy thing	koinos	common rather than special.
Done despite	enubrizo	aorist, active, participle; treated with utter contempt, arrogantly insulted.
Know	oida	perfect , active indicative; we know(with everlasting results) that this is true.
Vengeance	ekdikesis	avenging, revenge.
Recompense	antapodidomi	future, active, indicative; will pay back in the same kind as the insult was given(justice)
Judge	krino	future, active, indicative will judge, the indicative mood indicating that the act is certain.
Fearful	phoberos	fear filled.
Fall	emipto	aorist, active, infinitive; to fall at a future point in time into.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

WARNING AGAINST THE GREAT SIN OF REJECTING REVEALED SPIRITUAL REALITY. VERSES. 26-31.

This section repeats many principles that were found earlier in Hebrews 6:4-8. We are to fear the living God, because the things He has commanded are to be obeyed, or eternal consequences follow. If we have the relationship of Father to child with God, we are still to be fearful of falling short of His holy demands, and also to be fearful lest we in any way disobey or wander off His path for our life.

"The modern tendency is to bowdlerise fear of God into 'reverence for God', or minimise it by exulting love of God as a higher motivation for right behaviour than fear of him. But doing so blunts the impact which the prospect of judgement ought to make (verses 27, 30, 31). There is a right reason for fearing God; there is such a thing as 'holy fear'(11:7). 'The fear of Adonai is the beginning of wisdom' (**Proverbs 9:10**)." (D Stern, 1992, JNTC, page 707).

Verse 26. The Old Testament warned in many places against deliberately sinning, "with a high hand", for there was no remedy for that within the Mosaic system. This was the deliberate rejection of God's Word and the habit of disobedience by constant repeated acts of sin that the person knew had been forbidden. It indicated what is also called a "hardness of heart" associated with the choice of evil rather than God.

This is the thing referred to in this verse. We know that sin is covered for the believer by the provisions of confession, **1 John 1:5-10**, but this passage and many others in scripture indicate that there is no remedy for those who set their hearts and minds against God's clearly revealed will and continue to sin against his holy character. For such people there is only judgement, for such a mental attitude indicates hatred of the Lord, and that is not a believer who loves the Lord Jesus.

This passage we are studying terminates at Chapter twelve verse one! As that verse begins with a "so therefore", it is wise to pause here in verse 26, and before we go to much further, let us read the point that the writer is leading to over the next chapter and a half. Read chapter twelve verses one through three.

Note that the writer is urging the first hearers of this letter to "run to win" the race of this life, by looking to Jesus, by resisting sin, and by following the examples of the many saints who have gone before. He urges them and us, to follow the "faith-rest life", of obedience and hope, stripping away anything that might slow us down or distract us from total obedience to the Lord. Our motivation is absolute love/respect for the Lord who gave himself for us.

Like Paul's words in **1 Corinthians 9:24-26, Philippians 2:16**, the writer fears disqualification after running hard for a time. He wants these people to reach the finish line and celebrate the final victory of faith, as they break the finishing tape and enter heaven. He does not want them to face the judgement of a life distracted by sin from the eternal prize, which is then lost.

The tense of the verb "to sin" in this verse is instructive, and helps us answer the question as to whether we are looking at a believer here or an unbeliever. It means to "keep on sinning", and refers to a pattern of disobedience that is indicative of the mental attitude that the writer is drawing attention to. It is the wilful, or deliberate action that the writer is identifying, the attitude that God is not that serious about obedience, but that a person might "get by" with certain sins. The writer quite rightly draws our attention to the great evil of this mental attitude. To ignore the Lord's clear instruction is to face judgement, and play with disaster and death! It casts severe doubt upon the salvation status of the person who adopts this mental attitude through time. **Romans 8:9, 14:23, 1 John 5:16-21.**

John 16:9 reminds us that the sin that leads to eternal damnation is rejection of Christ as Saviour and Lord. The writer indicates in this passage, that while these people have heard and apparently believed the truth, their lives do not stack up with their words! Their basic and persistent disobedience to the clear will of the Lord, indicates a spirit of evil that points to damnation rather than salvation being their destiny. He is bluntly asking them, what is your destiny? Is it eternal life with God, or eternal judgement with the adversaries? Whose team are you on? He challenges them to prove their

eternal destiny later by their actions now! **James 2:18-26**. They have received full knowledge of the truth, but what they have done with it places in doubt their words!

This indicates that they have fully understood the truth, and accepted it as truth. They stand without excuse before God, if they walk away from it now. There is a question mark hanging over these people. Are they saved or not? Their response to the points raised here in Hebrews will indicate the answer to the question.

There is no other sacrifice for sin that can ever be offered to cover their sins, other than the one offered already in the person and work of Christ. **Acts 4:12**. There is not other whereby mankind may be saved. If they reject the Lord now, and trust the animal sacrifices in the temple (and remember throughout this passage, this is their specific sin!), then they are trusting in something that cannot save them! Christ alone, His blood alone, His Holy Spirit alone, His will and destiny alone; these are the things that matter for time and eternity, there is no other issue of importance!

Verse 27. Rejection of Christ as Saviour is the only “unpardonable sin”, and it is unpardonable! This is the sin that will see unbelievers join the devil and his demons in the Lake Of Fire. Refer also to **Hebrews 12:29, Revelation 20:10-15**. We do not like looking into the “flip side” of the Gospel message, but we must, and here the writer opens the door of Hell for us to look in with fear and horror. This is all the unbeliever has to look forward to. There is a sure expectation of judgement, and the judgement here is final! Choices = eternal consequences.

There is no escape from the creator God, there is no-where to run, as He is creator of all of this temporary universe of space-time! The two verbs, mello, and esthio, together underline the eternal consequences for those who are in the category of “adversaries”. There are only two categories of people in the whole history of mankind; those who obey God, and those who oppose God. The terms “believer” and “unbeliever”, fall short of the teaching of scripture. If a person claims to believe, yet is not obedient to the Word and Will of God, the Scriptures make clear, that person is under judgement, no matter what they claim to “believe”.

As James notes, **James 2:19**, even the devils believe the truth is the truth, and they tremble at the thought of the reality of their deserved fate. If we believe the truth then it will be shown in our actions, and the genuine child of God obeys the Lord, the phoney is on the devil’s side, and they have reason to tremble. Let us ensure we do more than just tremble at the Word! **Acts 26:25-29**.

Verse 28. The evidence that disobedience is serious is taken from the Mosaic Law, and so the writer argues from a lesser to a greater. If those who disobeyed Moses Law faced a great penalty, then how much more will the person who rejects the full revelation of Christ face? Those who disobeyed Moses faced death, on the word of two or three witnesses. There was no compassionate mercy shown, for they were judged as wilful trespassers of the Lord’s Law.

There is an error still common amongst God’s people, and it is the error of thinking that mercy is on-going and has no limits. **There is a limit to the mercy and forgiveness of the Lord**, and that is with the persistent negative volition of man. If a man persistently rejects God’s free offer of salvation, then that individual is in a place where having walked away from God’s loving kindness, they have only his absolute justice and righteousness left to face. They have wilfully placed themselves under judgement, and there is nothing else for them then!

Verse 29. The absolute awfulness of rejection of Christ is very graphically portrayed here. To reject the Lord as Saviour and Lord, **is to trample his blood beneath your feet**, and for such a sin there is no forgiveness, because you have trampled the very grounds for your own forgiveness. Note the meaning of the word translated “trodden”. It is the Greek word that means both to trample, but also with that is the thought of absolute despising of the thing trampled, and rejection and hatred of it with a violence that is beyond logical reason. Sin and evil is always beyond logic!

This is a terribly accurate description of the attitude of the hardened sinner and rejecter of the Lord Jesus Christ; for they do not just reject him, they hate him, and they mock him. Their actions illustrate their attitude and this is the reason for the Lord’s severe judgement upon them. Do not feel pity for the “adversaries” of the Lord, because their hatred of God is the source of their doom. No one will be in the Lake of Fire who has not fully and thoroughly rejected the option of heaven, and who hate the Lord Jesus and all He stands for.

Verse 30. To trample the blood, to despise the Lord’s sacrifice whereby man is sanctified, is also to despise the Holy Spirit; it is a three fold rejection of God’s person and plan, and so places the adversary in a place from which they have no escape, for they have despised their only escape route. This principle is mentioned a number of times in scripture; **Matthew 12:31, John 3:18, 36, 16:7 - 11, Acts 7:51, 2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12, Romans 1:22 - 32, 2 Peter 2:19 - 22**. The initial quote in this verse is from **Deuteronomy 32:36**, where the Lord reminds the Israelites that He is in charge and that He does judge individuals and nations. The perfect tense reminds us that “we know” that this is a final issue, and that “it is written” and settled – to fail to accept Jesus is to condemn yourself.

Verse 31. Unbelievers love to mock the very concept of judgement and Hell fire, and ridicule those who preach “hell fire”, but it is a fearful thing to face the judgement of Almighty God. There will be no mockery when the final judgement occurs. There is only the terrible hopeless fear associated with judgement left when the blood of Christ has been trampled. It is a terrible thing. **1 Peter 1:18-19**. Let us be accurate in our preaching here. There is no “hell fire”, as Hell is a waiting place only, a place of regret and anguish at the individual’s poor decisions in space-time. **Luke 16:19-31**. The fire is the eternal fire of the “Lake of Fire”, where the determined unsaved join Satan and his angels forever. **Revelation 20:11-21:27**.

APPLICATION**A. PERSONAL**

To persist in a known sin, wilfully to disobey God and continue in sin, means only one thing for that person; it means they are heading for deserved and righteous judgement. Remember the particular sin of this church was that they persisted in offering sacrifices in the temple. Remember also that they heard these words and changed their behaviour, becoming obedient to the words of the writer and leaving off their religious apostasy.

They proved by their actions that they were indeed believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Recall the words from James, that while faith alone saves, the faith that truly saves does not remain alone, it leads to godly action, and an obedient life. Let us ensure we are obedient in our lives.

Are we “despisers”, are we “trampers” of the blood of Christ today? What a frightening thought to even ask the question, but it is a question that can be asked and answered emphatically “NO” by those who love the Lord. This warning passage may be compared to **2 Corinthians 13:5**, and it is clearly something the early Christians were asked to do at times. They were to examine themselves, to check themselves out, to ensure that they had not become slack concerning obedience to their Lord.

Our attitude towards the faith is all too often complicated by the thinking of our age, with its weakness and laissez faire attitudes regarding sin. The Lord’s thoughts are not our thoughts, and we must adjust our attitude towards holiness, for He will not change himself to suit us, or compromise with evil.

We must not “claim the blood” to cover sin, as if we are doing a casual thing. Forgiveness for sin cost the Lord his all, and we must not become casual in any way towards the cross and the blood shed for us. Sin remains a serious thing, and every sin remains an act of disobedience that is to be fled from. Let us take the warning on board, and flee from sin, and hate the results of carnality as scriptures clearly indicate should be our attitude. **1 Corinthians 6:18, 10:14, 1 Timothy 6:11, 2 Timothy 2:22, James 4:7, Jude 23.**

B. PASTORAL

Let us stop referring to only “believers” and “unbelievers”, but rather balance and complete the picture more fully, and refer to those who believe in, love and obey their Lord, compared to those who are his adversaries, who disobey and despise all He said and did. To reject the Lord is a legitimate choice, but it is a terrible and evil one, given what He has done, and who He is. Belief works out in life and so does unbelief, and it is the life witness and value system that is under scrutiny by the Lord of Glory.

The Lord does not set any value on mere head belief, for a belief that does not work out in the life is hypocrisy, it is a lie, not faith! Obedience to God and disobedience to God’s will are the two categories that God demands we speak about, and so let us challenge God’s people as we ought to.

No-one who hears our preaching must ever walk away believing that if they intellectually accept that Jesus is the Christ, then they are OK, for unless their faith works out in their daily life in godly living, then their “faith” is no better than the demons “belief”, for they too believe the truth about Christ, for they cannot deny its truth! Accepting Christ as Saviour is more than mental assent to the truth! It is what the truth does within a life that proves the faith is real! Let us all walk in the fear of the Lord, rather than the smug false confidence of the “easy believism” theologians!

Let us ensure that we do not err on the other side of the truth either! Some magnify the “fear of the Lord” to such an extent that the Grace of God is lost and people are left with the Christian life being reduced to an anxious walk through a life characterised by neuroticism. We are to fear nothing, except displeasing our Lord through any disobedience.

The writer quotes **Deuteronomy 32:35-36**, for a clear reason. We are not, as pastors to take it upon ourselves to “discipline” errant Christians, for that is the Lord’s job, and He will do it! We are in the “preaching of truth” business, not the conviction or punishment of sin business; for that is the role of the Holy Spirit.

We must proclaim the truths of this section, without getting sidetracked into work that is not ours! We are the heralds of the King of kings, here to proclaim his policy, not do his work! The Lord will do his work, and he calls us to do the work he has given to us! We preach the whole Word of God, and the Spirit will convict and work in the lives of those who hear. We are called to give the gospel message, but also we are called to give the message of judgement, so that all might know the whole truth, and see and fear the judgement of Almighty God.

CONCLUSION

Faith must work out in obedience, or it is not true saving faith. A “believer’s” genuine status is proved by their godly and obedient life. We are called to a Christ like life, and a person who claims to know Christ will resemble Him, for saving contact with Him always transforms the life.

The Holy Spirit is in the transformation business, so a life without godly change is probably a life without the Holy Spirit! Praise God, that the first hearers of this letter truly believed it's contents and obeyed it's message, and were saved from the destruction of Jerusalem that befell their neighbours. Let us also hear, believe, and obey the Word daily and be delivered from sin, and from disaster.

DOCTRINES

JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST [See page 80 above]

JUDGEMENT: GREAT WHITE THRONE [See page 117 above]

SIN

1. Sin means to fall short (like an arrow falling short of the target) of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).
2. Therefore, anything which does not meet God's standard of righteousness and holiness is sin.
3. It is clear to see, then, that mankind, in his own strength, cannot achieve the righteousness of God (Romans 3:9-10).
4. The sin of Adam:
 - a) Sin entered the world with Adam (Genesis 3:1-5, Romans 5:12).
 - b) The penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23)
 - i) spiritual death - separation from God in time (Genesis 3:8)
 - ii) physical death - separation of the soul from the body (Genesis 3:19, 5:5)
 - iii) eternal death - separation from God in the Lake of Fire Revelation 20:13-14).
 - c) The man, Adam, as head over the woman, was therefore held responsible for sin (Romans 5:12).
 - d) The penalty of sin is imputed to all people, and, apparently, passed down through the male in birth.
 - e) Because Jesus was born of a virgin, He did not inherit the sin nature from Adam.
 - f) As a sinless man, He was therefore qualified to offer Himself as a sacrifice to pay the penalty of sin (death - spiritual and physical).
 - g) Because Christ has paid the penalty for sin for us, those who trust in Him are no longer condemned (Romans 5:19, 8:1).
5. All of creation is corrupted as a result of sin (Genesis 3:16-19, Romans 8:20-22).
6. Three types of sin:-
 - a) Adam's sin is imputed to all mankind
 - b) As a result, we all inherit a sinful nature
 - c) As a result, we therefore commit personal sins.
7. Sin manifests itself in three categories:
 - a) Sins of action/deed
 - i) Examples include murder, adultery, stealing
 - b) Sins of the tongue/spoken
 - i) Examples include lying, slander, gossip, blasphemy
 - ii) Out of the seven "worst" sins, three are sins of the tongue (Proverbs 6:16-19)
 - iii) Can result in the sin unto death (Psalm 12:3)
 - iv) God protects and blesses the believer who is victimised by the sins of the tongue (Matthew 5:11-12)
 - v) Troublemakers are always characterised by sins of the tongue (Psalm 52:2).
 - c) Sins of the mind
 - i) Examples include pride, coveting, jealousy, bitterness, hatred, vindictiveness.
8. Recovery from sin:
 - a) When a believer sins his fellowship with God is disrupted. The Holy Spirit is grieved, and can no longer control your life.
 - b) Confess the known sin (1 John 1:9, Psalm 66:18) God forgives these sins upon confession and cleanses from the unknown sins in the believer's life as well as known sins.

- c) Examine your motivation - this involves full surrender to God (Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 13:5).
 - d) Move on from the sin which you have confessed. Don't get tied up with guilt - this is another sin. (Philippians 3:13-14, Psalm 103:10-12)
 - e) Resume your active spiritual walk. Avoid areas where you might be tempted. (Hebrews 12:12-13)
 - f) Be reconciled to others once you have been reconciled to God (James 5:16).
 - g) In human forgiveness we are told to forgive others even as God has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).
9. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples (John 13:10):-
- a) The body is clean - we were eternally forgiven once and for all at the cross (Hebrews 10:1-12).
 - b) The feet need regular washing - we must confess our sins to the Father to restore fellowship (1John 1:9).
10. Satan constantly accuses us of our sins before God (Revelation 12:10). However, the Lord Jesus Christ is our Advocate/Lawyer in heaven (1 John 2:1). He pleads for us by saying that the penalty for that sin has been paid in full.
11. Names for sin include:-
- a) Unbelief - denial of the truth. (John 16:9, Hebrews 3:12)
 - b) Lawlessness - rejection of rules of life. (1 Timothy 1:9)
 - c) Iniquity - evil acts. (Acts 8:22, 23)
 - d) Trespass - encroachment on God's authority. (Ephesians 2:1)
 - e) Disobedience - refusal to obey. (Hebrews 2:2)
 - f) Transgression - violation of law. (Luke 15:29, Galatians 3:19)
12. The sin unto death is the physical death of a believer, due to habitual unconfessed sin or rebellion against God. (1 John 5:16, 17, 1 Corinthians 11:31, 32) Examples:
- a) The Corinthian Pervert - (1 Corinthians 5)
 - b) The Corinthians who habitually came to the Lord's table in an unworthy manner (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)
 - c) Moses (Deuteronomy 32:48-52)
 - d) Achan (Joshua 7:16-26)
 - e) Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1 -11).
13. There is only one sin which can't be forgiven - the unpardonable sin - rejection of Jesus Christ.
- a) It is based upon rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. Genesis 6:3, John 16:7-11, Hebrews 10:29.
 - b) Synonyms for the unpardonable sin are: willful sin (Hebrews 10:26-31), blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31), resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51), insulting the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:29).
14. The first recorded sin was that of Satan - pride (Isaiah 14:12-14).
15. God is not the author of sin nor the author of temptation. It is incompatible with the nature of God for Him to create sin because of His divine character. (James 1:13)
16. Temptation comes from the world, the flesh (sin nature within man), or Satan. If he entertains the sin, man then chooses to sin - sin is therefore a result of man's own free will. (James 1:14)

PARAPHRASE

"For if, after we have received God's full knowledge, we keep on in the habit of sinning, actively choosing evil and sin over God's will, then there remains after this no further sacrifice for our sins. All we are left with is a fear filled sure expectation of judgement by hell fire, which will eat up completely all who are opponents of God. The person that rejected and ignored the Law of Moses died under judgement, without any feeling of compassion or mercy on the part of the people, and that before two or three witnesses. How much worse, do you consider, will the punishment be then, for those who have treated with utter contempt, and trampled the blood of Christ under their feet? Who have treated with contempt the blood that sanctified them, acting as if it is a common and useless thing, and so have arrogantly insulted the Holy Spirit of Grace! For we know the one who said, "vengeance belongs to me, and I will pay back in kind those who have insulted me", says the Lord. And again in another place the scriptures record, "the Lord will certainly judge His people". It is certainly a fear filled thing, to fall into the judging hands of the living God."

“ 32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; 33 partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. 34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and enduring substance. 35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise. 37 ‘For yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry’. 38 ‘Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him’. (Habakkuk 2:3, 4.) 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

KEY WORDS

Remembrance	anamnimnesko	present, middle, imperative ; call to memory!
Former	proteros	early days of their life as a church.
Illuminated	photizo	aorist, passive, participle; you received light, illumination.
Endured	upomeno	aorist, active, indicative; they remained under, endured patiently bore.
Affliction	pathematon	suffering, affliction.
Fight	athlesis	fighting, conflict, struggle.
Gazing	theatrizo	present, passive, participle; keep on being put onto the stage for the purpose of derision.
Reproaches	oneidismos	revilings, insults, reproaches.
Afflictions	thlipsis	pressures, and troubles that trouble the soul.
Companions	koinonos	sharers with.
Compassion	sunpatheo	aorist, active, indicative; had compassion, you suffered in your souls.
Took	prosdechomai	aorist, middle, indicative; accepted with joy (chara).
Spoiling	arpage	plundering (indicates they stripped their houses of goods and money to help).
Knowing	ginosko	present, active, participle; keeping on knowing.
Enduring	meno	present, active, participle; abiding ongoing.
Substance	uparxis	possessions.
Cast a way	apoballo	aorist, active, subjunctive; do not throw away (maybe you will maybe you wont – subjunctive).
Confidence .	parresia	confidence, boldness.
Recompense	misthapodosia	payment of great reward.
Patience	upomeno	endurance under pressure.
Come	eko	future, active, indicative; will certainly come.
Tarry	chronizo	future, active, indicative; will certainly not delay.
Draw back	upostellomai	aorist, middle, subjunctive; who possibly draws backwards.
Perdition	apolumi	total destruction, ruin, with all things lost; of judgement.
Believe	pisteos	those who are of faith.
Saving	peripoiesis	to the possession, keeping, gaining of their soul.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Believers are now challenged to continue their advance in the spiritual life to a more mature and obedient walk with the Lord. In preparation for study of these verses turn back to **2 Timothy 4:1 - 8**, and read these verses, and then turn forward to **2 Peter 1:12 -15**. Both Paul and Peter express sentiments in their final letters very similar to the thoughts that we see the writer expressing here. “Press onwards”, is the motto of the Christian life that is lived in the power of God. Also refer to **Matthew 16:24-28, 7:1-9**.

They are reminded of their own past spiritual endurance, and urged to excel their past by total obedience in the present and future. The truth of God’s Word in their soul results not just in knowledge about Christ, but has resulted in their knowing Christ, and walking with Him through life, and that living experience of God’s knowledge and fellowship can’t be taken away. (**Philippians. 3:7-14, Hebrews. 13:5-6**).

The danger they are in, is that all this might be thrown away through their disobedient lives now, and their confidence in the Word of God will be worthless. Remember the principle that we have seen through these verses; that knowledge of the truth unapplied is worthless knowledge. Unless the truth of God works out in the life of the child of God, that person comes under divine discipline and their life is characterised by judgement rather than blessing. (**Hebrews 6:19**)

The solution for them is given in verse 36, where they are encouraged to persevere in their feeding on the living Word of God, and their application of it into daily life. As always there are two alternatives for the believer in Christ; there is spiritual advance in application of the Word to life, or there is spiritual retreat through disobedience. Verses 37-39.

Verse 32. Memory is the key to success. If we can recall key facts and experiences we have the foundation for success in all areas of life. To remember incidents is to have the possibility of learning from them, and to recall the truths of God’s Word is to be able then to apply them more thoroughly to new situations, and this leads to powerful spiritual growth. The writer urges the people to remember their own past experiences as believers; their “former days” of spiritual glory. This is a church, like many today, that could look back to the time of great revival and evangelism, but in more

recent times they had grown cold and were now formal, ritualistic and spiritually dead. In the early days of the church at Jerusalem they had faced and stood up under great pressure, with terrible suffering and loss for all people; losses of health, liberty, life and property.

Verse 33. The church members all suffered in different ways, with some facing direct pressures, of physical violence, of public humiliation, of public ridicule, of imprisonment, while others (their family and friends), faced the soul suffering of watching their loved ones be so badly treated. Just so today, the church faces the same challenge. Some will be directly attacked for their faith, while others are called to stand with them and support them in their suffering. Often we can tend to glorify direct suffering for Christ, but ignore the value of those who suffer as the targets of satanic hatred. We are to stand where the Lord has called us to stand, whether it is to directly face suffering and assault, or to simply stand in support of those who suffer. These people had a godly history, but a disobedient present, and the writer is going to urge them to get back into living fellowship with Jesus their Lord, and so find their heart and strength again.

Verse 34. These people had stood with the writer in his suffering for the gospel's sake, both in word and deed. They had joyfully plundered their own goods, leaving their houses stripped of saleable possessions to ensure the writer was alright in his jail. This makes me believe it is Paul writing. This sort of devotion to the Lord proves their love for the Lord and his saints. We prove our love by the way we share our goods, our time, and our money with the Lord's servants. They were happy to give away their earthly goods, because at that time they were more focused on heaven than on the things of earth. Their hearts were set on their eternal rewards rather than their houses and goods upon the earth. Heavenly reward is "abiding", it never is lost, and it alone is worth giving our all for. What we have on earth will rust and decay, it is what we have stored up in heaven alone that matters eternally. **Matthew 6:19 - 21.**

Verse 35. "Do not throw away all this!" The writer puts the command in the subjunctive mood reminding us that there is potential that they lose everything if they stay in disobedience. Notice the way the writer phrases this. Do not throw away your boldness!; do not throw away your confidence in God! It is not confidence in ourselves that will carry us through life, but confidence in the Lord and His dependable Word of Truth. It is the Word of God that lives and abides forever, and provides the foundation of stability for us in the midst of great pressures and losses.

These people will lose all their earthly goods during the fall of Jerusalem; every one of them will lose all things they cannot carry on their backs when they leave the city! Yet in the midst of this great catastrophe they will have peace and find the places of service for the Lord amongst his people in the foreign lands into which they must flee. Where was their reward going to be? It was not on earth, for all that would be lost because they stayed in the city too long.

The word translated "recompense" can be translated as "back wages". Once again the focus of the writer is heavenly rewards for earthly obedience. These people must get their eyes off the goods and possessions they have on earth. They must see past their houses and cash balance at the bank, for all that will be swept away, only what is built up in heaven will give any "great reward". They must press on, with an upward look remembering that we are being cheered on by the saints of the past, **Hebrews 12:1-3**. If they fail and fall short of what the Lord requires of them, they will suffer as in the days of Hosea, **Hosea 4:1-6**. We never lose anything in time that will not be made up with interest in eternity!

Verse 36. They have need of endurance, and it is something they had before, so in the power of the Holy Spirit now, it is not too much to ask of them. As we move forward the Lord will give this inner strength, but it is given as we move forward in obedience and faith. The word, "hupomone" is the great military word for strength under pressure, and we are to be characterised by toughness under pressures, so that we keep resisting evil as we draw near to the Lord, in prayer and Bible study. **James 4:6-10, Psalm 31:1 -8, Psalm 138:1 -3, Proverbs 8:33 - 36**. Blessing flows after we have done the will of God, not while we talk about it. God wants "doers" of the Word, not talkers! **James 1:21-27**.

Verse 37. **Isaiah 26:20** is quoted here. The quote is from the great time of pressure when the Assyrian's army took away the Northern kingdom and destroyed much of Judah as well. This was a Holocaust with over 90% of the population disappearing! The quote reminds us of what we now call the "frailty of this life", and we are well reminded of this fact. Our life is but "a little while" and it is gone. The end of time is on His timetable, not ours, and He is coming and when the time is right He will arrive! The writer reminds them of the future certainty of the Lord's return.

They are to see all things in this life in terms of eternal reward and the end of time itself. Every week we are meant to celebrate Communion with the Second Advent in view – "until He comes..." **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**. If they/we keep their/our eyes fixed on these realities they/we will not be seduced by temporary things and by replaced rituals. The writer calls them to reality, in contrast to the "little time" things of this age:

1. The reality of the meaning of the cross, in contrast to the temporary significance of temple ritual.
2. The reality of eternal reward, in contrast to the pleasures that this world's goods can give for a season.
3. The reality of the Lord's Second Advent, in contrast to the "successes" of time that can be taken away.
4. The reality of spiritual life and power, in contrast to the emptiness or ritual, and wealth, and social position in a society that is under God's judgement.

Verse 38. Another Old Testament quote, **Habakkuk 2 : 4**, is given here, one that crops up three times in the New Testament to underline a crucial doctrinal point. "The just, shall live, by faith", each New Testament quote emphasises a

different word's significance. **Romans 1:17, The Just, Hebrews 10:38, shall Live, Galatians 3:11, by Faith.** In our verse the writer underlines the danger of falling short of God's command to faith and obedience.

God has no delight in disobedience; if we draw back we come under judgement. Retreat is the way of death, advance is the way of blessing, for the obedient believer. God loves obedience. Let us live in God's love and stand/advance!

Verse 39. The writer includes himself with the church of Jerusalem and encourages them with a battle cry to advance. "We are not those who retreat, are we?", he says, to encourage and challenge them. He underlines again the serious consequences of retreat, for it leads to destruction; to the loss of everything of lasting value. The word for destruction is a word reserved for total destruction with nothing left, and is used to describe damnation.

There are only the two categories of people to the writer, those who advance and are blessed, and those who join the adversaries, retreat and so destroy all they have apparently gained earlier in their lives. There are those who are truly saved and will be blessed and there are the people he considers fakes and make believers; those who wilt under pressure, and fail to advance in obedience to the Lord's plan. Failure to advance and "fruit" = fake to our writer.

His attitude throughout this letter makes a similar point to the Lord's parable of the seed and the sower, for only the seed that fully germinated and grew was considered true and blessed, all the others were under the curse. It is maturity through obedience, and resultant spiritual productivity that the Lord values, any who fall short and retreat, lose all their heavenly blessings, and from his language throughout the letter, possibly their salvation as well! The writer is very strong in this last verse, indicating clearly that their eternal destiny is at stake. They must make the right decisions right now.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

It is finishing the course, not starting it, that wins the athlete their golden crown/medal, and just so, it is our on-going obedience to the Lord that wins eternal rewards. Let us not grow slack lest we lose all that we have gained. We are to call to memory our past success, and all that we have learned of the Lord and His will and apply it daily. It is advance that matters, we must never retreat in the Christian life.

Let us remember also the words of verse 33, and stand with our brethren around the world who suffer for the faith, be it by prayer, by giving, by words of encouragement, by standing physically with them. We are to do anything we can to support our brethren in the faith in their times of pressure.

Have we ever "plundered" our possessions for any Christian in need? Have we ever given until we felt there was a lot missing in our house? This is the standard the early church sets us. Let us not continue to be ashamed of our goods, let us ensure that all we have is ready for the Lord's use. The late Dr Harry Ironside said humorously, "If you ever believe you love money too much, always test yourself by giving some away and seeing how you feel about it".

Think about what verse 35 means. All of time is simply building up credit in your heavenly bank account, to be drawn on in eternity. The credit is built up, the "great recompense of reward", is built up through our obedience to the Lord. It is a grace bank account in heaven, so that the Lord adds abundantly to it for the smallest acts of obedience, for he desires to bless us, but it all depends on our obedience. How is your bank balance in heaven believer? How obedient have you been today to what the Lord would have had you do for Him?

When the going gets tough, the pretenders, apparently "tough" people, often get going! We are called to be people who endure under pressure, who are ready to tough it out through the hard times when blessing seems far away. Are we fair weather Christians, or are we ready for the hard times?

The writer to the Hebrews casts doubt on our very salvation if we fall back and fail to advance in the faith! To be named amongst the "just ones" we must "live" "by faith". The Lord has no pleasure in those who do not live by faith! If we seek the Lord's pleasure we must walk the path of obedience and faith.

In verse 39, the word for "saving" is an interesting one, and may indicate that the writer believed the very salvation deliverance is at stake for these people if they retreat over the issues he has raised. He indicates that those who do not finish the race miss out on all they gained. Does this cover salvation as well as loss of eternal rewards? The writer is deliberately vague, perhaps to place additional pressure on these people. Unless the seed cast by the sower grew and was fruitful it was not considered as valued for anything except destruction.

Perhaps we are too casual in our discussion of "eternal security", for the writer wants these people to be very insecure, he is deliberately worrying them, and perhaps we need to be more worried on this matter ourselves, and ensure we finish the race set before us!

The old Calvinists were possibly right when they spoke of eternal security always with, what they called, the "perseverance of the saints", indicating that those genuinely saved will keep on in the faith and finish the race, and that those who do not finish the race were never genuinely saved. They took their principle way too far, but the words on the page are meaningful; let us all persevere in our walk in the power that God gives to his saints through the Holy Spirit's many ministries and the Lord's personal presence with us for fellowship.

B. PASTORAL

This is a tough section and raises the most challenging and disturbing issues for all believers/pastors who want to be true to their Lord. The doctrine of Eternal Security is well indicated in scripture, and believed by most of us as a great comfort, but perhaps we have erred in not emphasising the things this writer covers here in this section. We can be too comfortable in our salvation, and live lives that do not indicate we are truly saved. To the early Jewish believers such a thing was unthinkable, and indicated that the faith professed was not really true.

To fail to advance in the faith was seen as evidence of a faulty faith, a fake belief, a make belief. If faith did not work out in life it was deemed to be false, and the profession of faith in Christ seen as hypocrisy unless it worked out in a holy and obedient life. The writer demands to see the fruit of obedience in these people's lives or he indicates they are doomed for destruction, both temporal and possibly also eternal. He is clear in his language, they are in danger if they do not obey, and his language indicates it is more than just the destruction of Jerusalem that is in view. Are we as blunt in our warnings to the Lord's people as we clearly are meant to be?

The Lord demands obedience, and great loss follows disobedience, or retreat on any matter. The writer gives us God's policy, and we must carefully study these verses and test our preaching against them! If a person claims to be of the Lord's flock, and yet lives a life of disobedience, we are obliged, from this section, to warn them of loss of rewards. But far more, we are also to warn them regarding their eternal destiny, telling them clearly that the Lord's people do not habitually sin, and if they keep on in their sin they are not the Lords, and are in danger of the Lake of Fire forever, in the company of the greatest "fake" and pretender of all, Satan and his team!

Confession with the lips that is not followed by obedience of the hands and feet is hypocrisy, not genuine faith! The man that does not finish the race, did not have the finish line and his master's "well done" in his heart! He was only pretending to be a really devoted athlete! Devoted athletes pour their hearts out, leaving all their energy on the track.

DOCTRINES

SUFFERING [See page 104 above]

MATURITY [See page 108 above]

CARNALITY [See page 43 above]

SPIRITUALITY [See page 44 above]

ETERNAL SECURITY [See page 79 above]

PARAPHRASE

"(Given the seriousness of all this), recall right now to your minds how you lived in the early days of the church! Remember how as a church, you received the light of the Word of God, and how you patiently endured great suffering for the faith, in times of great conflict. Some of you were made a laughing stock for the unsaved, both by insults and physical sufferings, and some of you suffered by standing with those who were so attacked or you supported them in other ways. You also had practical loving kindness on me when I was in prison for the faith, and you proved your love by ransacking your house for possessions to sell or donate to those suffering for the faith. At that time you did this because you saw your possessions in heaven as more lasting and significant than your goods here on earth. Do not now then (after all this) throw away your confidence, and so lose such a great reward in heaven. For you have need now of patient endurance (again)! So that having kept on doing the will of God, you might receive the eternal rewards (that God has for you). For in a little while the one who is certainly coming will arrive, and he will certainly not delay his coming! Now (and always) the just ones will keep on living (only one way) and that is by faith! But, remember, if a person retreats away from faith, then God will have no pleasure in that person. But we are not among those who draw away backwards to the loss of everything, but we of those who are people of faith, right through to the gaining of the (rewards of the) soul."

PART TWO - CHRIST BRINGS BETTER BENEFITS AND BETTER DUTIES - (CHAPTERS 11-13)

THE EXAMPLES OF FAITH TO FOLLOW TAKEN FROM HUMAN HISTORY

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11:1-7

“ 1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good report. 3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. 4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. 5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. 7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”

KEY WORDS

Now is	estin	present, active, indicative; Now this (faith) is! Very emphatic and strong start to the verse.
Faith	pistis	the confident act of believing, and the truth of that which is believed.
Substance	upostasis	essence, substance, assurance, foundation, guarantee (legal term for a paper that guarantees ownership of a piece of land or other thing).
Hoped	elpizo	present, passive, participle; the confident hope rested in.
Evidence	elegchos	evidence, legal proof; another legal term indicating proof of an affirmation.
Seen	blepo	present, passive, participle;; being seen by the eyes by a glance.
By this	en touto gar	for by this(faith evidence).
Obtained	martureo	aoist, passive, indicative; they received witness (from God).
Good Report		understood in the previous single word which translated into five English words.
Understand	noeo	present, active, indicative we have thought out and understand.
Framed	katartizo	perfect, passive, infinitive; outfitted, in the sense that the creation was made in detail for the purpose of the creator.
Seen	blepo	present, passive, participle;; seen as with human eyes.
Made	ginomai	perfect , middle, infinitive; have received being.
Appear	phainomai	present, middle, participle;; are visible.
Offered	prosphero	aoist, active, indicative; offered a sacrifice.
Excellent	plein	better than.
Obtained	martureo	present, active, participle;; God testified concerning him.
Righteous	dikaios	righteous, in standing before God.
Speaketh	laleo	present, active, indicative; he keeps on speaking.
Translated	metatithemi	aoist, passive, indicative; to be changed, and moved from one place to another.
Testimony	martureo	perfect , passive, indicative; received this testimony with everlasting results.
Pleased	euresteo	perfect , active, infinitive; was well pleased, with everlasting results.
Impossible	adunatos	without power, it is impossible.
Please	euresteo	aoist, active, infinitive; to well please.
Cometh	proserchomai	present, middle, participle; to come to, to approach.
Believe	pisteuo	aoist, active, infinitive; it is necessary to believe.
Rewarder	misthapodotes	one who gives a reward, the one who pays the wages due.
Diligently		understood in the meaning of the word for seek.
Seek	ekzeteo	present, active, participle;; searches out, prepared to exhaust himself in the process.
Warned	chrematizomai	aoist, passive, participle; having been given divine instruction.
Moved	eulabeomai	aoist, passive, participle taking a good grip of, acting in a carefully thought out manner.
Prepared	kataskeuwazo	aoist, active, indicative; outfitted and prepared all the details of.
Saving	soterian	salvation.
Condemned	katakriuo	aoist, active, indicative passed judgement against.
Heir	kleronomos	heir of all things.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

1. FAITH DEFINED AND ILLUSTRATED IN THE PRE-PATRIARCHAL PERIOD.

FAITH DEFINED VERSES 1-3

Many ask the question, “what is faith?”, and this passage answers the question from a biblical point of view. Faith is the assurance (reality or title-deed) of things hoped/confidently/expectantly looked for. It is the conviction (proof, or evidence) of things not seen with the human eye yet. (2 Corinthians 4:18 - 5:7) These two qualities are illustrated in Verses. 2-3.

Verse 1. Biblical Faith always has content, and the very word for it, 'pistis', emphasises the content of faith; what is believed. Let us look at each of the key words in this verse to see the writer's definition and compare it to the attitudes that dominate our own day. The verse begins, "Faith keeps on being" (present, active, indicative, of the verb for status quo) of this nature – this is the definition of biblical faith for the entire Church Age. Faith is the "substance", the evidence, the foundation, the legal guarantee of the thing that faith is expressed in; that which is confidently hoped for. Faith is the "legal proof", of things believed to be true, for God says them, yet they are not seen yet with physical human eyes.

Two legal terms are used (note in this book just how many legal terms the writer has used so far, to underline the force and power of the logic that is behind his argument). Legal proofs are only ever expressed in the public court, to give open and testable evidence for a conviction/aquittal, and this is the outworking of faith also. Believer's faith is always expressed openly as a part of the "Great Commission" (**Matthew 28:18-20**), and is both the believer's own expression of their joy in the truth, but also a strong condemnation of those who reject the truth.

Biblical Faith is always a challenge to those seeing its expression to decide about the one behind the confident faith expression – Jesus. Our faith is the grounds of our joy, and the ground of the condemnation of those who reject the truth; the corner stone (the Lord himself) becomes the rock of offence to those who reject the one who is the "Rock" of our salvation! **Isaiah 28:16, Romans 9:33, 10:11, 1 Peter 2:7-8.**

The writer is also saying in this verse, that the act of faith is the dynamic expression of confidence in a truth, revealed by God, directly through the Lord, or by the Holy Spirit through His Word: and it's dynamic power is the evidence of it's reality. There is something about the life and living testimony of the person who expresses faith that speaks of their confidence, and points strongly to the truth of what they do truly believe.

This sort of faith works out in their confident lives; it speaks through their actions, of the truth of what they believe, and convicts (even condemns) those who see and hear them, legally demonstrating to those who observe, that the believer's faith points to the eternally significant truth about who Jesus really is! The rest of the chapter will give illustrations of those who demonstrated such faith, and convicted their generations, holding to the truth of their faith, even if it meant death. Like Peter, and James the writer here is consistently repeating the Apostle's belief, that true Biblical faith will always work out in the life that witnesses by word and deed to the Truth. **Jude 3, James 2:18-26.**

Verse 2. By means of this sort of faith the elders of old Israel received God's witness that they were acceptable, and righteous. It is always by openly seen evidence that the truth is known, and the dynamic lives of these people proved the dynamic saving nature of their faith. It is faith's expression that is, "credited to the account for righteousness", for it is only faith's expression that proves it's real presence. **Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:3, 14:23, James 2:18-26.**

Verse 3. Having stated in verse two that faith working out is going to be the subject, the writer returns here to add to the definition given in verse one, with a personal illustration. Through the ages of time when men have looked up to the heavens they have marvelled and bowed before the one they "saw" in the heavens was the creator. Equally powerful is to contemplate the ages of time, and reflect upon the survival of mankind, and the wonder that life still exists at all on this tortured fallen planet. Individually we give thanks for God's protection, but look at the nuclear threat and stand amazed – for only God has kept, and will keep, stupid men from destroying themselves and the planet.

Only the "fool" has said in his heart there is no Creator-God. **Psalms 14:1.** Whether we examine the wonders of space or time, we confront both our limits and the creator's hands. We can "see" his presence yet he is not visible. This is the place where believer's faith, or unbeliever's rebelliousness will be expressed. Faith is not a "leap in the dark", it is a step into the light of what creation reveals! The writer says, we "understand", reminding us that belief in God is logical and based on evidence, and that it is disbelief which is illogical and foolish.

Creation, and the ages of history to date have been, "framed", or put together according to a purpose, by God for mankind to express their faith. The whole creation is "purposive", and it's purpose centres in the person and work of Christ. All the ages have been under God's controlling hand, and He has never lost his grip over history or things in the creation. There is a plan and it is working out. The things we see were not **made** (perfect tense again – with lasting results – with consequences that flow on beyond space and time) by other things we see! This is so obvious when you see it spelt out like this yet man ignore this truth. The worlds and ages of time are controlled by God who is beyond both space and time. The writer reminds us in this verse that we stand as creatures in the presence of the creator. Once we see this, we confront the great choice that the "elders" faced; will we be obedient, or will we reject or ignore the truth?

Verse 4. The first of the heroes of faith comes from the days just after the creation, and involves the first man born, who becomes, as a result of his faith, the first martyr for the truth. Abel approached God through a blood offering as his parents had been instructed to, but Cain, the unbeliever, "knew better" and brought his own works as his offering. Man's work is not acceptable to God, only the blood of a divinely acceptable sacrifice can atone for our sin.

Cain's sin began with his rejection of the plan of God for his salvation, and this led to rejection and hatred of his brother, who had accepted God's way. With every hero of faith there are those who, like Cain, opposed and hated the believer, and often persecuted or killed the godly ones. This chapter is sobering reading, and builds on chapter ten's points, reminding us that those who reject God will hate us, and that here on this earth we have no continuing city!

Faith is our joy, but it is also the great divider of mankind. We are either with Abel or with Cain; there is no middle ground in the matter of faith. God's testimony concerning Abel, was that he was acceptable to Him, that he was righteous. It is God's testimony that is alone of value. He went to his unjust death without any loss, except time upon the earth, which is always well made up for time later upon the Millennial earth! There is no loss in faith, for in Christ all is made right, either in space-time in the Millennial Kingdom, or in eternity itself!

Cain lived for the rest of his life on the earth, and he had wealth, power, and health and also misery, for he knew that he would face God in the end! He had rejected the creator and all his years were simply wealth tranquilizing his inner torment, for he was heading in only one direction; into death and then the last judgement. The writer is going to record many great saints of the past, most of whom die violent deaths, yet they are blessed, even in the midst of their dying, for they have an eternal destiny of blessedness, with great reward. They also have an on-going witness, even though long ago dead they keep on speaking for God. The death of all believers is in the Lord's hands, and our death is precious in the sight of God, **Psalm 23:4, 68:19-20, 116:15, Job 5:21-27.**

Verse 5. Enoch is a strange figure from the pre-flood period, yet he is one of those few chosen by the author to illustrate an aspect of mature believing faith. Take the time and read, **Genesis 5:18, 22-24.** With Elijah, he is the only other man to be "taken by God" without having to die. He received "translation". He was literally taken from one place to another; in this case from the world of space and time, into eternity. Although his contemporaries really searched for him they did not find him, or his body, and they came to the only conclusion that fitted the facts; namely that God had taken him. The reason that this made sense to these people, who were not quick to assign such an act to direct divine intervention, was that he was a man uniquely walking with God, a man they all knew, who walked with God daily and who pleased God. Note the **perfect tenses** of the verbs that explain the testimony that is eternally pleasing to God. There are everlasting results when we please God!

Verse 6. The "but" that starts this verse connects it strongly to verse five, so read the two verses together, for this verse gives a principle that relates directly to the life of Enoch. Without the sort of faith we are reading of here it is completely impossible to please God. There is no "well done, good and faithful servant" without the sort of faith we read of in this chapter. Faith is the dynamic power of the Christian life. The two prerequisites are given here. If our focus in life is to please the Lord God, we must have this sort of faith. We must first believe that the Lord exists. Isn't this obvious?

It wasn't then and it isn't now, for look at the modern liberal churches! They speak of a "god" they don't even believe exists, as any more than an idea in their own limited minds! If God truly exists then a number of things follow; he rules, and he has a part for us to play in his plan for this creation. Having believed that God exists, then there is an aspect of God's character that must also be believed. The Lord is the rewarder of his saints; he pays their wages, he rewards. The Lord God is the rewarder of his own, and we receive great blessings in time and eternity. The Lord seeks to bless us, how seriously do we seek to find this blessing. If we knew that there was a pipe down which flowed gold, how hard would we seek to find such a pipe? This is what the writer is saying here.

Verse 7. Noah is the type of a faith that mentors perseverance. He believed at one point in time, and then for 120 years slaved over the building of an Ark, without discouragement, against the mockery of his entire generation of humanity. During all the long years he toiled, there was not the slightest visual evidence that the Ark would be needed. He preached daily, even though there was no indication of the judgment that he said would fall unless there was godly repentance. Until the firmament above the earth collapsed upon the earth, and the fountains of the deep opened up no one had ever seen even the possibility of rain, let alone the deluge that came upon the earth.

Note the sequence of the verse. First came God's warning. There was **no evidence**, other than God's words, that a flood was even possible, for no rain had ever fallen upon the earth, which had a total greenhouse environment. Second came Noah's response, he moved into action, in obedience to what he had been told. Faith expressed itself in action that responded to God's warning, without anything else. In a thought out manner he responded, got to grips with the plan for the Ark and started the project with plans, and lists of what he would require, and daily he preached the gospel.

He did not just start, he planned, and prepared, then he worked and he witnessed to his faith in the words of God. He may have taken years to prepare timbers and all other things he required, before the hull even took shape. At every point people asked him what he was doing, and he replied that he was obedient to God, preparing to escape through God's warning, from a disaster that was certainly to come. It was planned, systematic, organised, and disciplined, year after year. It was 120 years of obedience in both action and preaching before the flood came.

The Ark provided a place of safety for Noah and his three sons and their wives, but he may have had many other children, who were not prepared to follow him. **Genesis 5:30 cf, 5:32, 6:18.** The Ark was God's provision for salvation, but each member of the household had to express their own faith and join Noah in the project. Finally they each had to express their faith and walk up the ramp and be a part of the Lord's provision, against the mockery of their neighbours. An adult child of Noah could have worked on the project and on the last day joined the mockers and not walked into the Ark. Such a person would have been lost, and the writer's purpose is to underline again the need for perseverance to the very end of God's Plan for our lives.

The athlete only wins the prize if he/she finishes the race, and while the people he writes to have run well in the past they are in danger now of losing all they gained earlier. They must enter their "Ark" of salvation/deliverance and enter the new age or they will lose everything! The Ark was salvation to those who accepted it's provision and entered in, but it was the symbol of judgement for all the rest. Noah ignored the verbal attacks of his generation through all the years that it took to

build the Ark, for he had his eyes on the Lord who had given him the order. The people had their eyes on the Ark instead of seeing it as a growing testimony to Noah's faith in God, an illustration of God's Grace, and a growing inditement of their own negativity.

They rejected the growing evidence of Noah's faith work, and so condemned themselves; they fell into Hades without excuse, there to await still today the last judgement to come. **Revelation 20:11-15**. The result for Noah was so different, for he became the Heir of all things, a true son of righteousness. Heirship of the whole earth was his, but far more than that, for he had an eternal reward also. Heirship depends on faith application, for there is no entering into the promised blessing of God unless you actually "enter", and that means a faith that works out in obedient actions.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Does our faith in the Lord sound like it comes within the definition of faith in verse one? If it does not, then we ought to be very concerned, for we do not have biblical faith, and need to get it quickly! Faith that is real always works out in the life, that is its nature. The nature of hypocrisy is that which is said, and what is lived remains separate. We must examine ourselves to ensure we are, "in the faith" that saves, rather than living the lie of a hypocrite. **James 2:18-19**.

Faith is confident hope in what is taught, it is never panic, or despair. We express our confidence in the words of scripture, because they are His words, and we can depend on the promises and directions He gives. We are to express this hope, this confidence, in all our dealings with the unsaved, for our attitude and our words, and our deeds are a part of our ambassadorship, of giving the Gospel message to the lost. We are to be as confident in the promises of the Word of God as we are in the other "facts" of daily life!

In fact, the Word of God is to become, as we mature, more real to us than the things we see each day. This is not so hard when we pause and reflect on just how much of what we accept is true (love, commitment, honour, trust) is not "seen" with human eyes. Each of these things is "seen" only as it works out in the life of the person, just so with faith also!

Abel's sacrifice was, "more excellent", because it was obedient to God's holy demands. Abel's sacrifice expressed the truth, where-as Cain's expressed his rebellious heart. By their fruit they are known! **Matthew 7:15-27**. What is the fruit of our life today? What does the world see in us today? Do we resemble Abel in our obedience to the revealed will of God, or have we slipped into the evil life style of rebellion of Cain? Where do we want our reward, on earth as Cain had it, for he certainly had a long and physically prosperous life, or do we seek eternal blessedness?

The blessing of time is juxtaposed throughout this chapter to the blessing of eternity, and we are urged to select where it is we wish to receive our blessings. The great heroes often died for their faith, yet their witness, as their eternal blessings keep on going. Abel keeps on witnessing to the truth even though he has been dead for thousands of years, and he keeps on enjoying his eternal rewards in heaven. Cain has long ago ceased to enjoy anything, as he waits in Hades for the last judgment and then eternity with Satan! We are challenged to choose our company, and know it is forever....

Do we "walk with God" as Enoch did? This is to be, as Watchman Nee said, the "normal Christian life", yet we rob ourselves of this blessedness through each day, by our disobedient and careless habits. The results of walking with God are eternal, they go on forever, and they alone are worth the effort to achieve. The alternative is easier and equally eternal, but there is no joy on that path.

Noah was alive during part of Enoch's life, and walked with God in a manner that was pleasing to God. Noah's faith speaks of the thought out commitment of a person to a long task which they just keep on doing until it is finished. Is our life characterised by perseverance? Are we people known for our ability to stick to a task and finish it, or are we amongst those who start but never finish. It is finishing that wins the prize, and finishing well! There is no prize for running, only winning! Noah finished his race, and persevered under the mockery of all around him except his immediate family. How are you running believer? Are you ready to "grit it out" under the pressures that will come in life, for that is what is required to win the crown of life!

B. PASTORAL

Abel, Enoch and Noah each had their detractors; people who did not follow their example and who rejected their Saviour, but they kept on walking with God. It is this persistence in walking according to the will of God that is prized by the writer of Hebrews, so that it is his constant theme. It should also be ours as pastors today. We watch the Olympic Games and do not expect to see those who pull out of contests, or are beaten, win prizes, for there are no prizes for the loser, only the winners.

This is the analogy to the Christian life that Paul draws so many times, and the writer here underlines as the crucial element of the truth he wants them all to see. There are too many lazy and complacent Christians in churches, confident in their salvation, yet with nothing in their lives daily to even demonstrate they know Christ at all! This is not right, and it is our duty before God to tell the Lord's people so! **Philippians 3:12-13**.

Daily **walking with God** like Enoch removes fear of death or anything lesser. Teaching the flock of God how to walk with their Lord is a big part of everyday preaching. Are we clear enough about the filling of the Holy Spirit, and the teaching

ministries of the Spirit, so that the people might apply the principles into life, and be without excuse before the Lord. Cain had blessing for a time on the earth, and is now in damnation, sitting in Hell, awaiting the Lake of Fire.

The people of Noah's day made their choice also, and had pleasant lives while Noah slaved over the building of the Ark. They had their reward, and Noah gained his. The only lasting reward is with God, even if it leads to the loss of all you have known before upon the earth. The attitude, and focus for life, that must come from the pulpit is a heavenly one, where, in the words of the old hymn, the things of earth, "grow strangely dim in the light of his glorious grace".

Noah illustrates the sort of persistence in service that is a true, "God-send", in ministry. Such people are to be warmly encouraged in their perseverance. They are to be taught and counselled by ourselves to persist in the Lord's revealed will for their lives, for only in such persistence is there the blessing of eternity.

We are called as God's under-shepherds to protect, encourage, and train winners for eternity, with heaven in their hearts and minds, and feet that run to service until their call to go into their eternal reward. Anything short of that and we are not doing our job as the Lord's pastors!

DOCTRINES

DESTINY OF BELIEVERS

1. He who believes in Jesus Christ has eternal life now (1John 5:11-13). He will never die (John 11:25,26, John 8:51).
2. Believers are said to "fall asleep" at their death (1Thessalonians 4:14). The soul departs to be consciously present with Christ, but the body "sleeps" in the grave until the resurrection (2Corinthians 5:6-8).
3. When Christ comes at the Rapture, the bodies of those in Christ shall be raised from the dead (1Thessalonians 4:16, 1Corinthians 15:20-23).
4. Our physical bodies will be replaced by immortal bodies (2 Corinthians 5:1-4) - conformed to the body of Christ (Philippians 3:20-21).
5. We shall be like him (1John 3:2) seeing His glory and reflecting it in ourselves (Colossians 3:4, John 17:22).
6. We will be rewarded because of works of faith (Luke 19:12-19) which will vary in proportion to our faithfulness in serving God (Matthew 6:20, 1Corinthians 3:11-15).
7. In the Millennial Kingdom, we shall reign with Christ as priests of God and Christ (Revelation 20:6).
8. To the overcomer (1John 5:4-5) Christ will give to eat of the tree of life (Revelation 2:7) and shall not be hurt by the second death - the lake of fire (Revelation 2:11). He will be given authority to rule over nations (Revelation 2.26-27). Jesus will acknowledge the believer before God (Revelation 3:4-5) who will be made a pillar in the temple of God (Revelation 3:12), and will be seated with Christ in His own throne (Revelation 3:21).
9. God will wipe away all tears from his eyes; sorrow, crying, pain, and death shall be no more (Revelation 21:4).
10. We shall know all things perfectly (1Corinthians 13:12).
11. We will receive an incorruptible inheritance (1Peter 1:3-5), kept by our all powerful God in heaven.

PARAPHRASE

"Now, this is the faith (we speak of, it is faith) that is the strong assurance of what we confidently rest in, it is the firm evidence of things we cannot see (with earthly eyes). For it is this sort of faith that received God's witness (to the spiritual status) of past saints. By this faith, we logically understand how that the worlds were put together in all their detail by God for His purposes. We comprehend that the things that we do not physically see were the source of being of all that we physically see. By this sort of faith, Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, so that God testified concerning him that he alone was righteous, and his gift alone acceptable, so that though he died (because of this) yet he keeps on speaking to us (of faith in action). By this same sort of faith, Enoch was translated (from earth to heaven directly), not seeing death, and he was not found (to be buried) because God had translated him, and the reason for this, was that before his translation, God had eternally testified of him that he was a man who was well pleasing to him. But, in contrast, without living faith, it is impossible to well please God. It is necessary for the person approaching God to fully believe first that he exists, and then that he is a rewarder of those who whole heartedly seek him. By this sort of faith Noah, having received God's clear instruction concerning things not yet even known by men, acted with reverence and careful thought, and thoroughly prepared the Ark inside and out. This led to the salvation of the souls of all who went with him, and by his act of faith, he passed judgement against the world, and he himself became an heir of righteousness through his faith."

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11:8-16

“ 8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 11 Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promise, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.”

KEY WORDS

Called	Kaleo	present, passive, participle; having received the calling.
Obedied	Upakouo	aoist, active, indicative; at the time of that call he heard and obeyed.
Go out	Exerchomai	aoist, active, infinitive; went out in obedience.
Knowing	Epistamai	present, middle, participle; not understanding, not knowing much about.
Sojourned	Paroikeo	aoist, active, indicative dwelt as a foreigner, alongside the native inhabitants.
Strange	Allotrian	as a foreigner.
Dwelling	Katoikeo	aoist, active, participle; he was making his home there.
Looked for	Ekdechomai	imperative, middle, indicative; waited expectantly.
Builder	Technites	craftsman designer, artificer, tradesman-architect-builder.
Maker	Demiourgos	the person in charge of the construction of the city according to the plan drawn.
Strength	dunamis	dynamic inner power.
Conceive	Katakole	lit=casting down, here it means conceiving through taking the seed (sperm).
Judged	Egeomai	aoist, middle, indicative; counted his words (character behind them) worthy, esteemed.
Dead	nekroo	Perfect , passive, participle; as good as dead.
Innumerable	Anarithmetos	not able to be counted.
Died	Apothnesko	aoist, active, indicative; they all died at their time.
Received	Komizo	aoist, middle, participle; not having obtained the fulfilment of the promise.
Afar off	Porrothen	from a long distance away.
Seen	Orao	aoist, active, participle; having seen.
Persuaded	Peitho	aoist, active, participle listened, were persuaded and obeyed.
Embraced	Aspazomai	aoist, middle, participle; and having embraced, greeted warmly. (Even when afar off this can be used, for those who cry out a greeting from afar convey their love).
Confessed	Omologeoo	aoist, active, participle were agreeing that this was ongoing truth.
Strangers	Zenoi	Foreigners (our word Xenophobia - fear of foreigners comes from this word).
Pilgrims	Parepidemioi	those who settle in a place for a short time, as foreigners alongside the owners.
Declare	Emphanizo	present, active, indicative; keep on making absolutely clear for all to see.
Seek	Epizeteo	present, active, indicative; they keep on seeking out.
Country	Patrida	a “fatherland”, a place where their father stood, which is truly theirs.
Mindful	Mnemeoneuo	imperfect, active, indicative; (if) they were remembering all through this time.
Returned	Anakampto	aoist, active, infinitive; to have gone/turned back again; bound themselves to their past rather than kept their focus on their future.
Desire	Orego	present, middle, indicative; they keep on stretching forward towards.
Ashamed	Epaischunomai	present, middle, indicative God is not ashamed, embarrassed.
Called	Epikaleo	present, middle passive, infinitive; to be called, to receive the title of their God.
Prepared	Etoimazo	aoist, active indicative; has prepared, made ready for a specific use.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

THE FAITH OF THE PATRIARCHS. VERSES 8 -16

Abraham's faith is used here to illustrate the mature believer's response to the Will of God (vs. 8), their assurance in the Promise of God (vs 9), and confidence in the Power of God (vs 17-19). Abraham is extolled in **Nehemiah 9:7-8**, as the example of faith to follow, and Paul mentions him in both Romans 4, and Galatians 3. He is “our father in the true faith”. An important principle emerges here, in this section, and throughout the chapter. While over 70 years of Abraham's life is overviewed, there is no mention of his weaknesses, his failings, and sins.

The principle contained here in this observation is a vital one for every believer to fully understand. Since all sins were judged in Christ on the Cross, God's view of the believer is not related to their sin or failures, but rather by what they do by faith in the Word of God. In other words, God's record of our lives in eternity is concerned only with our faith, not our

failures. **Hebrews 10:17**: "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more!". This principle was pre-figured in **Psalm 103:8-17**. Our iniquities are "mentioned no more", because as far as the east is from the west, that far the Lord has removed them from us once they are dealt with by confession. We are seen as born again believers as God's children, priests, and members of His Royal Family, not as sinners now.

Verse 8. Having received God's call, at that time he heard and obeyed God's calling and went into the place God told him of Abraham had a great life style in one of the greatest cities of the world of his day, Ur of the Chaldees. Excavation of Ur has revealed plumbing, toilets and all the things that we think were only developed much later. Abraham heard the call of God to leave his comfort and spend the rest of his life under the skins of a tent. For the preachers of the false "prosperity gospel", this is a strange thing God does, yet as we will see as we advance in this chapter it is the normal thing. The Lord calls more to suffer and go without, than he calls to service in the palaces of this world. Those who have the palace, like Daniel, often have their den of lions also! **Daniel 6, Ephesians 3:1, 13, Philippians 2:5-8, 3:3:10, Colossians 1:24-26, James 5:10-11, 1 Peter 2:19-21, 4:13....** . Be ready to join the "fellowship of his suffering".

He heard, and he obeyed, and it is this moving out in faith that proves his faith was real. The verb, *exerchomai*, literally means, "he uprooted", and that is what he did. He uprooted his family and went out into a place unknown to them. He was told that the land would be given to him for an inheritance, yet in his life time all he would own was a cave in which to be buried.

His burial plot became his testimony that one day his descendants would inherit his land, for God had already given it to him, yet he never saw it. This is a picture of the Christian faith, is it not? We have great eternal reward, and receive the down payment on it here and now in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but we do not enter into our full inheritance in time, only when we cross into eternity.

He went out not knowing really where he went. He had not been to Canaan and he had no map, but he had the "still small voice of the Lord" to guide him. He would have heard stories from travellers but had never travelled; few did in the ancient world. He left all he had ever known, and against the advice of friends, he left his house, his businesses, most of his family, all his friends of childhood, and fixed his eyes on what the Lord wanted for him.

Verse 9. He never was a citizen of any country after his move to Canaan. He stood alone, setting his face towards the will of God, and against any who stood against God. He opposed kings, for he was a citizen of no earthly country. He lived as a foreigner under tents all his life. We often get our patriotism towards our country in the way of our gospel message and the Lord's correct attitude towards state and nationhood. Abraham had his tent – we often want our mansion and the money to spend here. Abraham was rich indeed, but like us all he left it behind – his focus was on God.

We are not here as Americans, Europeans, Africans, or Chinese, but we are all here as "FOREIGNERS", as strangers in a strange land, for our home is heaven. **Philippians 3:12-14**. In an age when people groups built great cities to protect themselves against the wandering armies, Abraham lived in tents. He trusted in God's protection rather than the might of a city wall. He set an example of faithfulness in his home (tent), and his believing sons followed and trusted God also.

Through his failures and falling at times, he persevered, repented when he needed to, and reached the place of usefulness by God. Abraham is a picture of tenacity and getting up again and again after failure. Truly the Christian motto is, "NEVER, NEVER, NEVER GIVE UP!" They made their home in the tents they lived in, not seeking a big house on the hill for their retirement! Their hearts were fixed on heaven, and they served the Lord faithfully where they were called to serve, without joining their allegiance to any other nation than their heavenly home.

Verse 10. He looked for a city! He was focused on eternity not time, as we must be, if we would have the impact of an Abraham in our generation. He saw eternity as if it was here now; the future was the present to Abraham, and the closer we get to this mental attitude, the closer we get to dynamic service for the Lord. The Lord is the architect builder of the creation, and he alone has the plan for where things are going, and what is prepared for us.

Verse 11. Sarah's faith (vs 11-12) declares the faithfulness and immutability of God; reminding us that He is able to fulfil His Word, for He is the one who made the plan for this creation. In the face of human impossibilities the Lord delights in showing what is possible through faith and obedience to His plan. (**Genesis 18, 21:1-2**). While Sarah has her detractors, and she certainly took a while to get to the place of faith, she got there and persevered and so received great blessing, through the miraculous birth of her son. The Lord worked a number of powerful miracles in this woman's life, bringing Isaac to birth and then saving him later, and throughout this time Sarah kept on believing that the Lord would do what He had said, because she knew HIM, and trusted His character. Though well past menopause she received God's dynamic power to conceive and bear a child. **Genesis 17:1-8, Romans 4:17-21**.

Verse 12. Because of Sarah and Abraham's faith in the promises of God, there were born a multitude of people becoming the nation Israel. They were both sexually dead (perfect tense again – with permanent results), yet the Lord brought them to life again to fulfil his promises. What we see physically before us as "fact" is not the whole truth; what God wills, it is the truth, it is reality. Remember, It is the Father's Plan – it cannot fail, but we can fail to enjoy its blessings! **Hebrews 3:17 – 4:2**.

Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph continue the godly line, for the destiny of the nation that will come from old Israel was based on Regeneration, and obedience to the revealed will of God. (**Genesis 27:27-29; 39-40**). Jacob demonstrated the same

“Divine Viewpoint” perspective in his life and worship even through to the point of death. (**Genesis 47:31; 48:8-22**). Joseph also, like his father, departed in dying grace while ministering to others. His command regarding his bones set up a visual aid in the form of an unburied golden coffin. It was a reminder of God’s provision; for he was Prime Minister of Egypt, due to the grace of God. He had wealth to use, but his focus too was on eternity, not the wealth of time.

But the coffin was also a reminder of the future; a reminder that the Israelites did not belong in Egypt, and to keep before the descendants of Israel God’s promise of the Exodus. (**Genesis 15:13-16; 50:24-26**). I have often wondered what was painted on the coffin, as all coffins are painted, but I cannot see Joseph’s painted in the standard Egyptian manner. I suspect the Gospel message was there, and also the challenge to travel back to Canaan and take up God’s promises. God has written the gospel message in the very stars, and so I believe Joseph wrote it large upon his coffin – though dead he spoke to all subsequent generations of the real truth about death, destiny on earth and eternal destiny with God!

Verse 13. “These all” share the wonderful name of mature believers who made a difference upon the earth due to their faith! These people counted for God, served their Lord, and received their eternal reward. They were people who persevered in their faith and finished their race. **Philippians 3:14, 15, 16, 2 Timothy 4:7,8**. They all died, but that was not the end! Death is the fear of mankind, for it confronts us with a mystery that only God provides the answer to. They died without receiving the promise themselves, but they still rejoiced in the promise of God, for they saw it, and knew it was real. They rejoiced over the certainties of the Plan of God, and celebrated the reception of his promises in advance.

The words the writer selects to explain this truth are instructive. They saw, they believed, they celebrated and jumped for joy, as a person does when they see an old friend approaching from afar! They “embraced” the promises of God. They cried out their greeting to the coming promises, as if they and the promises of God were old friends! That is how real the promises of God were to these people. They lived as foreigners and temporary residents of the earth. They never felt comfortable here on earth, for they longed for heaven, and so did not get distracted by war, storms, famines, or the temporary power, wealth and fame associated with the palaces of Egypt.

Verse 14. **Philippians 3:17-19**. The people saying such things as these heroes of faith say, have a powerful witness, for by their lives, words, and deeds they proclaim that they live a certain way, seeing the world a different way from their contemporaries. They see everything in terms of their eternal destiny, and they are focused on their heavenly city rather than their earthly abode. They don’t mind being different to their fellows, for they see God’s reality as more powerful than that of the daily issues of earthly life. By all decisions they make, they make absolutely clear to all around them that they have a divine viewpoint rather than a purely human one. Everything they do speaks of God’s way of seeing things. They seek an eternal country! They keep on striving after, seeking out, a country to come. Their heart’s desire is to be in heaven, and their entire focus in life is to be in heaven with their Lord. They seek a country (patria = fatherland, or “father’s land”); they seek the land of their Heavenly Father.

Verse 15. These people, like us, retained their options; they could have returned to their homeland and had the life of luxury they left behind, but their lives were fixed on the Lord, and His will. They had actively forgotten their old homeland, and no longer considered it as home. Their mental attitude made a return to the place of their birth, simply not an option for them. Humanly speaking they “had options”, for they could have returned by the next camel train that passed their tent, but their heart was fixed on the Lord’s will and so they saw the camel trains coming and going from Ur of the Chaldees, and they were not tempted, for their heart was on heaven, not Ur.

Verse 16. Their desire, was expressed by their focus and energy being directed towards the Lord’s will ahead of them rather than their past life behind them. They saw, as we must, that the Lord has a “better” life for them than they have had before. Every day is meant to be “better” than the last, for as we grow more like the Lord Jesus we can be more used, and therefore more blessed, by the Lord.

For the believers who grow spiritually and have their eyes set on heaven, the Lord will never be embarrassed of them. Not only is the Lord not embarrassed of growing believers, he has already prepared for them a dwelling place for eternity.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Abraham went out from the known into the unknown, focused only on what the Lord would have him do. Where is our heart’s desire today? **Matthew 6:21**, Where our treasure is, that is where our heart will be.

Our father in faith, Abraham, sets us an example to follow here. Are we ready to leave all that we have known and serve the Lord where he directs us to go? That is the call that is part of the believers calling. The Lord’s will for our life alone, is to be our mental attitude. Let us test ourselves against this standard today, and ensure we are in the right place for the Lord’s will to work out in our life, where he wants us to serve Him.

Abraham was relaxed about being a stranger, a foreigner in a strange land that was never actually his. A basic human need is to “belong”, yet the Lord calls us to “not belong” here, and to relax with that strangeness, for we do belong in heaven and we will enjoy it forever – beyond space-time.

So many of us are so determined to “fit in” in human society that we miss out on the real path that the Lord has for us. Like Abraham, do not try to “fit in” on earth believer, for you don’t fit in here at all as a believer! Just relax and enjoy it, and focus on fitting in with other believers, and see that you have a “place” that you will perfectly fit into later, and it will last forever. Abraham lived in tents rather than solid homes, and he trusted the Lord for protection from the armies that swept through the land at times, rather than trusting the big city walls of the pagan strong points. Abraham illustrates an important Biblical principle of faith – that God’s path is the path of faith-rest – resting in the safety of his loving care on the brief journey we make here in space-time. The best for us is always “yet to come”.

The only safe place is where God wants us at this moment. A tent is safe if that is where we are meant to be. The only safe place is where the Lord wants us to serve, for there we will serve Him until he calls us home in his perfect time. Many a believer has gone back away from the call of the Lord, for they thought it too dangerous, and were later killed in a car accident, by illness, in what they thought was the “safety” of their home town!

We are in the creator’s hands. How secure do we feel there? Do we see the future reality as if it is present reality? Abraham and Sarah set us the example of the “faith rest life”, for they saw the Lord’s will as a present reality, even though it’s fulfilment was many years into the future. God said it, and that settled it as far as they were concerned. They failed, yes, they failed, but they always got back up and re-focused their eyes on the Lord’s will and plan. It is that focus on the Lord’s plan that kept them safe, and it will keep us safe also now.

Sarah’s faith in the Lord was rooted and grounded in her knowledge of God’s holy character. What God had said he could do, and she laughed at the thought, not in unbelief, but in amazement and joy, and so they called their son, Isaac (laughter). We are to rejoice in the Lord, and again rejoice! **Philippians 1:18, 2:16, 17,18, 28, 3:1- 3, 4:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:16, James 1:9, 1 Peter 1:6-8.** Let us join Sarah, Paul and Peter and all the saints, and rejoice in the Lord and his provisions for us!

Verse twelve confronts us with another vital Biblical principle. There is no such thing as a hopeless situation, for God’s plan and character cancels out such things; God’s surpassing grace provisions overcome situations. Impossible situations in man’s eyes have never stopped God working his will out through the lives of obedient, faith-filled (faithful) believers. Let us see things God’s way rather than man’s way!

All the saints of old were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. They ensured their hearts were set on heaven with no distractions by the things of earth, and as in verse 15, no sidetracks back to their birth-place, for it was no longer “home”, heaven was home! No distractions by the things of earth, and no sidetracks to the places of earth that appeal to the “old man”. Let this be our catch cry each day, and let us walk with the Lord until we go to dwell with him forever.

B. PASTORAL

How well are we preaching the eternal life perspective? For that is what we are confronted with in this passage in every verse. The great saints of old, whose example we are to follow, all were characterised by their heavenly focus rather than their earthly desires. They set aside their normal human needs, and in the power of the Holy Spirit looked to the heavenly realities. It is an “unnatural” thing to do this, and this is why so many believers don’t do it! It can be done only through an obedient life, a Holy Spirit filled, and Bible saturated life!

As pastors of the Lord’s flock let us ensure it is not lack of Bible teaching that stops the people under our care doing this! In the troubles that come in every pastorate let us be sure we focus on the Lord and his provision also. We are heralds of the King of kings, and as his heralds we have responsibility to pass on his policy. The Lord’s policy is that we fix our eyes on Him and his plan for eternity and speak more of that than we do of the things of time and space.

Where is our heart? For where our heart is, there will we be spending most of our time, and that is where we will seek to fulfil our dreams. If our dreams are of building a big house and successful business then that is what we will get. If our lives are focused on the things of earth we may get all the trappings of earthly wealth, but that is not what the Lord wants for us, for all that can be taken away in a moment. All we have here is left behind at death anyway! Only the things of eternity matter forever, and that is the message that the Lord’s people must hear from us every day!

DOCTRINES

GUIDANCE: THE WILL OF GOD

1. Three categories of will in history
 - a) Divine will (sovereignty)
 - b) Angelic will
 - c) Human will
2. Main areas of the will of God (1 John 3:23)
 - a) For the unbeliever - salvation (2 Peter 3:9)
 - b) For the believer - spirituality (Ephesians 5:18)
3. Christ has free will (Matthew 26:42, Hebrews 10:7, 9)
 - a) No free will in mankind would imply no free will in Christ.

- b) The basic principles of divine guidance however is based on the fact that man possesses free will to choose for or against God.
4. Type of will of God as related to the human race (e.g. Balaam)
- a) Directive (Numbers 22:12) -what God directs.
 - b) Permissive (Numbers 22:20) - What God allows.
 - c) Overruling (Numbers 23) - When God overrules.
5. Principles of Guidance
- a) Knowledge of biblical principles in the believer (Psalm 32:8, Proverbs 3:1-6, Isaiah 58:11, Romans 12:2)
 - b) Surrender and filling of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:13, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:17-18, 1 John 1:9)
 - c) Growth - to eat meat and not rely on milk (1 Corinthians 3:1-4)
6. Categories of the will of God
- a) Viewpoint will of God - What does He want me to think?
 - b) Operational will of God - What does He want me to do?
 - c) Geographical will of God - Where does He want me to be?
7. An example of the will of God (Acts 11) - the Guidance of Peter
- a) Guidance through prayer (vs 5)
 - b) Guidance through the mind (vs 6)
 - c) Guidance through the word (vs 7-10)
 - d) Guidance through providential circumstances (vs 11)
 - e) Guidance through the filling of the Spirit (vs 12)
 - f) Guidance through fellowship and comparison of data (vs 13-15)
 - g) Guidance through remembering Scripture (vs 16)

DESTINY OF BELIEVERS [See page 206 above]

OVERCOMER

1. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1John 5:4,5)
2. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." - believers will live with God in heaven forever. (Revelation 2:7)
3. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" - believers will not be subject to the lake of fire. (Revelation 2:11)
4. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." - believers are accepted by God on the basis of His provision. (Revelation 2:17)
5. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star." - believers will rule over the nations and will be honoured. (Revelation 2:26-28)
6. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." - believers are justified and sanctified by the death of our Lord and their names are permanently in the book of the living. (Revelation 3:5)
7. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." - believers will have access to the Holy Places of God and will eternally be identified with Jesus Christ. (Revelation 3:12)
8. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." - believers will reign with the Lord Jesus Christ. (Revelation 3:21)

REWARDS AND CROWNS [See page 75 above]

PARAPHRASE

“By this sort of faith, Abraham, having received the calling of God, heard and obeyed the command to go out from his land to a place that he was about to receive as his inheritance. He went out in obedience, not fully understanding or knowing much at all about where he was going. By faith he lived as a foreigner amongst the native inhabitants of the land, as in a foreign land he made his permanent home in tents that decayed, living there with Isaac and Jacob, who were the joint heirs of the same promise. He did this because he was waiting expectantly for a city to live in, whose architect, designer, and constructor is God. By this same sort of faith, Sarah also received dynamic inner power to conceive a child and bring it safely to delivery, although she was well beyond the age when such things should not have happened, because she counted the Lord’s promises, backed by his character, were utterly dependable. Due to their separate faith, from them both, even though they were both sexually dead, were born the multitude of children, as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore, unable to be counted. They all died in their time, still having their faith alive. They had not actually obtained the fulfilment of the promise, but from a long distance away, they having seen it, and having believed it’s truth, they embraced the future reality with warmth, and kept on confessing before all, that they were but foreigners and temporary residents of this earth. For those who believe such things, keep on making clear by their lives that they keep on seeking out a true fatherland. For if they had been constantly remembering from where they came, (rather than being focused on where they were going), they might have returned there. But rather we keep on seeing them stretching forward towards their heavenly country, and for this reason, God keeps on being not embarrassed about them. He is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared them a city”.

HEBREWS 11:17-23

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac shall thy seed be called’. 19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. 20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. 21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. 22 By faith Joseph when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. 13 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment.

KEY WORDS

Tried	Peirazo	present, passive, participle; he received testing in the fire to see what he was made of.
Offered	prosphero	perfect , active, indicative; he offered up as a sacrifice.
Only begotten	monogenes	only born one, uniquely born one.
Received	anadechomai	aoist, middle, participle; he received back again with rejoicing.
Called	Kaleo	future, passive, indicative; will be called.
Accounting	logizomai	aoist, middle, participle; he calculated on the basis of firm evidence (logic)
Figure	Parabole	parable, simile
Blessed	Eulogeo	aoist, active, indicative; blessed.
Concerning	Peri	concerning.
Dying	apothnesko	present active, participle; while he was in the process of dying.
Worshipped	proskuneo	aoist, active, indicative he worshipped God(positive mental attitude in death’s face).
Leaning	epi to akron	on the top of.
Died	Teleutao	present, active, participle as he came to his end (his time to expire, die)
Mention	mnemoneuo	aoist, active, indicative; remembered what was important to remind the people of.
Departing	Exodus	the leaving.
Commandment	entellomai	aoist, middle, indicative; gave instruction.
Born	Gennao	aoist, passive, participle; having been born.
Hid	Krupto	aoist, passive, indicative; was hidden.
Proper	Asteios	beautiful, lovely.
Not Afraid	ouk+phobeomai	aoist, passive, indicative; were not(strong negative) fearful.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The story of each of the Patriarchs is a story of Faith and Grace; God’s Grace provisions and the faith of these individuals in them. Each, in different ways failed, yet each was blessed of God through their persistence in faith. Each was tested, as we are, and each persisted in their life, through the testing, pass or fail, to obey the Lord. It is this testimony that the writer wants us to see earned by the believers in Jerusalem. They are being called, as we are, to stand with their ancestors, in dynamic faith that works out in life through service and worship.

Verse 17. The writer sums up Abraham’s life and uses the principle here to lead into the other Patriarchs. Abraham was tested in the fire to see what he was made of, and so will all believers be, who truly love the Lord and seek His will for their lives.

Suffering under pressure is not something most believers want to speak of, except to pray it does not come to them, yet all the great men and women of scripture were tested in the fires of affliction. The word for testing here is the Greek verb

peirazo, the word that indicates the testing of metal in fire to burn off impurities, and ensure only the best metal comes through. That is what the Lord does to his servants, to ensure that they serve him in a manner that wins the highest rewards of eternity. Remember, heaven is our eternal home, the affairs of earth, and our “ease” down here is irrelevant, for it is simply the preparation for heaven. The Lord is constantly working on us to make us more like the Lord Jesus Christ, and that means testing and retesting to ensure our hearts and minds are fixed on heavenly reality rather than the prosperity of earth.

It was a powerful test that Abraham faced, but it was a test of his maturity, for he had walked many years with the Lord before this occurred, and he was a prepared man for this test. The Lord never pushes us beyond what we are able to handle, if we trust in Him. **1 Corinthians 10:13**. Abraham was a prepared man for this last great test of faith, for he knew the Lord who tested him, and knew that God was able to even bring Isaac back from the dead, for the Lord's promises were bound up in Isaac. Isaac was not a young man at this time, and so he too expressed his faith in Abraham and in God as he allowed his father to bind him on the altar; a thing he could have resisted.

Isaac and Abraham both express their faith in God upon Mount Moriah, and both receive the blessing of God through their faith. Both men believed in the God who could do the things that men thought impossible. **Romans 4:17-21**. Isaac was his “only begotten son”, the only divinely born one, the only one who had the promise of God, and so the one who pre-figured the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 18. In Isaac was Abraham's seed, or posterity called, so he was essential to the promises of God, and it was this promise that Abraham believed and so knew that Isaac would be alright, for the Lord's promise was upon and through him alone.

Verse 19. Like the Lord all those years later, Isaac was, in effect, raised from the dead at this time, for Abraham was ready to slay him, and God alone stayed his hand, and provided the alternative sacrifice. Abraham did some divine “accounting”, and knew Isaac would be safe. The Greek word is *logizomai*, which means to work out on the basis of good evidence, and come to a conclusion which is backed by firm facts.

Abraham was right in his calculating because it was based on God's holy character, and the certainty of God's secure promises. Abraham knew that God was able to do what he had promised. He was secure in his faith in the holy character of God. **James 2:20 - 24**. The resurrection faith was firmly held by the Patriarchs, and the writer of Hebrews wants this to be clearly understood by his hearers also. In this day Judaism was in two main branches, with the Pharisees believing in resurrection, and the Saducees rejecting the very possibility of it.

Verse 20. Isaac was the son of promise, but he was a man who is problematic, for he was in early days not the sort of man you would necessarily be attracted to as a person, yet late in life he becomes the persistent man of faith fully, and this time is expressed when, as a blind old man he leans on his staff and pronounces the blessing upon Jacob and Esau, in accordance with God's will. Esau was his favourite son, but he focused, in this blessing, on what the Lord had clearly revealed, that the promise would come through Jacob. He saw past his human desire and love for Esau, to what God was working out in grace, and his faith in God was greater than his love as a parent. **Genesis 27:27 - 40, Romans 9:6 - 14**.

Verse 21. Of all the things that could be said of Jacob's life only this time of his death is mentioned, when he to blessed the sons of Joseph ahead of his other grandsons. **Genesis 48:30-41**. He recognised that the traditional blessing of the elder ruling would not apply in this case, and that the elder would serve the younger, and the spiritual blessings would flow from the younger for they were the ones who were more mature spiritually.

The Lord reminds us repeatedly through this section, that blessing is in accordance with his grace by our faith application and the obedience of our walk; the Lord does not bless in accordance with the rules of men, by lineage or physical wealth, but in accord with his plan, and the faith and obedience (the spiritual maturity) of the individuals involved.

Isaac worshipped after and through his blessing for he saw that God was working his purpose out and he rejoiced in this. He worshipped as he leaned on his staff. He did not see the deterioration of age, and the pain and discomfort of aging as something to cry out to God over, rather he relaxed with the infirmities of aging, and praised God, worshipping him in joy as he saw who God was, and what God would do in the future. He saw God and his plan, rather than being sidetracked by his infirmities, human resources, or doubts and fears.

The Lord filled his thoughts, not his own problems or his loves. When he died he simply got back into bed and draw up his legs, and “was gathered to his people”. **Genesis 49:31** is a verse that indicates again the certainty of going to be with the believing dead in heaven, and the burial rituals of the Patriarchs indicate they believed in resurrection, and wanted to choose their company for the resurrection.

Verse 22. Like the others, Joseph's life is not mentioned, but his death scene is. The ancient Greeks had a saying, taken from Socrates, “call no man happy until he is dead”. By this they meant that you could only tell whether a person had really understood life and served God by the way they handled their dying. Joseph's great legacy was not leading the people into Egypt, that was God's provision, by placing Joseph in the Egyptian jail at the right time. Joseph's greatest legacy was his belief in the Exodus, almost four hundred years before it would happen, and his very specific instructions concerning his burial conveyed his faith in what God would do.

Joseph's coffin would become their "Visual Bible" for these years, as generation after generation would come to the coffin and remember Joseph's words, that they were not going to stay in Egypt, but that God would one day lead them out, and that they were to take Joseph's body with them and bury him with his fathers. It was Joseph's testimony that he believed the promises of God and would not be buried with his fathers until the people had left Egypt. Joseph could have had the Pharaoh take an army into Canaan and have him buried in Abraham's cave at Hebron, but he didn't.

Note the word for his death, which is different to previous ones the writer has selected. He uses teleutao, to refer to Joseph's death, a word that means "to come to the end, to arrive at the right time to die for him". It is a word that reminds us that we are under the plan of God, and the death of the believer is always at the right time in accordance with God's plan. We are here for a purpose and that purpose may even go beyond our moment of death.

At this time when others are concerned with their end Joseph was focused totally on the Lord's plan and in giving the very specific orders relating to his body for their benefit, not his final destination. He put his own concerns aside thinking only of the affairs of the Lord. After four centuries have passed, Moses took the bones of Joseph and they became the banner of the Exodus, Joseph's coffin leading the march, **Exodus 13:19**, and then over forty years later his bones are laid to rest at Shechem, in the centre of his people's land allotment, and while it was not with those of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, it would be in the centre of his own descendants. **Joshua 24:32**. Joseph wanted to be with his people of faith at the resurrection, and was prepared to wait for burial that he might testify to the faithfulness of the promises of God.

Verse 23. Moses' parents were also people of faith, who saw that Moses was more than just another lovely baby, he was a child upon whom God's hand was for a future role. They saw the future and let it direct their path in the present; they acted on the basis of their faith. Their faith expressed itself in their actions that led to Moses being brought up in the palace of Pharaoh, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. The parents of Moses faced the edict of Pharaoh and deliberately chose to disobey and so hid Moses for three months, for they knew God had a plan for Moses, and they did not fear the law, only God. They saw past Moses' obvious beauty to the true beauty of the plan of God that was clearly centred in this baby, and were solely focused on that rather than standing in fear of the laws of men. God's Word was more important than fear, dreams, or the opinions of others.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

The blessing that God had given to Abraham through the birth of Isaac was not as important to Abraham, as the one who gave the blessing. Abraham's focus was on God who was his God and Lord over all his life, who could give and take away and would still be his blessed Lord. Abraham was ready to lose his only son for he was focused on the plan of God for time and for eternity. What are we prepared to do for the Lord? What have we held back?

None of us will ever be asked to do what Abraham did, for this was a pre-figuring of the Lord's offering, and only needed to happen once. But if we go on to serve the Lord we may be asked to put aside the physical or material blessings we have received to that time, in order to serve the Lord in a greater way! Where is our heart? Is our focus on our blessings received, or on the Lord who gave them? The Lord is entitled to ask us to give them up, and follow him into poverty if required, and it will always be for greater service and greater eternal blessing.

Our desires or the Lord's plan? Isaac saw past his desires to the will of the Lord. He put aside his natural preference for one son above another and saw what the Lord was doing with the boys. Can we see past our desires and preferences and be obedient to the Lord's plan alone? Our challenge is to see things God's way rather than our own.

Jacob saw past his aged infirmities to the will of God for him, and so must we. Each of these men put aside their own concerns and were focused on the affairs and plan of God, seeking that city that was yet to come and ensuring even to their last words that their descendants were reminded of the eternal realities that alone matter.

We are to obey the authorities in all things except where the law violates a principle of the Word of God. Moses' parents saw this principle clearly and so took action to ensure that Moses lived, for they saw that he was a child that would be used of God and was a big part of their nation's future. Their faith, like Joseph's, was vindicated by the actions of God in bringing about the Exodus. We must focus on the Lord's plan for us, and trust him that he will bring about both his deliverance from troubles and direction to the places of service for each of us.

B. PASTORAL

Divine viewpoint or human viewpoint? That is the big issue daily for each believer and reminding the Lord's people of this choice is a major part of our work as the Lord's pastors. Do we teach in such a way so that the Lord's flock sees the distinctions that they must in order to make the right choices in life?

It is easy to become self-focused, to see our infirmities, our troubles, and forget that we are called to serve HIM, and be focused on HIS PLAN. The Christ-centred life is the life we are to live, and by word and example lead others into this dynamic way of living also. To be Christ-centred is to focus on the reality of troubles and suffering, and to be prepared to have no place to lay our head! **Matthew 8:20**.

We are surrounded today by many voices calling out the false "prosperity gospel", which is no gospel at all. As we go through this passage we are reminded of the truth of suffering, the truth of the Lord's testing, even if it comes without specific suffering. Testing situations are the norm for all mature believers, and the only ones who do not experience them are those who refuse to grow, but stay as babies in the protected nursery.

Our churches are to be training grounds for the soldiers and ambassadors of Christ, they are not to be taken over by the nursery department! Every church will have it's nursery, but we have failed in our role if the bulk of the congregation remain in nursery school unable to take solid food and hard tasks. No medals are awarded to babies, nor are they awarded for parade drill in the safety of the home base, it is only as we grow that we can be used in the battles of the Angelic Conflict, for that is why we are here. We are here to fight for the Lord, not passively wait for his return.

DOCTRINES

GOD: CHARACTER OF GOD [See page 134 above]

FAITH [See page 83 above]

PROMISES [See page 128 above]

RESURRECTION [See page 116 above]

FEAR

1. Spiritual death is one way of describing Satan's kingdom. Hebrews 2:14
2. Spiritual death is the place of the source of fear. Hebrews 2:15
3. In spiritual death, Adam was afraid. Genesis 3:10
4. This fear motivated Adam to produce religious activity (fig leaves) and lies. Genesis 3:7
5. Salvation removes the basis of fear, which is condemnation from the Justice of God (spiritual death).
6. Spiritual maturity removes the function of fear. 2 Timothy 1:7; Hebrews 13:6
7. Maturity or Occupation with Christ, is freedom from fear.
 - A. I John 4:18 - "fear is not in the sphere of the Love (O/W/C); but the perfect love (Cat. 1 in maturity) keeps casting out the fear (result of carnality) because the fear has discipline, and the fearful one (believer in rebellion) has not attained to maturity in the love ."
 - B. I Corinthians 13:5 b "The love does not think the evil" (schism of Chapter. 12 resulting from carnality). Satan's Policy is to Enslave to Fear
8. Carnality or any form of religious activity that leads us away from Grace and daily obedience to the Word enslaves the believer to Satan through fear. Galatians 5:1; Romans 8:15
9. The mature believer is commanded to fear nothing he may suffer in life, for by means of God's grace provision all we ever may need is provided for us. Revelation 2:10
10. The baby believer is sustained by the so called Faith-Rest technique; we believe God's Word, obey his commands hour by hour to daily life, and rest upon his promises. Hebrews 4
11. As we become mature believers we continue with this "faith-rest" daily but in addition to this we are sustained by our understanding / application of entire categories of God's Word - we have then moved beyond the promises to confidence in the very character of God.
12. Illustration: A woman who asks every hour, "Do you love me?" needs assurance through many promises, and many actions backing the promises up. Once she gets to truly know her husband, and her love is fully established in him through his faithfulness to her, she has absolute assurance, and doesn't need constant reminders of his love by specific words. She is full of confidence through knowledge of her husband's character.
13. Chapter's. 3-6 of Hebrews deal with the falling away from growth and confidence by these believers . The spiritual principle of "Faith-Rest" (Chapter. 4) is the means of getting them back on target .

14. In Hebrews 13:6, we see the objective of the writer, freedom from fear by their daily, moment by moment living the awareness of the love of Christ for them, and the power of Christ available to them.
15. The writers of scripture identify correctly that when the believer is fearful, he imitates the unbeliever ("cowardly" – Revelation 21:8), and that is not right given our great position. Hebrews 11:27 "By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is unseen." This is our standard!
16. Fear is a mental attitude sin that shows our mind has moved away from thinking of the Lord. 1 Samuel 17:11,24
17. Fear is a sign of falling back into domination by the "prince of this world". 1 Samuel 18:12,29 21:12 28:20
18. Absence of fear is a big part of maintaining a dynamic mental attitude. Hebrews 13:6 11:27
19. There is only one legitimate fear; it is the fear of failure to enter spiritual maturity. Hebrews 4:1
20. Love demands absence of fear. 1 John 4:18 They are two opposing mental attitudes.
21. Fear is not part of the Divine Plan for the Believer. 2 Timothy 1:7 Exodus 14:13-14 Joshua 8:1 Isaiah 41:10 2 Samuel 1:7
22. Courage and lack of fear is a sign of mature spiritual status. Psalm 3:6 Psalm, 56:3 Hebrews 11:27
23. Fear is the power by which the Evil of Satan rules among mankind. Hebrews 2:14-15 Genesis 19:30 (Lot) 1 Kings 18:9-14 (Obadiah), both Lot and Obadiah show how the failing believer lives in constant fear.
24. Fear is the word used to mean "Occupation with Christ" when related to the attitude of the mature Believer toward Christ. 2 Samuel 23:3 Nehemiah 5:9,15 Ephesians 5:21 Job 28:28 Psalm 19:9 34:10 Proverbs 1:7 9:10 Proverbs 10:27, 1 Peter 2:17

PARAPHRASE

"By this (same sort of) faith Abraham, at the time when he received the proving or testing from the Lord, offered up Isaac his son, his uniquely born son, the one in whom the promise centred. For it was of Isaac that it was said, 'It is in Isaac's line that your descendants will come'. For Abraham logically worked out, that even if God had to raise Isaac from the dead, (the promise would be fulfilled), and indeed in a way God did raise him up again from the place of death. By (this same sort of) faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning the things that would later come to pass. By this (same sort of) faith Jacob, when he was in the process of dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshipped God, as he leaned on the top of his staff. By (this same sort of) faith Joseph, as he came to the end of his life, reminded the people of their coming Exodus, and gave specific instructions concerning (what they were to do with) his body. By (this same sort of) faith Moses, having been born was hidden by his parents, for they saw a beautiful young child (who was important), and had no fear at all of the command of Pharaoh."

HEBREWS 11:24-29

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter; **25** choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; **26** esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. **27** By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. **28** Through faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. **29** By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land; which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned."

KEY WORDS

Of years	megas	having become (ginomai) great.
Refused	arneomai	aoist, middle, indicative; said no to, denied.
Choosing	aireo	aoist, middle, participle; to lift up, here choosing to exult as his life choice.
Suffer	sugkakoucheo	present, passive, infinitive; in order to suffer ill treatment with .
Enjoy	apolausis	enjoyment, pleasures.
For a season	prokairos	temporary.
Esteeming	egeomai	aoist, middle, participle; considering logically (using 'divine logic' - faith).
Reproaches	oneidismos	reproach, shame, disgrace.
Riches	ploutos	fullness, abundance of wealth.
Treasures	thesauros	storehouse in which wealth is kept safe.
Respect	apoblepo	imperfect, active, indicative; he looked away from the one groups of riches to another.
Recompense	misthapodosia	recompense, payment of reward that comes after a task is completed.

Forsook	kataleipo	aoist, active, indicative; he left behind.
Wrath	thumos	hot rage.
Endured	kartereo	aoist, active, indicative;; he was strong(mind and body) and he held out under pressure.
Seeing	orao	present, active, participle; he kept on seeing (in his mind's eye) the Lord.
Kept	poieo	perfect , active, indicative; with lasting results he kept the Passover.
Sprinkling	proscheris	pouring, sprinkling, referring both to the death of the animal and the painting of the door jams in the sign of the cross.
Destroyed	olothreoun	the destroyer.
Passed thru	diabaino	aoist, active, indicative; they passed through.
Assaying	ambano	aoist, active, participle; trying to do.
Drowned	katapino	aoist, passive, indicative;; were swallowed down, engulfed totally.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

THE FAITH THAT SAVED THE EXODUS GENERATION. VERSES 24-29. (THE FAITH OF MOSES - EXODUS 2-14)

God's own evaluation of Moses is brief but great in honouring this man's faith. (**Numbers 12:3, 7**) As human beings we see too often the failures of our heroes, but God sees only our walk in faith, for he sees us through the eyes of the one who gave his all for us. Moses had it all, as far as most modern people would see it. He was "son of Pharaoh's daughter", a possible heir to the throne, in fact tradition records that he was heir, and that he had the offer of the hand of Neferari, the most beautiful princess of Egypt. He had the best the world could offer, and yet he saw past the money, the power, and the glory to a greater glory in the service of the Lord: he saw past the earthly palace, which was his, to the eternal palace prepared by God for him. **Acts 5:41, Romans 8:18, Hebrews 11:1 , 2 Corinthians 4:18, 1 Peter 1:8.**

Verse 24. Moses had real earthly power and a real title with the fame, the girl and the authority to go with it. It is thought that the "Pharaoh's daughter" referred to was Hatshepsut, who ruled in her own right and would have passed the throne to Moses, and may have wanted to. Let us pause here a get a few facts on Moses early life.

Acts 7:21-23, tell us that he became great in the Egyptian sense. Tradition records that this meant he had been educated in the so called "University of the Sun", where he would have studied the arts that Egypt ruled the world in, Maths, astronomy, administration, diplomacy, and languages. He then became a general and defeated an Ethiopian invasion force. After this he took up administrative duties, and designed cities, especially the city of Karnak.

He was loved by Neferari the crown princess, whose husband was to be the next Pharaoh. He was in a position where he could have rationalised that it would be better to be Pharaoh, as Joseph had been Prime Minister, and free the Israelites from a place of power, for that way he got the kingdom, the girl, and the people were free. The only problem about this, was that it wasn't God's plan, and Moses knew that! He was not called to be like Joseph, but be Moses!

He had to refuse the kingdom, and he did after he saw the way the Israelites were treated, and when he realised that the Egyptians would never accept the Israelite's freedom being granted by an "Israelite Pharaoh". He saw that it was impossible to "have it both ways", he had to be a Israelite or an Egyptian, and even though he had been Egyptian for forty years he cast it aside and threw his lot in with the Israelites. It was a decision from which there was no turning back, and initially he was rejected by his own people, and it must have looked as if he had lost everything, Egypt and Israel.

Verse 25. The writer wants us to see clearly the issue for Moses, and for his hearers, and for ourselves today! He could have selected the pleasures of sin for a season. He would have had everything, yet in eternity he would have had nothing. He chose to suffer along with the people of God, and they suffered and died in the brick yards. He took the life of a slave, and later a herdsman, rather than that of the greatest king of his day with absolute power. What would the preachers of the prosperity gospel have to say about this? The writer is clear, Moses was right, for the celebrity ship of the world lasts for a moment, only the "well done" of the Lord lasts forever.

Verse 26. His reasons were rational and well thought out. The word translated, "esteeming" underlines this. The Greek word, "hegeomai", means to expertly evaluate all options and select the only one that really adds up, and that was God's way, divine viewpoint, rather than what looked attractive to mankind. He weighed up the reproaches of the Egyptians against the treasures of the Egyptians, but then added into the equation the viewpoint of God. To look at the treasure houses of the kingdom that were his, and then select a path where they were lost, and the very people who bowed low now would abuse later. I can understand why Moses later lost the plot at the Israelites – what he gave up personally, and what he did for them, and how they abused him, and yet that was God's story also, and Moses was in good company – he was in God's company. Moses illustrates the "fellowship of his suffering".

Why would he select such a course of action? The only reason is that he looked further than the affairs of space-time, he looked beyond forty, or even eighty years, he looked into eternity. He looked from the pile of riches the world had to offer, and saw out into eternity to the one who pays the wages of righteousness, and set his mind and heart to win these wages in eternity and throughout the struggles of his life he fixed his being on the fact that the Lord would pay him the wages due in eternity and he was content to wait until then to be rewarded.

Verse 27. By faith he forsook Egypt. It was not by fear, as some might conclude from the story. After Moses had killed the Egyptian foreman he faced a choice again. He could have claimed his throne again and led a revolt to become

Pharaoh, for his old army would have stood by him. He could have bathed Egypt in the blood of civil war and regained the throne, killed the man who was to become Thutmose III, and so become Pharaoh, and get the woman he loved, who loved him. It was all still possible, so it was not fear that made him flee to Midian, it was seeing that God's way was not that way. He was strong as he fled, not wanting to shed more blood against the will of God, and in the deserts of Midian he endured all the testing that came with being a herdsman. He stood strong under pressure, under doubts and second guesses, and so prepared for the task under the stars, for another forty years.

Moses would be eighty years old when he finally gets the Lord's call to start his service and be the deliverer. It was only after the pharaoh and the woman he loved were dead that he would return and face their son; the man who could have been his son! We have time tables and we have set ideas about who is too old, or not the right sort of image, to be of use, but God delights in turning our value systems on their ears! Israel will be delivered by an old man of 80, just as Britain was by Churchill at ages 67-71 in World War II.

Verse 28. Exodus 12:1-30. Through faith he kept the Lord's Passover feast. He instructed the people in its keeping, and he led by example. The Lord's way of leadership is always by example, and so Moses explained and did what he expected all others to do. All the people made the sign of the cross around their doors and the angel of death passed over them. It was an act of faith, or belief in the words of Moses by the people, as Moses expressed his faith in God by telling the people to do this. Moses put himself on the line, in a manner that made his faith open to ridicule if he was proved wrong, but he knew the one who called him to serve, and expressed his faith with confident actions.

Verse 29. Exodus 14:1-15:21. The water tests of the Exodus were significant, and the first one was the biggest of all; the Yam Suf ("sea of reeds") before them and the enemy behind them. Moses expressed his faith in God, expected a miracle and the Lord provided one, for Moses was in his will, and that was the place to be that day, and every day. Miracles occur throughout scripture and at all ages in time, and are acts of God to underline his sovereignty, occurring at times when they are required to complete the Lord's purpose.

Miracles do not occur because men ask or think they need them, they occur because it is the will of God and fits in with his eternal plan. Our role is to be in the place of the Lord's will and then relax with God's provision in that place, for the Lord's will is the place of power, and if miracles are required they will occur. For Israel the miracle was an act of deliverance, but for the Egyptians who tried to follow them it was an act of judgement and they all perished.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

The phrase, "the pleasures of sin for a season", is a powerful one, for it reminds us that all the pleasures of time are but "for a season", they are all temporary. No matter how many great meals we have had, the memory of them does not stop us getting hungry or starving tomorrow. No matter how many great trips people take, and amazing things they see, it doesn't stop them feeling empty and suicidal later. The pleasures of time are related to the meeting of our human needs, and they are new every morning! We must decide to seek pleasure in the temporary things of life, or the eternal, we cannot have it both ways. Joy with eternal focus is sustainable, in time and eternity.

When do we want to receive our wages, now or later? Are we ready to wait until eternity to receive wages from the Lord for the work we have done here, or do we seek rewards and blessings here and now? Moses had it all and walked away from it for he saw something greater. How would we pass on such a test?

Moses saw that the Lord's well done and eternal rewards were superior to anything that could be enjoyed in time and space. He was focused on the attitudes of the people and the need to turn things around God's way, and he saw that he could not redeem the Israelites as Pharaoh, but by following God's way he could achieve the goal the Lord had for him, but he had to walk away from everything he had built and earned throughout his first forty years.

The Lord used all the knowledge that he had learned in Egypt and taught him more in Midian again, and all together it would be applied throughout the Exodus. Moses was prepared to lead a nation in the wilderness. In the Lord's grace he had learned languages, military skills, building, maths, administration and government, and theology. Directly from the Lord he learned humility and obedience to the will and words of God.

Moses is a great study of training for ministry. The Lord works with him again and again, never letting Moses' failure or doubts stop the progress, and Moses does not stop, but remains persistently focused on what the Lord is to do with him. Moses' greatness is seen in his persistence, right through to the end, even though he knows he will not walk the land he keeps faithful to the Lord. Are we ready to wait on the Lord as Moses does? He waits for eighty years before the Lord calls him to serve, and at the right time he moves forward. **1 Peter 5:5-10.** God's timing is God's time. Nothing else!

B. PASTORAL

Preparation is a major theme of this section. Moses is ready to wait on the Lord's time and then he acts decisively, but not before it is right. Moses could have set out to do things his way, but he takes the much harder road and does it God's way and so the Lord gets the glory, not him. The spirit of humility is the spirit we need as the Lord's pastor-teachers. We are to be ready to serve the Lord, as and when he directs, but always with an eye on eternity, for it is then that the wages are paid, not here on earth, for the Lord's service. Nothing is certain or obvious to others or us here and now.

DOCTRINES**MOSES – THE LAW [See page 67 above]****PHAROAH – GOD’S POWER**

1. SCRIPTURE - Exodus 7:7 - 14:28.

2. BIOGRAPHY

Pharaoh was the title of the Kings of Egypt. The title showed the person on the throne as a representative of the sun god Ra. The Pharaoh we are to consider is the Pharaoh of the Exodus. His identity is unknown. Many state he was Rameses 11 but the Bible shows a much earlier Exodus than his reign of 1301 - 1234 BC. 1Kings 6:1 indicates a dating of c. 1450 BC which indicates Amenhotep II as the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Study of Acts 13:18-21, however, gives a date of c. 1530 BC. (See Chronology, Topic 33, Book 1). The Pharaoh of the Exodus is shown to be superstitious and unstable, moving rapidly from right to wrong as he desired. He expected his own magicians to copy the miracle plagues of Moses and Aaron. He was ready to promise a course of conduct that only ended when he and his army were destroyed in the Red Sea. Pharaoh, the world's most powerful ruler of his time, was confronted by a man, sent by God, who had spent 40 years tending sheep on the backside of the desert. Ten plagues were performed by Moses to bring pressure on Pharaoh. Pharaoh, however, resisted God's power; eventually losing his life pursuing the children of Israel.

3. EVALUATION

- a) Exodus 7:7-13. The Lord tells Aaron through Moses to change his rod into a snake. Pharaoh orders his magicians to do the same. Aaron's snake swallows the magicians' snakes. Pharaoh's heart hardened (verse 13).
- b) Exodus 7:14-25. The Nile was an idol river: it's water worshipped as life-giving. The first plague turned these waters into blood. God humiliated the Nile god. Pharaoh's heart was hardened (verse 22).
- c) Exodus 8:1-15. Hekt, the goddess with the frog's head, was exposed when the land brought forth frogs through both Aaron and the Egyptian magicians. Pharaoh hardened his heart (verse 15).
- d) Exodus 8:16-19. This plague was directed against Seb, the earth god. The magicians fail and say that it is God's work (verse 19). Pharaoh's heart was hardened (verse 19).
- e) Exodus 8:20-32. The flies probably were the scarab beetles, being against Scarabaeus the sacred beetle. Having compromised, Pharaoh hardened his heart (verse 32).
- f) Exodus 9:1-7. The death of the Egyptian cattle was directed towards Apis, the sacred Egyptian bull. The Jewish cattle were preserved. The heart of Pharaoh was hardened (verse 7).
- g) Exodus 9:8-12. The affliction of boils was a judgment against Neit, the goddess of health. The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart (verse 12).
- h) Exodus 9:13-35. Hail and fire were judgments against Shu, the god of the atmosphere. Pharaoh's heart was hardened (verse 35).
- i) Exodus 10:1-20. The Egyptians worshipped Serapia, the god of locusts. God sent a plague of locusts. The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart (verse 1,20).
- j) Exodus 10:21-29. The ninth plague, a supernatural darkness, showed how impotent Ra, the sun god was. The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart (verse 27).
- k) Exodus 11:1 - 12:36. The son of Pharaoh was the representative of the god-man. When the crown prince died, Pharaoh allowed the children of Israel to go.

4. PRINCIPLES

- a) God will not tolerate other gods before Him (Exodus 20:3).
- b) Pharaoh at the start of the plague hardened his heart but eventually God hardened his heart (Romans 9-17,18).
- c) Man's negative actions, if perpetuated long enough in spiritual matters, can result in the inability of that person to believe in Christ (Revelation 14:9-11; Hebrews 4:1-3).

- d) God can use unbelievers to show His glory (Romans 9:17).
- e) Miracles performed in God's power can be duplicated in some cases by people using Satan's power (2Thessalonians 2:9).
- f) Behind a Christian - non-Christian conflict is a spiritual conflict. The Christian walk is fought in the spiritual realm (Ephesians 6:12).
- g) Negative attitudes towards God are disastrous individually and nationally (Isaiah 57:21).

PARAPHRASE

“By (this same sort of) faith Moses, when he had become great, said 'no', to (the privilege of) saying he was the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He made the deliberate choice to suffer great affliction along with the people of God. Rather than enjoy the temporary pleasures of a sinful (if kingly) life, he chose the reproach (of those he could have joined); he chose the greater riches (of heaven) above the treasure storehouses of Egypt (which were his). He preferred to join Christ and suffer the reproach He endured, and wait for his eternal reward for this choice (rather than enjoy rewards in time). By (this same sort of) faith he left Egypt behind, not because he feared the hot rage of the Pharaoh (but because he made a choice). (He did all this) because he kept on seeing (in his mind's eye) the one who is invisible, and so he was strong in mind and body and stood up under all the pressures that came to him. By (this same sort of) faith he (organised the) keeping of the Passover feast, the sacrificing of the lambs, and the painting of the door posts with the blood so that the angel of death, sent to kill the firstborn of Egypt might not touch the Israelites. By (this same sort of) faith, the Israelites passed through the Red Sea, as if on a dry road, but when the Egyptians attempted to do the same they were engulfed by the waters and perished.”

HEBREWS 11:30-40

“ 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. 31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. 32 And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah, of David also, and Samuel and of the prophets; 33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection, 36 and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute afflicted, tormented, 38 (of whom the world was not worthy). They wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And these all having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise. 40 God having provided some better thing for us that they without us should not be made perfect.”

KEY WORDS

Fell	pipto	aoist , active, indicative; at that time they fell down.
Compassed	kukloo	aoist, passive, participle; having been encircled.
Harlot	porne	prostitute.
Perished	sunapollumi	aoist, middle, indicative; were destroyed altogether with the others.
Believed not	apeitheo	aoist, active, participle; were disobedient.
Received	dechomai	aoist, middle, participle; having welcomed the spies.
Subdued	kategonizomai	aoist, middle, indicative;; struggled against and overcame in battle.
Wrought	ergazomai	aoist, middle, indicative;; worked effectively to achieve righteousness.
Obtained	epitugchano	aoist, active, indicative; received as a result of work/effort.
Stopped	phrasso	aoist, active, indicative; walled up, fenced, stopped up.
Quenched	sbennumi	aoist, active, indicative; they put out fire.
Escaped	pheugo	aoist, active, indicative fled and escaped.
Made strong	dunamomai	aoist, passive, indicative;; they received or acquired strength, became mighty.
Waxed	ginomai	aoist, passive, indicative; received strength to become something they were not before
Valiant	ischuros	strong in battle as a valiant warrior of renown.
Received	lambano	aoist, active, indicative; they received
Tortured	tumpanizo	aoist, passive, indicative; tortured in many ways.
Accepting	prodechomai	aoist, middle, participle; not accepting or receiving.
Obtain	tugchano	aoist, active, subjunctive; in order that they might receive/obtain.
Cruel		not in text but understood by the use of the other words.
Mockings	empaigmos	mocking derision by those who cruelly imitate a suffering person.
Scourgings	mastigos	whipping that strips away all the flesh from the back.

Stoned	lithazo	aoist, passive, indicative;; received stoning to death.
Sawn asunder	prio	aoist, passive, indicative; sawn in two top to bottom; Isaiah suffered this death.
Wandered	perierchomai	aoist, active, indicative they went about.
Destitute	ustereomai	present, middle, participle; going without, lacking basics for life.
Afflicted	thlibo	present, passive, participle; being constantly under pressure unto distress.
Tormented	kakoukeo	present, passive, participle; being mishandled, treated evilly.
Wandered	planaomai	present, middle, participle; wandered aimlessly about, being hunted and constantly on the move to avoid the hunters.
Obtained	martureomai	aoist, passive, participle received the witness.
Provided	problepomai	aoist, middle, participle; saw before, forethought, provided.
Perfect	teleioo	aoist, passive, subjunctive; brought to completion, to the goal. "By (the same sort of) faith,

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The next ten verses cover the rest of Israel's history and mention some interesting heroes of faith. Each is interesting, for they are not the "plaster saint" variety, but are real people with real old sin natures, and they often fail at points through their life, but they persevere and end well in eternity, often not in time. This is the point that the writer is making for the church at Jerusalem; they have begun well, have fallen, but it is not too late for them to end well.

The first heroine mentioned is from the time of the fall of Jericho; Rahab's faith. Verses 30-31. Joshua, who we think ought to be mentioned in a roll call of heroes is not mentioned, Rahab is, and she isn't even Jewish by birth! Note the point above, and remember throughout this last section of the chapter, this is not a "roll call of heroes", but a selected group of faithful people, chosen because they are "unlikely heroes of faith", often failed, but then recovered to lead the people of God well until their appointed end. They are also, like Rahab, people who were otherwise overlooked because they didn't fit any accepted expectation of what was spiritual.

Verse 30. From **Matthew 1:5, 6, 16, and James 2:25**, we know that Rahab is a heroine of faith, and one who enters Messiah's line through her faith. Jericho was taken by faith, not by the power of the Israelites. They were obedient to God, and did what they were commanded to do, even though it was not something that appeared to be necessary. Their obedience against the mockery of the pagans on the wall was their expression of faith in the words of God, and the Lord delivered the city into their hands. All the people perished except Rahab and her family, because they had expressed faith in the God who had led the people through the wilderness.

Verse 31. Refer to **Joshua 6:1- 20, 2:1 - 25**. Rahab is praised because she made a decision to support God's people, and on the basis of that risked her life and the lives of all who were with her to protect the spies from Israel. It was her expression of faith that proved her faith was real. Rahab was in a place where to fail to act was to have no faith at all; it was to die! This is the point the writer wants the church of Jerusalem to see; that they will perish unless they express their faith and leave behind the old sacrificial system, and embrace the new covenant, being prepared to separate themselves from their own people in the process. The reason the others in Jericho perished was because they "believed not"; they failed to see the evidence and act upon it.

It was clear from the acts of God in the wilderness that the Lord was the mighty God of all, yet they did not believe. The evidence of their lack of belief was seen in their actions. This is the writer's main point; these people of faith acted on the evidence they had. Those who paid with their lives under judgment did so because they saw the truth but buried their heads in the sand. To fail to see what God is doing is culpable ignorance, and mankind is individually held responsible for their action of ignoring the reality of God's actions in space-time and God's demands upon them. The writer here is underlining the same point made by James many years before; if faith does not work out in life with visible obedience, then it is not saving faith! **James 2:18-26**.

Verse 32. The writer now lists a representative group of men who showed by their actions that they believed and were obedient to the Lord. He begins by saying that he could make a lot larger list but neither time nor space allows for such a list. The men mentioned are again an interesting group. We have the greatest King in David, the first of the named order of the prophets in Samuel, and then a blanket reference to all the prophets. David failed but once again is remembered as a man who repents, stands up again and serves the Lord in obedience. Samuel is the solid, stable, faith filled and godly man who bridges the time of the Judges and the time of the kings. The prophets as a group, are men and women who often suffer for righteousness sake, and a number of their stories are given in the following verses. Before going to them the writer refers to four of the best known of the Judges of Israel; Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah.

Each of these men demonstrates that it is simple faith and obedience in the Lord that he seeks of us. Each man made mistakes and failed to perfectly obey and follow through, yet each is blessed and honoured for their final obedience to the revealed truth. Gideon was a man of fear, and needed many encouragements from God before he acted, but he did act! **Judges 6:11 - 8:35**. He leaned on the Lord, and was obedient, to the extent that an army of over 50,000 enemy was defeated by 300! Barak is, like Gideon, a man of fear, who with encouragement becomes a man of action, expressing his faith in God by calling the army to fight. He works with Deborah, and she and Jael get the human glory for the victory, but Barak is content to be a servant of the Lord, and is not worried about who gets the credit for the victory. His focus is on the outcome, not himself. Judges chapter 4 - 5. It is this focus that the Lord demands of us all.

Samson, Judges 13 - 16, is not a hero most would mention, for his weakness for wild women and parties ends his career as a deliverer of Israel, and finally leads him to death, but in his death he is obedient and redeems himself. Even at the end it is not too late to act, the writer is saying. Jephthah, **Judges 11:1 - 12:7**, is remembered more for his rash promise to God than for his great deeds, but he was a deliverer of his people, and through his simple faith he defeated the Ammonites. Each was a man who acted on the Lord's instructions, and so from weakness were made strong by acts of faith, even if at the end of their lives. None are perfect, but each did what they were asked to do at a critical time. The "last days" before the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple are such a time to "get obedience right", as are the "last days" before the Lord's Second Advent that we appear to be living through.

The vital importance of faith applied at critical times has been firmly stated, and now the results of such "active faith" is listed in the next two verses. Verses 33-34 Here many great victories of active/applied faith are listed, and they are listed as being won by those who unsheathed the Sword of the Spirit, and so saw the power of God work for man's deliverance.

Verse 33. There are some dramatic verbs in this and the next verses. There are twenty characteristics of faith in action.

1. They subdued kingdoms. The verb, katagonizomai, is a strong one, indicating total crushing of an enemy into complete defeat so no resistance remained. The secret of military victory is the **strength and focus** that comes from believing God's Word and applying it over time, so that the soldier-saint is stable and tough minded, trusting the God whom he has seen work out marvellous things in their life. Military victory comes, not from knowing about Bible doctrines, but from believing and applying them!

2. They wrought righteousness. The verb, ergazomai, means that they **worked out into their daily lives the truths** of God's revelation so that the truth was seen in their stable righteousness of word and deed. Their thoughts and actions were controlled by the Holy Spirit through application of the Word of God to daily life.

3. They obtained promises. The verb, epitugchano, means to **receive as a result of total commitment** and effort on the individual's part. They totally devoted themselves to the work of God, and so received the blessings promised to those who are obedient! No victor's crown is awarded without total effort on the athletic track or the battlefield. They obtained by effort, and so must we! God in grace provides all we need to achieve this, but we must work it out in faith application. This is the same point James has made many years before to this church. There is no difference between faith and works, for true faith always works out in action! Only fake faith doesn't work!

4. Stopped the mouths of lions. They closed shut the mouths of lions, either by killing the lion, as David, **1 Samuel 17:34-37**, and Samson did, **Judges 14:5, 6**, or they, by prayer, saw the **mouths of lions stopped** up, as Daniel did, **Daniel 6:21-22**.

Verse 34. The list continues here of triumphs achieved through faith expressed in dynamic action.

5. They "quenched the violence of fire". The story of the three men from **Daniel 3:1-30**, is here in view. These men chose death rather than stop the worship of their God, and instead they **walked in the middle of a fire** with the Lord himself. They were threatened and maligned but they left their case with the Lord and remained obedient. Once again it is faith in action, under pressure, that is in view here. **Colossians 3:16-17**.

6. "Escaped the edge of the sword". The verb, pheugo, means they were able to escape at times. The three men who faced the fire were not able to escape, so **they stood firm** and took their punishment, but at times the Lord opens the door of escape and we are to take that door and flee, for that is the Lord's will for us at that time. The Lord demands discernment from his servants; we must know when to stand and fight and when to flee, and when to quietly take our punishment, but each action must be the expression of our faith in God. **1 Kings 19:2ff, 2 Kings 6:31ff**.

7. "Out of weakness were made strong". Out of helplessness, illness, debility, "astheneia", **were empowered** with strength and power, "dunamoomai". The passive voice of the verb reminds us that we receive the strength of the Lord through the Holy Spirit's indwelling power.

8. "Waxed valiant in fight". Many men who were not strong or brave before the call to arms arrived became strong and heroes of the battle-field, because they **trusted God and threw themselves into active obedience**, being ready to die rather than submit to evil!

9. "Turned to flight the armies of the aliens". The result of their obedience was that entire armies of alien invaders were put to flight. The Lord delivered Israel again and again **through the obedience of ordinary men who trusted** the Lord and did what they were told.

Verse 35. This verse begins the record of the same sort of faith, but a very different outcome. In these cases the believer may not have been physically delivered, but may have suffered and even died, yet such suffering is mentioned as a glory, on par to the earlier glorious victories. The writer reminds us, lest we be carried away with the "positive" outcomes of faith, that the Lord may allow us to go through great suffering, but in his sight, and for all eternity, this "negative" outcome, from man's perspective, is still "positive" from God's! Evil men believe they have killed a believer but they have simply sent them home to heaven to receive greater reward than can be imagined by the evil ones. There is victory in spite of, and at times, even because of a death.

10. "The dead were resuscitated and returned alive to those who had grieved their death". **1 Kings 17:8-24, and 2 Kings 4:8 - 37**, record the **works of God** through Elijah and Elisha leading to this miracle.

11. "Others were tortured, even to death, in many ways". This is reference to the awful suffering of those who suffer and die for their faith under evil men's power. It is a reminder however that even though the enemies of God occasionally are able to kill his saints, their **death is still precious in God's sight, Psalm 116:15, 68:20**, and the believers involved enter his presence with thanksgiving, for there is no pain nor tear in heaven, even if many need to be wiped away due to the manner of the death. **Revelation 7:17, and 21:4**, tell us that it is God himself who wipes away the tears of his saints who have died for him.

12. "Many did not accept a way of escape from their torture because to do so would have been to betray their faith". The history of Israel and the church is full of such examples of those who were offered by their pagan tormentors life if they betrayed their Lord but they refused, for **their mind was set on being raised** from the dead with a body like the Lord's; they saw resurrection day rather than their execution day.

Verse 36. The roll call of honour continues, of those who suffered unto death for their faith, looking to their heavenly rewards rather than the pleasures of time. The writer identifies three ways great believers suffered, by mocking verbal abuse, by cruel physical abuse, and by loss of freedom and all the decent things that can be had in this life through imprisonment.

13. "Trials of Cruel Mockings". - **Satanic people will enjoy inflicting cruelty** upon others and laughing at the person's pain, imitating their cries as they inflict more pain. This level of evil is hard for refined and civilised people to understand, yet hatred like this is just beneath the surface of all unbelievers, no matter how "refined" they appear to be.

14. "Scourgings". - Our Lord himself **suffered this great torture**, which involved a living death over many hours. Most died of infection over painful days of agony, after a scourging, which ripped the back to pieces.

15. Others were "thrown into prisons, with chains binding them". From Jeremiah through to Paul many saints suffered prison, and they were not the clean places modern prisons are. They obediently sought the path of the Lord, even these most evil places, being **ready to sing psalms at midnight**, and wait for the Lord's deliverance, be it into life or heaven. **Acts 12:1-2, 16:23-26**.

Verse 37. In this verse the writer saves some of the most shocking till last to underline to his hearers that they must be ready to pay the price to be servants of Christ. They must be ready to suffer, and to come out of their concerns for their property and respectability within their city and stand for Christ no matter what the cost. They must stand with their ancestors in the faith, and be ready to suffer with them.

16. "Some **were stoned to death**". From Zachariah, **2 Chronicles 24:20, 21**, through to Stephen, **Acts 7:57-60**, God's men had been killed this way. Pious hypocrisy will always turn to violence, and the believers of Jerusalem less than forty years after the Lord, and Stephen's death would know the hatred of the mob before they left the city for good. The Lord warned of this, **Matthew 23:35 - 37, 45**.

17. Isaiah was "sawn in two" with a wooden saw by King Manasseh. As a form of death it had been mentioned earlier in **2 Samuel 12:31**, and tradition records Isaiah **died this terrible way**.

18. All God's greatest men and women were "tested in the fires of affliction". The verb again is peirazo, meaning to be tried in fire to test the nature of the metal. The writer reminds the hearers of this letter again, that the Lord sits over us **assaying our character** to see if we are truly worthy of reward, and giving us opportunities to win greater and greater rewards. All testing is for the purpose of rewarding the believer so tested; it always has a good outcome in eternity in view.

19. Others were "slain with the sword". Many **good men and women are murdered**, from Abel through until our own day the evil ones take the lives of the good at times. How can we understand such things? The big picture is all we can have before us at such times, eternity not time being what guides and stabilises our hearts and minds as we face the evil of those who hate God.

20. They **wandered/walked about in the skins of animals** while others were wearing clothes. They suffered privation, loss of earthly goods, and wealth. They suffered economic hardship, often having no homes, but the Lord provided for them and they learned to trust him in the midst of their suffering. **Philippians 4:11-13**. Persecution brings, privation(economic hardship), affliction(constant pressure and distress in the mind), torment (being treated badly by those you meet), and the fact that you have to wander (be constantly on the move to avoid the enemy). All these things were endured by God's people, and the people of the church of Jerusalem are reminded that if they face any of this they are not to think something strange has happened. They will flee the city only with what they can carry.

Verse 38. The writer gives his assessment of these fathers and mothers of our faith. The world was not worthy of them! They were hunted like animals over the hills, but their very steps were precious in the eyes of the Lord, and those who kept their minds stabilised in the truths of God's Word were mentally safe, even as they were hunted. We see this best in the life of Paul, as he noted in **Philippians 4:4ff** above.

Verse 39. All these heroes of faith received God's testimony over their lives, and God's surpassing great rewards for eternity. They heard the Lord's "well done, good and faithful servant", but yet they did not see the victory of God on the earth, and indeed right until our own day evil men, "wax worse and worse". **2 Timothy 3:13.** Even though they died before they saw the Lord's final victory they knew it was coming because the Lord's Word was believed, the Bible was more real to them than their sufferings. **1 Peter 1:10-21.** This remains our challenge; for the promises of God to be more real than the pressures that Satan can bring to bear upon us.

Verse 40. In this final verse the writer brings together two key words of the book, and the unity of all believers in it. The phrase, "some better thing", is the reality of the person and work of Christ, resulting in the unique provisions of the church age which completes the revelation of the Old Testament, and without which the Old Testament would be imperfect, and incomplete. Apart from the person and work of Christ, and the acts of the Holy Spirit in this age, the Old Testament Saints could not "be made perfect", or brought to completion.

They laid our foundation of faith, and yet it is by us and the work of God through our age, that they are brought to completion. The writer brings all the ages together here, noting the great truth that we all are bound up together in, "this same sort of faith", and we are all brought together to the goal, which is our joint heavenly eternal destiny. We are all together as children of faith in the end, but each individually must express their faith in action. There is no corporate accountability or responsibility, it is always individual. We are accountable and must respond to God as his created individual beings.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Unless faith works out in daily life it is not saving faith! Rahab could have believed anything "in her heart", but it would not have saved her life, nor the lives of the spies. Belief, "in the heart", is inferior even to the devils belief in the truth, for they at least tremble, **James 2:19**, but the person who fails to act on their belief in the truth will be destroyed with the unbelievers, for their lack of action proves their belief (not true faith) is not real. Real faith is active, never hidden. The church at Jerusalem is convicted of it's sin here; for they have believed the truth but compromised with evil to enjoy a good, and they think, safe life. They are not safe at all! The only eternally significant safety is on God's path for our life.

The writer is clear; there is no such thing as a genuine hidden faith, for such a belief is simple hypocrisy, unless it works out in life. The devils "know about" Jesus and they tremble, for they believe all he said is true, they know it! They are damned in their "belief" for it does not effect change in their lives, it does not work out. The strong challenge of this letter, and the letter of James, challenges us. Will we exercise our faith, or will we sit on it and so lose it? Faith that does not work out is not genuine, and does not save, for it is not real, for only the thing that is real is saving!

Let us work out our saving faith in fear and trembling! **Philippians 2:12, Ephesians 6:5.** We do not have the spirit of fear if we are in Christ Jesus, but concerning this matter of application of the Lord's Word to daily life, we should be very scared of failing to apply! We are to prove ourselves daily, as a soldier does before his commanding officer, through our bravery in the thick of the battle! Like Abishai, a fighter to the end protecting David. **2 Samuel 21:15-17.**

In this section we see the writer give twenty outcomes of faith in action, and his aim is to bring the people who receive this letter to "come out" and stand for the truth and let what will happen occur. There is total and uncompromising focus on action, focus on outcomes, focus on God's will, focus on application, focus on eternal reward and earthly service and sacrifice. There is a role call of faithful men, as well as a catalogue of the outcomes of faith, both for earthly blessing and earthly suffering; however all are united in eternal blessing and great reward.

David, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, as the first on the list make interesting reading, for all failed in some way to some extent, yet the Lord honours them all for they did not let their failures stop their service, but repented and obeyed. That is one of the writer's points. It is finishing the race that is important, and finishing well, even if we have fallen through the race. The Lord's blessing is not stopped by our fear, nor by our sins, but only by our refusal to deal with them!

We all face our den of lions, and like Daniel we are challenged to face those things that would eat us up, with prayer and faith-rest in God's provisions. Relaxing in God's place for us and God's provision for us in that called place. It remains the challenge for the believer through until our day, and will remain so until the Lord returns for his church. We are called to stand for the Lord where he calls us to stand, for life or death, for earthly prosperity or suffering, but always for heavenly rewards. How clearly do we see the issues of space and time? Do we see the truths that are here unfolded before us? Do we have the eternal life perspective?

As men see it, the positive outcome of faith is deliverance, a negative is death, yet from God's perspective both are positive, for all faith expressed wins great eternal reward, and the martyr's crown awaits those who stand firmly for God until the end. We are called to run our race and walk our path whatever it involves, trusting the Lord for deliverance. Hebrews 12:1-3. How prepared are you believer to walk the path that the Lord calls you to?

B. PASTORAL

From Abel to Stephen the martyrs speak of the penalty of faith in a world that hates God. **John 15:18-27.** How clearly do we articulate this from our pulpits?

The lying prosperity gospel has seduced so many today that faithful preachers are toning down their teaching when they should rather be speaking more loudly of the cost of faith. The writer has noted many "triumphs" of faith, in the sense that we mean triumph, but he has made the important other point, that suffering or death for the truth is "triumph" also, and we need to have the eternal perspective, seeing things God's way rather than man's. How well are we doing on this point as pastors? Do the Lord's people understand that he may call them to suffer, lose all their earthly goods, and even die for him? How robust are we in our preaching on these matters, and how strong in our personal walk regarding this issue?

Suffering is a major theme of Scripture and one that we must clearly teach lest believers strike things they have no knowledge to handle, nor example to follow. The challenge is strong here to preach about the great heroes of faith, teaching about their deliverance and their deaths, so that all who hear are full ready to follow their Lord wherever he calls them to serve him. What sort of living example are we for the flock of the Lord to follow? Do they see a fair weather Christian, or a robustly strong saint who can take the pressures of suffering?

How many from the roll call of heroes of the past would our congregation even have heard of, let alone be able to talk about? People learn by examples, and these men and women are our examples. Is our systematic teaching program covering all these people and their lives or are the Lord's people ignorant of these great ones?

If our people are ignorant of these people then we are at fault in our teaching! Let us do some serious checking with our people and ensure they are learning the truths that will set them free from sin, and keep them safe from despair under the pressures that might come to them!

As we reflect on this section of chapter eleven, let us examine our performance as teachers of prayer also. We see here at least twenty outcomes of faith, and if we are training believers to pray we ought to be training them to understand the variety of ways the Lord will answer prayer, and to see that we may glorify him in pain or prosperity, in salvation from trouble, or the sorrow of suffering. Is our focus on the Lord and our life with him in eternity or is it limited to the things of time?

DOCTRINES

FAITH [See page 83 above]

ETERNITY PAST AND ETERNITY FUTURE [See page 21 above]

SUFFERING [See page 104 above]

EVIL

1. Evil is anything which is against the plan of God.
2. Evil is not necessarily "nasty" - it is merely anything that will take us away from the path that God has for us. False religion may be very moral (and therefore look "holy"), but it is evil.
3. People who believe that their "good works" can satisfy God's holy demands are deceived by evil (Romans 7:19, 20).
4. Only God's Word protects from and negates evil (Psalms 54:5, Romans 12:21, Isaiah 45).
5. The company of evil people will destroy the effective witness of the believer (Isaiah 5:20, 1Corinthians 15:23).
6. There is no evil in God at all (Psalm 5:4, 1John 1:5, 4:4).
7. God judges evil and will condemn it to the lake of fire (Psalm 34:16, Isaiah 13:11, Revelation 20:11ff).
8. The Lord is always in control; Satan only does things by "permission" (Job 1:6-12, Proverbs 16:3, 4, Isaiah 45:6, 7).

PRAYER

1. We may know the provision of God but we must communicate with Him in order to obtain this provision.
 - a) Prayer is the believer's means of communicating with God.
 - b) The Bible is God's way of communicating with man.
2. Promises Involving Prayer
 - a) Matthew 21:22 We should ask believing.
 - b) Matthew 18:19 The power of corporate prayer.

- c) Psalm 116:1, 2 God is always available to hear our prayer.
 - d) Isaiah 65:24 God will answer while we are yet praying.
 - e) Matthew 7:7 We are commanded to pray.
 - f) John 14:13-14 We can ask for anything in His name.
 - g) Philippians 4:6 The prayer should be with thanksgiving.
 - h) 1 Thessalonians 5:17 We should pray without ceasing.
 - i) Hebrews 4:16 We can come boldly to the throne of Grace.
3. Prayer Divided into 4 Segments
- a) Confession of sins (1 John 1:9)
 - b) Thanksgiving (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
 - c) Intercession for others (Ephesians 6:18)
 - d) Petitions for one's own needs (Hebrews 4:16)
4. Power of Prayer
- a) Individual - Elijah and the burnt offering (1 Kings 18:36-39)
 - b) Corporate - the release of Peter from prison (Acts 12:1-18)
5. One Prayer that could not be Answered The prayer of our Lord on the Cross (Psalm 22:1-18)
6. To Whom are Prayers Addressed?
- a) Directed to the Father - (Matthew 6:5-9)
 - b) In the name of the Son - (Hebrews 7:25)
 - c) In the power of the Spirit - (Romans 8:26-27)
- The Son (Jesus) and Spirit are interceding for us.
7. Prayers can be Divided into Petition and Desire
- a) Petition - What you ask God for (e.g. a new car).
 - b) Desire - The desire behind the petition (e.g. happiness because you have a new car).
8. Four Possible Combinations
- a) Petition answered - Desire not answered. Psalm 106:15 - The quails of the Exodus generation. 1 Samuel 8:5 - A King to reign over Israel.
 - b) Petition not answered - Desire answered. Genesis 18:23 - The preservation of Sodom. 2 Corinthians 12:7 - Removal of the thorn in Paul's side.
 - c) Petition answered - Desire answered. 1 Kings 18:36-37 - Elijah requests fire for the offering. Luke 23:42 - The penitent thief's prayer. Type c) represents the perfect prayer.
 - d) Petition not answered - Desire not answered. Type d) unanswered prayer has 8 main reasons which are shown in paragraph 9.
9. Reasons for Unanswered Prayer
- a) Lack of belief (Matthew 21:22)
 - b) Selfishness (James 4:3)
 - c) Unconfessed sin (Psalm 66:18)
 - d) Lack of compassion (Proverbs 21:13)
 - e) Pride and self righteousness (Job 35:12-13)
 - f) Lack of filling of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18)
 - g) Lack of obedience (1 John 3:22)
 - h) Not in the Divine will (1 John 5:14)
- Most of the reasons for unanswered prayer, is some form of sin in the life, which can be solved by confession of known sins as per paragraph 3 a) under the concept of 1John 1:9.
10. Intercessory Prayer
- a) This is one of the four factors in a prayer, which are:-
 - i) Confession of sins
 - ii) Thanksgiving
 - iii) Intercession
 - iv) Own needs.
 - b) The power of intercessory prayer is taught in (1 Kings 18:42-46) the principle being found in (James 5:16-18)
 - c) The power of prevailing prayer is shown in (Acts 12)
 - d) The prayer for the unbeliever (Romans 10:1)
 - e) Prayer for an unknown believer (Colossians 1:3-11)
 - f) Prayer for the known believer (Ephesians 1:15-23)

11. The True Lord's Prayer (John 17)

- a) That Jesus might be glorified as the Son who has glorified the Father (v 1 cf. Philippians 2:9-11).
- b) That He might be restored to glory which He had prior to the foundation of the world (v 5).
- c) For safety of believers from the world and the devil (v 11, 15).
- d) For the sanctification of believers (v 17).
- e) For the spiritual unity of believers (v 21).
- f) That the world might believe (v 21).
- g) That believers may be with Him in heaven to see and share His glory (v 24).

PARAPHRASE

"By (the same sort of) faith, the walls of Jericho fell down, having been encircled (by faith) for seven days. By (the same sort of) faith, Rahab the prostitute, welcomed (and protected) the spies, and so did not perish along with the others in the city who were disobedient (to God). And what more can I say? (Much more!) Words would fail me telling of the stories of Gideon, Barak, Sampson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and of the (other) prophets. (All these), by (this same sort of) faith, struggled against kingdoms, and overcame them, they worked effectively and were declared righteous, and they received the promises of God as a result, and closed up the mouths of lions. They put out raging fires, escaped from sharp swords, received strength out of weakness, were mighty in battle, forcing the armies of foreigners to give way before them. Some women received their dead back alive again by resurrection, others were tortured in many awful ways, not accepting offers to save themselves, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection. And yet others (endured) derisive mocking from their captors, cruel scourgings, and took their trials (bravely), yes even to chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, sawn asunder, were tried as in fire, slaughtered by the sword. They walked around on the earth, dressed in the skins of sheep and goats, being without the basic necessities of life, constantly distressed under great pressures, being treated evilly. The world was not worthy of them! They wandered like sheep hunted by wolves, never secure, always moving, over mountains, in caves and even hiding in holes in the earth. These all received the witness that they had faith, yet did not receive the promise of God in time, for God had something better prepared for them, so that they would not reach their goal without us".

NOTES**CHAPTER 12**

THE EXHORTATION TO HOPE (CONFIDENCE) AND ENDURANCE 12:1-29

- 1. The Christian Race 12 : 1, 2,

2.	Our Athletic contest	12 : 3 - 4.
3.	The Discipline of the Son who the Father wants to win	12 : 5 - 11
4.	Advance in your training with confidence	12 : 12 - 17
5.	Know to what place you have come	12 : 18 - 24
	Sixth Warning Passage - Warning Against Indifference	12 : 25 - 29

HEBREWS 12:1-4 - THE CHRISTIAN RACE

“ 1 Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin.”

KEY WORDS

Therefore	toigaroun	therefore then, on the basis of all that has gone before.
Are	echo	present, active, participle; we have been, are being.
Encompassed	perikeimai	present, middle, participle; surrounded, as in the arena, with the crowd towering above.
Lay aside	apotithemi	present, middle, participle; let us keep on laying aside.
Weight	ogkos	weight, load, burden; anything that slows an athlete down in their sport.
Beset	euperistatos	easily avoided, easily surrounded, dangerous ground.
Run	trecho	present, active, subjunctive; let us run, as an athlete.
Patience	upomone	strong patience, endurance under pressure.
Looking	aphorao	present, active, participle; looking away from one thing to concentrate on another.
Author	archegos	pioneer, leader, author, mentor.
Finisher	teleiotes	the one who brings a thing to it's goal, completion.
Set before	prokeimai	present, middle, participle; lying before.
Endured	upomeno	aoist, active, indicative; stood up under the pressure.
Despising	kataphroneo	aoist, active, participle, thought unworthy, thought not worth the worry, treated with contempt.
Set down	kathizo	perfect , active, indicative; has taken his seat, with results that go on forever!
Consider	analogimzomai	aoist, middle, imperative; consider, calculate this, work this out, reckon this up, ask the right questions again and again, and so be really sure!
Endured	upomeno	perfect , active, participle; stood up under, with lasting results for us all.
Contradiction	antilogia	speaking against, verbal attacks.
Wearied	kamno	aoist, active, subjunctive; do not become weary, tired of persisting/persevering.
Faint	ekluomai	present, passive, participle; be fainting, collapsing, giving up.
Minds	psuchais	souls.
Resisted	antikathistemi	aoist, active, indicative; stood up, in line of battle, against an enemy.
Striving	antagonizomai	present, middle, participle; keeping on boxing in the boxing ring, fighting to win.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

We are challenged to run our race of life with the same focus and determination that an athlete does when competing in front of an entire stadium full of people, for that is indeed our place! We stand upon the earth in space and time with a “race to run”, and in heaven all those spoken of in chapter eleven are watching us! What do the saints do as they await for us to join them? This verse would indicate they watch us, with great interest in how we are running!

Whether this is the “full time” activity of the saints in heaven, or not, we will only know when we arrive, but his verse strongly hints we are being actively watched, and the crowd is cheering us on! The mental attitude the writer wants us to have is that of the athlete; we are to “go for gold”, no distractions, no side tracks, no deviations from the path set before us, focused only on the finishing tape and trying to get first prize. What are we giving our spiritual ancestors to cheer about in our lives today? Do we see our lives today as “under scrutiny”? God watches us, but so do those who went before!

Verse 1 The verse begins with a very strong “therefore” (toi gar oun); for these reasons, since we are royal family of God, then we ought to behave differently than we have been! We are surrounded by witnesses from the past who watch our every spiritual move, so let us act like soldiers/diplomats/athletes. What do they do? They strip away all that slows them down before they serve/compete, and so ought we! The word here is a strong one again, and reminds

us that we must keep on laying aside every thing that slows us down, every weight, every issue that is a distraction from the race, or hinders us winning on the path God has set for us.

The athlete stripped away all clothing to run in the Olympic Games of the ancient world. Now clothing is a "good thing", not a bad thing, but in running it slows you down. This is the issue for us! We are to deal with sin, but this verse isn't dealing with that, but with the many "things of life", that are not bad in themselves, but they will slow us down in our spiritual life. The battles that the believer must win, are three-fold; against evil (Satan's policy), against sin(our old sin nature's weaknesses), and against the details of daily life, that are not bad in themselves, but may need to be put aside so that we might run faster to the prize line. It is this last area that demands the most discernment, and requires us to carefully listen to the Holy Spirit and follow His directions. It is these last two areas that the writer concentrates on in this section.

The Christian athlete is to deal with both "weights", and "sins", for both will stop them reaching the prize line. The weights, or concerns over the details of daily life, need to be laid aside, not cast away as bad, just put aside as a distraction from the real purpose we are here on planet earth. Running requires a clear track, without any things on the track to trip us up, and so the writer introduces the "sin problem" again. Sin trips us up, it stops our progress, and hinders our winning the race of life. To win, we must focus on both dangers to victory, and let the Holy Spirit deal with each.

Having faced distractions and deviations that will side track us from our purpose here on earth, we are urged to run with patient endurance(upomone). This is a great military and athletic word, indicating the sort of true grit that the tough soldier/athlete had to keep on going in very difficult situations without complaint. We are to keep on running, and not waver in our focus on the finishing line. We are here on earth to serve the Lord, and that is our race to run. No matter how tough the race, and how hard it is to keep on going, we are to focus on the end of our life, remember the saints in the stands and keep on running the race set before us. Trouble is inevitable in the believers life, it is the strong mental attitude with which we face our troubles that the Lord is calling us to here.

Verse 2. As a runner runs their race they are not looking where they place their feet, for they have checked the track ahead of them before they started; their sole focus point is the end of the race, the finishing line where the judges stand. We are called to "look up and away" from the details of life and fix our gaze on Jesus. Pastors have called this, "occupation with Christ", having the heart and mind so focused on the Lord that the things of earth do not distract at all from the job he has left us here to complete. He is our example of patient endurance, and he is the one we are to become more like daily. Note the two perfect tenses here. The joy that was "set before them" was eternal if they obeyed and lived the faith-rest life.

The Lord is the "author" and "finisher" of our faith; the leader who is our mentor and example to follow, and the one who provides the power for us to reach the goal itself. His example is given to us to follow. Note the Lord's focus was upon the joy of victory that was at the end of his race, and with that joy alive within him he went through the pain of the cross, treating with contempt the shame for he saw the throne room in which he had the seat of honour. He saw his victory in advance and in the certainty of it set his mind towards and through the painful journey he had to take to win our salvation. Just so we are to focus on the crowns of glory that we are to win by running well, and to see ourselves already in heaven, when we get weary, so that we might push on.

Verse 3. Consider Him! Look with focus and real study into the life of Jesus and see the truth about your own life. Examine his life and see the answers to the conflicts and troubles in your own. The verb is another strong one, urging us to think logically, again and again to ask the right questions and seek the Lord's answers. In sport's psychology we call this "mental skills" but it is just biblical thinking; seeing the truth from the Creator's perspective rather than the limited perspective of pathetic, arrogant and scared men!

Think about the Lord's persistence and patience as he walked the Galilean roads. As the Lord walked and preached he faced a few times of praise, but mostly he was reviled, verbally insulted, and physically threatened, and finally brutally killed. There was no "prosperity gospel" being preached by the early church, for they were too close to their Lord, who was a, "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief". He kept on and so must we, even though we will be "wearied" at times. The challenge is to feel weary, but not to "faint in our minds". The writer knows where failure begins, and it is rarely in the body! It is the mind that grows weak and soft first, by losing it's focus on the true, worthy, eternal goal.

Verse 4. The writer is just a little sarcastic at this point. We must beware of sarcasm, but here it is warranted, for this church has become precious about themselves, and they have not been obedient, so they have no right to feel smug about anything! Some have died for their faith here in Jerusalem, but that was nearly forty years before, and the church has grown tired and cautious, traditional and safe, rather than true and strong to the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They have had troubles but do not at this point face the threat of death (blood), and they certainly haven't been "resisting" in their daily walk, for they have been compromising with traditional Judaism, and were at this time, still going into the Temple to offer sacrifices. They have not been struggling (another athletic word drawn from the boxing ring), against their Old Sin Nature as they should have been. They have been compromising rather than confronting. The use of the boxing analogy is important to note, for boxing in the ancient games was not like today's contests. In the ancient world the winner was alive, the loser was often dead! The writer uses this language to remind the church that the stakes are very high in the issues facing them; if they are obedient they will live and serve the Lord with blessing, but if they continue on their path of disobedience they will die under the judgement that is coming upon Judea.

APPLICATION**A. PERSONAL**

Deal with “weights” believer, for the daily distractions of our temporal and very limited life will lead us steadily away from the path the Lord would have us walk. What do you spend your time worrying about each day? Do a quick audit through today. What took up your time as a “worry” or concern? How significant were those items in terms of your eternal destiny and even in terms of lasting enjoyment here and now?

The Lord would have us without the cares of this world, because we have passed them all over to our Lord and are looking to him to solve our problems so that we can focus all our energy on doing what he wants. **1 Corinthians 7:22, Philippians 4:6, 7**. Deal with sins that trip you up or you won't be able to run far or fast. Confession of sins is well understood by many, **1 John 1:9**, but avoidance of known sins is barely understood by any! **Hebrews 12:13**.

Ask yourself believer, how well do I avoid known sinful patterns in my life? Do I always fall into the same sins? Am I always confessing the same things? If the answer is “yes” to any of these, then you have not been thinking or planning ahead as an athlete must.

Remember, the mental attitude being encouraged is that of an athlete, and they must plan ahead, train for a goal, avoid bad foods, and habits, and control their behaviours so that nothing takes any energy away and wastes it. Their focus is on winning and they ruthlessly eliminate everything from life that will hinder them winning. A winning athlete is a driven, devoted, and disciplined person who is hungry for victory. They are the winners; but those that don't train and commit to the contest with self-discipline and focus are the losers. What will we be in the Christian life?

Run with patience believer, (literally – with “big souled determination”!) These orders are the difference between the winners and the “also rans” of the race of life. The writer to the Hebrews wants all his people to be winners, and the race of life is the one race where all can win the crown! What is required is focused patient endurance; true grit to hang in there under the pressures of life. Each day we are to commit to the race again, with renewed focus upon our Lord, who is to be our mentor and our source of all power necessary to run to win!

Press forward in the contest, which can be seen as a race or a battlefield, and remember in the “battle” analogy, that our Christian armour is only on our front! The armour of the spirit is only good if we are pressing ahead: there is no protection is we retreat! In the Holy Spirit's power there ought to be no retreat, for we are never short of required resources. Can we disregard the shame? The Lord focused ahead into the very throne room of heaven where he was going, and so dealt with the multitude of sufferings that were his before his death.

Just so with us, for we too can focus ahead and so deal with the pressures of the moment; for all that earth can give us by way of suffering, is but “for a moment”, when we see our eternal reward. Don't let your mind grow weak, strengthen yourself by keeping your focus on the Lord and drawing in his strength through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. We have no excuse for failure, for we are never short of power, nor of examples to follow.

B. PASTORAL

Laying aside the things that distract is a common biblical theme; and the Lord and the apostles make it clear distractions come in all shapes and sizes and types. **Matthew 10:37-39, Luke 8:14, 9:59 - 62, 12:15, Luke 14:26-33, 18:22 - 30, 21:34 - 36, Romans 13:11-14, 2 Corinthians 7:1, Ephesians 4:22 - 24, Colossians 3:5 - 8, 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 2 Timothy 2:4, 1 Peter 2:1, 4:2, 1 John 2:15-16**. How often have these verses been preached thoroughly before the Lord's people under your care? God's people need to know these things, and know them well.

A major problem with the church today is that believers get distracted by the details of daily life and so do not fulfil their role and purpose. The above verses are very clear! Let us call the Lord's people to focused service, without distraction, that we might all win the prize of our high calling! **Philippians 3:14, 1 Timothy 1:9**.

Professional Athleticism is a strong motif for the Christian life, and yet all too many ministers are soft in their habits and bodies, and weak in the strength of their souls. This ought not to be so! We are called to be like professional athletes and to train as hard as they do spiritually remembering the “watchers” over our conduct in the stands. **1 Corinthians 9:24 - 27, Galatians 5:7, Philippians 2:14 - 18, 3:7 - 17, 2 Timothy 4:6 - 8**.

Looking unto Jesus. “Sir, we would see Jesus”. This remains the real question of the lost. The lost and the saved still ask that question of us as the Lord's pastors, and we must ensure that in our words and deeds that is what they see. **John 6:40, 12:21, Philippians 3:20, 21**. Discipleship, or mentorship is the biblical pattern for leadership, and we are to be examples for the flock of God to follow.

DOCTRINE

FAITH – OVERCOMING BY FAITH [See page 128 above]

SOLDIER: CHRISTIAN SOLDIER OF EPHESIANS CHAPTER 6 [See page 44 above]

PARAPHRASE

“Therefore then on the basis of this information, we understand that we are surrounded by witnesses(to the events of our daily lives), like athletes in the arena surrounded, as if by a great cloud of people (from the past). Given this reality, let us keep on throwing aside any weight that slows us down, dealing with any sin that makes our ground dangerous, so that we can with strong endurance run the race that stretches out before us. Let us keep on looking to Jesus, in faith our mentor, and the one who is our goal. He is our example, for he focused on the joy ahead in eternity, and strongly endured the cross, despising the shame of it, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. So look closely at him, and work this out! He robustly endured the hatred and opposition of sinners towards himself, so (do likewise) don’t let yourself become weary, nor let your soul grow weak and give up. You have not yet stood in line of battle against the enemy to shed blood, nor have you entered the ring to fight the boxing contest to the end!”

HEBREWS 12:5-11 - THE DISCIPLINE OF THE FATHER ON THE CHILD HE WANTS TO WIN!

“ 5 And ye have quite forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, ‘My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him, 6 for whom the Lord loves he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth’ (Job 5 : 17, 18, Proverbs 3 : 11, 12). 7 If you endure chastening, God dealeth with you as sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then ye are bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the father of spirits and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby.”

KEY WORDS

Forgotten	eklanthano	Perfect , middle, indicative; you have caused yourself to completely forget.
Exhortation	parakleseos	the encouragement, exhortation to action.
Speaketh	dialogo	present, middle, indicative; keeps on reasoning with you, arguing/disputing with you.
Despise	oligoreo	present, active, imperative; do not keep on neglecting, thinking lightly of.
Chastening	paideias	discipline, instructive training for education.
Faint	ekluo	present, passive, imperative; don’t become slack and mentally fall over/apart.
Rebuked	elegcho	present, passive, participle; receive conviction, reprovod of sin, rebuked.
Loveth	agapao	present, active, indicative; who the Lord keeps on loving(desiring their best).
Chasteneth	paideuo	present, active, indicative he keeps on disciplining for educational purposes.
Scourgeth	mastigoo	present, active, indicative; he keeps on “skinning alive with a whip”.
Receiveth	paradechomai	present, middle, indicative he accepts, and receives as his son.
Endure	upomone	present, active, indicative; if you keep on enduring.
Chastening	paideia	discipline.
Dealeth	prosphero	present, middle, indicative carries on towards you as.
Are	ginomai	perfect , active, indicative; have become, with permanent results.
Partakers	metochos	participants, partners.
Bastards	nothos	illegitimate.
Corrected	paideutes	ones who corrected, disciplined us.
Reverence	entrepomai	imperfect, middle, indicative; we respected them at that time.
Subjection	upotassomai	future, middle, indicative; shall we subject ourselves under the authority of.
Profit	sumphero	present, active, participle; for that which is best, for our advantage.
Partakers	metalambano	aorist, active, infinitive; in order for us to partake of.
Exercised	gumnazo	perfect , passive, participle; having been trained by it, with lasting results.
Yieldeth	apodidomi	present, active, indicative keeps on repaying, yielding the crop of righteousness.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

They have not yet shed blood, (over recent years at least), for their testimony, but they are starting to feel persecution's wind blowing. There is a feeling that judgement is in the air and that they are about to suffer, possibly in an extreme manner. Is it discipline, is it judgement because they have gone too far (or not far enough)? The church at Jerusalem is concerned and tending to blame the Lord for their troubles rather than seeing the events as the Lord's gentle discipline because he wants them to change their ways, and finally change their location and leave the city they love.

Discipline, in the sense of the Greek word, *paideia*, means both things, both discipline because you are doing wrong, and testing situations so that you can really learn an otherwise purely academic lesson. God is not in the business of creating theologians who can debate the faith, he is in the business of making Christian soldiers; saints who work for him on the earth in the tough battles of the Angelic Conflict.

Verse 5. They have forgotten crucial things that the Lord had taught them. Note the perfect tense of the verb, *eklanthano*, here. Literally, it reads, "you have caused yourselves (by your actions and ignoring of the truth) to completely forget". How is it that people can forget what they previously knew well? The answer is simple, and well documented in the lives of mankind; in the memory area, what you do not use you lose. Things well known may still be locked away in side the mind, but they are locked away, no longer accessible to recall.

The church has forgotten the principles of divine discipline and teaching, and so they have not seen the signs that the Lord is dealing with them in discipline. The Lord deals with us so that we might spring into action; there is always an action based outcome in view. The Lord teaches us as his children, for so we are, and that means there is always a good outcome in view for us, if we are obedient to our heavenly Father. There is danger, however, if we do not heed the Lord's warnings to us.

The order is clear on the writer's part. Do not despise, or keep on neglecting the clear dealings of God with you. Do not keep on doing this, he says, indicating that the Lord has been trying to teach this church for a considerable period, and they have not been corrected to date. This letter is their last chance, and fortunately history teaches us they took it, although they lost all their worldly goods when they had to flee the city.

Two very instructive orders flow from the writer's pen here. Do not keep on neglecting the Lord's words to you! Do not faint because of the Lord's discipline! The word translated faint (*ekluo*) means, do not become slack in your thinking, or receive a spirit of weakness, and so fall apart mentally under the pressures. We would say, "do not crack up", under this pressure! They are in danger of losing their minds here, the pressures will become so great, yet the writer recalls them to the Word of God, that can stabilise them with the eternal realities that they now desperately need to know and apply.

Discipline from the Lord is always for educational purposes; in order that we might grow stronger to serve him more, and so win more blessing. There is no growth without application, and no application without a situation in which a truth must be applied! Don't blame God allowing pressure situations to come into your life, see the opportunities for application of doctrine and get up and apply the Word into the fabric of your daily life!

Verse 6. This principle is one we must never forget, but must daily remind ourselves that the Lord's love for us is an "active" love, and he will not see us fall into sin or distraction without telling us about it! Every child of God in whom he delights will receive discipline, and at times, if we require it for our eternal blessing, that discipline will be extreme (as far as we are concerned). To be "skinned alive with a whip" is not anyone's idea of fun! It is an extreme punishment, and often led to death in the ancient world, so why does the writer use this terrible word (*mastigoo*), in the same verse as he speaks of the Lord's love and delight in us? No son of any noble family was ever scourged, for it was a punishment inflicted on only the worst criminal, and to scourge a Roman citizen was to be in danger of being put to the scourge yourself, no matter what your rank! This is why the officials of Philippi were so worried about having beaten Paul and Silas. **Acts 16:33 - 40.**

The writer's point is meant to shock and amaze the first recipients of this book. The contrast between scourging (*mastigoo*), and welcoming (*paradechomai*), was meant to make them think. The Lord's hand is over the believer at all times, and if terrible suffering or a difficult and testing situation comes, then it comes for a reason, and it does not ever conflict with the Lord's love for you, and if it leads to your death, then it is his final welcoming of you home to eternity. Scourging in the Roman world meant you were the lowest of the low, and the believers in Jerusalem were feeling that, so the writer reminds them that they are still to be received in heaven as the children of God, no matter what they go through here on earth. His other point is that they must listen to God and hear and obey the Word so that they might not stay permanently in the place of discipline but return to the place of service and blessing. **Job 5:17, 18, Proverbs 3:11, 12.**

Verse 7. **Psalm 30:1- 5.** Read this Psalm before studying this verse before us now. If you endure the discipline of the Lord you pass the test God sets you. If we stand up strong under the pressures he allows to come our way to help us grow spiritually, then we go on to greater service in time and great rewards in eternity. The challenge is not to let discouragement hinder our advance. It is in disciplined learning situations, that we truly learn. Outside of difficult and challenging situations, there simply are no places to apply what you have been taught, and really learn that the knowledge works! This is why we are to see the troubles of life as the Lord's discipline, not in the sense that we have been "bad" and he is punishing us, but rather, that these trials are the testing grounds of what we are learning, without which we cannot grow. The writer goes even further in this verse, noting that unless you find yourself in testing situations, you are probably not a true son of God.

The Hebrew word, mamzer, or illegitimate is the one that is referred to here in the next verse. To be born out of marriage was to be placed in a position in society from which there was no escape. You had no rights as an illegitimate child and could not serve the Lord in the Temple. In the sense that the writer uses it here, he reminds these people that unless they are true sons and daughters of God by genuine faith then they have no rights at all, and are not even saved! Testing proves your salvation status, and the writer wants to assure these people of their status, and the Lord's love for them in the midst of the growing pressures they face. The Lord's challenge to them is to learn through the testing and so grow and serve.

Verse 8. If a person is not a "partaker" of testing situations then they do not belong to the Lord's family. All of us are involved daily in testing situations, the writer says, that proves who we are. If a "believer" finds himself consistently in times of plenty, pleasure and never knows testing, it may indicate that they are not genuine believers at all, for it is the normal Christian life to have trials of faith, for these trials are the only means of growth. The word for bastard, is meant to shock the readers also, and it still does. The writer is startlingly honest here; for this is the issue, if a person isn't a genuine child of God but think they are, then it is only because they are not legitimate. They think they have found some other way to become Christians other than the blood of Christ, but there is no other way! In the matter of the Christian faith there is only one door, and one way to be saved, and that is God's way. The Lord's parable of the door and the sheep fold make this very clear. **John 10:7-18.**

Verse 9. This verse begins with a word that indicates the writer has suddenly thought of another point that was not necessarily part of his initial plan in writing. It is an important point that the Holy Spirit brings to mind for this man. If we respect and obey our earthly fathers, how much more ought we to obey and serve our heavenly father. Our fathers disciplined us imperfectly, they made errors on the way, yet the result was often good, in spite of them. We respect them, and have problems from them, but God makes no mistakes with his discipline, and he opens the door of eternity for us. He is the father of spiritual life, and all who have a spirit, and he alone gives spiritual life.

Verse 10. Earthly fathers work with us for a "few days", and how fast do the early days of life flow past us. But the Lord is our father all our life. All fathers and mothers are imperfect, for they discipline according to their own pleasures; in accord with their limited viewpoint of how life is. The Lord is so much more wise and effective. There is a clear objective in the Lord's work with us, and it is growth in holiness. We are to become "set apart ones", holy, different from those around us, set aside for his work on earth, and participants in his glory in heaven. There is a real profit in suffering and trials if it leads to glory, and once again the writer, by raising this point, reminds us to look up, and out into the eternal future, to glory.

Verse 11. No discipline is pleasant at the time it occurs, and the only way we can handle it is to remember the eternal perspective on it all. There is no "occasion for happiness" when trials are present in life, rather there is grief and hurt and sorrow. However, once the trial has passed, there is joy, for the Lord pays back with interest (profit) all the genuine believer has suffered to learn the lessons of the spiritual life that are required to serve the living God. Fruit bearing in the spiritual life comes only in and through trials. Unless faith is tested there is no growth, and unless there is learning in trials and testing, and discipline there is no real service for that believer. A soldier is only fit for combat duties when they have passed their basic and advanced training, and it is designed to be tough, so that they learn all they need to survive the battle field of the devil's world. Just so it is with us; the Lord must put us through great tests so that we might become his obedient servants, and tough enough to depend solely on his power, and so win the victories that he has for us.

The fruit of righteousness is won in the training ground, or battlefield of the Lord's choosing. The writer uses the Greek word for gymnasium training in this last verse to underline the nature of the training the Lord will give, and the battles he will ask us to fight when we are fully trained. Learning to serve the Lord is tough, and then in the places of service it is tough at times, but this is where the "action is", and this is where the eternal rewards are won. As we have reflected before, there are no Victoria Crosses won on the parade ground, and there are no Gold Medals won unless you win at the Olympic Games! The Christian life is about winning, about going for gold, about total commitment in training and application on the track, or field of battle. The stakes are the highest they can be, and there is no compromise with the enemy possible at any time, only victory or total defeat and disgrace.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

The discipline of the Lord is always a tough thing to handle, but once we see the Lord's purpose we can move through each trial of faith quickly and victoriously. Troubles will come to us, but they do not need to slow our progress down, if we keep our eyes focused on him and seek the meaning of all pressure in his plan rather than our fears. How well are we doing in this matter this week? Have we seen a test of faith as a positive opportunity for application of the truth, or have we moaned to the Lord about our lot? Every testing situation, or straight discipline situation is meant as a teaching/learning opportunity. If we are out of line the Lord will send straight discipline to correct us back onto the road, but if we are learning His Holy Word, then he will provide faith tests that the word may be applied, so that we might learn to apply Bible doctrine under pressure in a disciplined manner. The Lord wants us to live disciplined lives under the power and control of the Holy Spirit. This is the path of true service, ambassadorship, victory and eternal reward.

Testing is meant to be occasional, for reinforcing a truth so that you can move on to more service; all testing or discipline is educational. All testing situations come to us to assist in our application of the truth, or to force us to confront a false viewpoint and change it for a truth. The situations where a great trial comes that leads to our death is rare and few believers face this, but even here the writer gives the same hope, or confidence. If we are facing a suffering unto death, then that too have been allowed under God's Plan, and will lead to even greater eternal blessing; the challenge in the midst of it, is to follow the Lord's example and focus on the throne room of God where the one who loves us awaits our arrival.

Testing proves who we are; we are the Ambassadors for Christ, his soldiers in the invisible war, and so we will have trouble in this world, for we have the Lord's word on that. **John 16:33**. Troubles are not "strange" things for an "active service believer", for we are in a great warfare with Satan and his forces, and testing situations are "normal" in warfare, and are normal in the training for warfare! The writer warns us that we need to be careful if we are not in testing situations, for that means we are out of the battle(or training ground), and if we are out of the army, is it because we are on the other side, for Satan's people don't receive tests? Satan's people will often have a great life, for this is all they have, and he keeps the pressure off them!

Those who chose an easy life have chosen the pleasures of this world over the rewards of the next, and that is the indication that they are on the other side to Christ. Our Lord is our mentor and example in all things, and if he suffered so will we! This is the "normal Christian life". We are on a battlefield, and ambassadors on a battlefield are armed and ready for death in an instant. We are not "kings" in pavilions of gold, we are armed fighting kings, like David on the many battlefields he faced! Heaven is our palace rest. **John 14:1ff**. Here, as followers of Jesus we share "**the fellowship of his suffering**". **Philippians 3:7-10, Colossians 1:24-26, James 5:10-11, 1 Peter 2:19-21, 4:13**.

How was our mental attitude this week? Have we lived this week as if we are athletes or soldiers, totally focused on the battle around us or to come, or are we slack in our minds, becoming "faint" under the pressures of normal life? The Lord calls us to strength of character, and that will only be built up under pressure. Let us take the pressure situations the Lord allows or directs into our path, learn from each, and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the Commander of the Army, the author and finisher of our faith.

B. PASTORAL

We are challenged as pastors to ensure we keep the reality of testing situations before the saints, so that they do not grow faint, but rather grow stronger through them. The so called "memory curve" is also a point the writer raises that is relevant for pastoral ministry. If people do not consistently hear something and then apply it the item "learned" will be quickly forgotten. Memory retention only occurs if the lesson is well learned and repeated at the time, and seen applied at that time. If these things do not occur learning will be temporary, and within days the things apparently "learnt" will have been totally forgotten. The Lord will handle the application testing side of things through the work of the Holy Spirit, but our job as pastors is to repeat lessons firmly and warn about the application tests so that the saints are not unprepared for them.

Genuine children of God will face suffering, and testing situations often, if they are growing. Have we taught this truth lately? Check out your preaching schedule and see whether there is enough teaching on passages that assist with handling pressure situations. Are the Lord's flock under your command prepared for the action the Lord may call them to?

DOCTRINES

SUFFERING [See page 104 above]

DISCIPLINE OF BELIEVERS [See page 75 above]

MENTAL ATTITUDE

1. DEFINITION: The state of mind where the mind is set on a course of action on the basis of the whole function and thinking of the soul.
2. What you think is what you are. Proverbs 23 : 6, 7.
3. Without clear thinking there is conflict in the mind of the believer. Isaiah 55:6-9, James 1:7-8.
4. Believers are commanded to adopt the "Divine Viewpoint"; that is have their thoughts in line with the clear teaching of Bible Doctrine. 1 Corinthians 2:16, 2 Corinthians 10:4-6, Philippians 2:5.
5. Fellowship and energy within a church is based on believers all being in tune with what the Bible teaches. Philippians 2:2.
6. Our new life in Christ Jesus demands a new thinking in tune with His. 2 Timothy 1:7, Romans 12:2.

7. Confidence in service and living generally flows from this "Divine Viewpoint". 2 Corinthians 5:1, compared with, verses 6, 7, 8.

Also:

Stability in life	James 1:8
Prosperity of soul	Philippians 4:7
Giving to the Lord	2 Corinthians 9:7
Spiritual c/f worldly	Romans 12:2, Colossians 3:2
Purity c/f evil	Matthew 9:4
No arrogance	Galatians 6:1-5.
Inner beauty	1 Timothy 2:9,10,15.

ENEMY

1. The carnal believer is the enemy of God - this type of carnal believer is always out of fellowship and never uses confession (Romans 8:7-8).
2. The backslidden believer is the enemy of the cross (Philippians 3:18).
3. Demons are also the enemy of God (1 Corinthians 15:24,25; Hebrews 10:13).
4. Unbelievers are the enemy of God (Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21).
5. The pastor who disciplines the backslidden believers is regarded by them as their enemy (Galatians 4:16).

SOLDIER: CHRISTIAN SOLDIER OF EPHESIANS CHAPTER 6 [See page 44 above]

PARAPHRASE

"And so, it seems you have forgotten completely, the scriptural encouragement, in which God reasons to you as his children, saying, 'My children, do not keep on neglecting the disciplining of the Lord, nor mentally fall apart when he convicts you of sins. For the ones the Lord loves he disciplines for learning, and may skin alive with a whip, the children he truly receives as his own! If you stand up under the pressure of this discipline, then the Lord deals with you as his children, for what child is there who a father does not discipline? If you are living without this sort of discipline, which we are all partakers of, then you are not his children, rather you are illegitimate, (without the rights or recognition of real children)! Also consider, we all have had natural fathers, who disciplined us, and we respected them at that time. Shall we not now, much more, have respect for God, and subject ourselves to the authority of the father of the heavens and so truly live! For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few days according to what seemed good to them, but our heavenly Father, disciplines us for our best eternal advantage, in order for us to partake of his holiness. Now every instance of discipline at the time does not appear to be a matter for rejoicing, but rather a reason for grief, but afterwards it keeps on yielding a crop of righteous fruit to all those who are trained by it for these eternal results."

HEBREWS 12:12-17 - ADVANCE IN YOUR TRAINING (HOLINESS) WITH CONFIDENCE

" 12 Wherefore, lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. 14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. 15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God. Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. (Deuteronomy 29 : 18,

19). 16 Lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17 For you 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.”

KEY WORDS

Lift	anorthoo	aorist, active, imperative; set up straight, lift up, revive again.
Hang down	pariemi	perfect , passive, participle; the hanging down hands(with permanent results)
Feeble knees	paraluo	perfect , passive, participle; weakened, feeble, lame.
Make straight	poieo	present, active, imperative; do the work to achieve this!
Path	trochia	athletic track, running lane cut into the stone.
Turned	ektrepomai	turn aside in the race, putting a bone out of joint.
Healed	aomai	aorist, passive, subjunctive to receive healing.
Follow	dioko	present, active, imperative; keep on pursuing, following after, hunting.
Holiness	agiosmos	sanctification, spiritual maturity, godliness(a life lived near to God).
See	orao	future, middle, indicative; shall see God. (avoid eternal damnation)
Looking	Episkopeo	present, active, participle; watching out carefully, as one with responsibility.
Diligently		
Fail	ustereo	present, active, participle; fall short of.
Root	riza	our word rhizome(root) comes from this.
Bitterness	pikrias	bitterness, against the plan. Deuteronomy 29 : 18.
Springing	phuo	present, active, participle; springing up as a new shoot/weed.
Trouble	enochleo	present, active, subjunctive; harass you, trouble you as a mob of people would.
Defiled	miaino	aorist, passive, subjunctive; made to stink, received defilement by excrement.
Fornicator	pornos	Immoral
Profane	bebelos	anti-religious; doing anything to mock or oppose religion.
Know	oida	perfect , active, indicative; you know, with lasting results.
Would have	thelo	present, active, participle; he kept on desiring to inherit the blessing.
Rejected	apodokimazo	aorist, passive, indicative; he was declared unfit after examination.
Found	eurisko	aorist, active, indicative; he found.
Place	topos	place, opportunity.
Repentance	metanoia	change of mind.
Sought	ekzeteo	aorist, active, participle; he was seeking it.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The words used, and the theme itself of the first verse are found in a number of places in the Old Testament. **Job 4:3, 4, Isaiah 35:3, Ezekiel 7:17, 21:7, Daniel 5:6, Nahum 2:10**, and then also in the letters of Paul, **1 Thessalonians 5:14**. Often believers become feeble minded and their arms droop and their weak knees give out under them! The cause of this is lack of consistent application of the Word by dynamic faith into daily life. As believers stop learning they stop growing spiritually stronger, and spiritual weakness leads to body and mind weakness. It is of interest that mental fitness is improved by physical fitness – it is physical activity that boosts mental functions.

The writer calls the church at Jerusalem to strength in application of the Word to life, so that they might become strong again. When a person wants to recover from a long illness they must start training again slowly and build slowly back up again. They must strengthen their weak limbs by carefully designed training routines, and that is what the Holy Spirit will do for us, as our personal trainer, as long as we place ourselves in the Gymnasium of faith-application.

Verse 12. Revive again your strength! The call is to action, to rebuild the strength they once had so that they will survive the testing times to come. Note the perfect tenses of the verbs associated with the weak hands and knees. The writer's point is clear. There are permanent results that flow from weakness unless it is turned around and becomes strength. Weakness that is spiritually trained through builds eternal strength! The Lord is in the restoration business, but we must submit ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit so that this rebuilding can occur. An arm muscle that isn't exercised in the Gym will become weak and will eventually be useless. It is not too late for these people but they are close to disaster unless they start to train again, so that the Lord can use them, and assist them escape the city when they will need to.

To be safe these people will need not only bible doctrine in their soul, but they will need strong minds and tough and fit bodies, for they will have to flee from the city when the Roman army comes. They will have to run and walk over thirty miles in the first day! The Lord's warning was clear about all this, **Matthew 24:9-28, Luke 17: 22-37**, but they have not heeded it to date. They have only about a year to get it right, get physically fit and spiritually strong, before the war begins and they need to flee the city as the siege is lifted for a time. Note the Lord's words about the time that is coming.

They will need to run, and the women of the Jerusalem church must pray they are not pregnant at that time. Now what is the application principle of that? For the believers who know they must run for their life, they must ensure they lose excess weight, get very fit, and do not fall pregnant until they know it is safe! To live the Christian life **you must apply the Word** and that means, **think, think, think, and then apply in the practical details of life**. It is easy to fall pregnant and get overweight, for all you have to do is not think about consequences, and get slack in your exercise routines. We

are called to think and apply the Word to life in the days we find ourselves in. As we are now in the “last days” before the Lord’s Second Advent we also need to be focused, fit and hungry for the Word and its daily application.

Verse 13. This order is taken from the LXX translation of the Old Testament in **Proverbs 4:26, 27**, but the thoughts expressed throughout this passage are from the passages above, especially **Isaiah 35:3-10**. Not walking on the straight path is another biblical theme, and in **Jeremiah 18:15, 31:8, 9**, it is used to call the people to forsake the wrong path and take again the Lord’s path for them.

The writer uses this call in both the Old Testament context of spiritual path, but also he draws on the athletic and battle analogy he has already used. For the athlete selecting a straight path to run on was the key to victory, as was selecting a straight and level road for an army to march easily down. To walk a rough uneven path is to risk dislocation of a joint, with the pain and complete halt of the advance that such an injury involves.

So many casualties in the “Invisible War” against Satan are caused by so called “accidents” rather than battle; believers are tripping themselves up through distraction rather than receiving a wound from the enemy. Satan is being blamed for things that are in fact the results of foolish believer’s stupidity or disobedience. If you trip yourself up it is due to distraction/disobedience, for you have not made a straight path for your feet.

What does making a straight path involve? It means not walking where there are known obstacles in the way. It means avoiding known areas of weakness, and it means strengthening the areas of weakness by specific training in those areas. Rather than falling over in a situation where it is predictable that you will fall, by planning and advance training you can ensure you do not fall! You can cut a straight running track so that you can keep in your running lane and win the race! All that is required is to identify the sins that easily “beset” you, **Hebrews 12:1**, and plan to avoid running into them again! Rather than not planning and thereby falling, plan to be healed, restored to usefulness. Plan to recover from sin, or else you will simply be repeating the same sins, again and again.

Verse 14. Two orders are given now very directly, and the consequence of not being obedient to them is spelt out. Unless we, “follow peace”, and “Holiness”, we will not even see the Lord work in our life; there is no fellowship with Him for any other than those who follow peace and holiness.

Once again the orders are echoes of many Old and New Testament passages. **Genesis 13:7 - 9, Psalm 34:14, 38:20, 94:15, 120:6, 7, Proverbs 15:1, 16:7, 17:14, Isaiah 11:5 - 10, 51:1, Matthew 5: 9, Luke 1:73 -75, Romans 6:21-23, 12:17 - 21, 14:19, 1 Corinthians 1:10, 2 Corinthians 6:16 -18, 7:1, Galatians 5:22, 23, Ephesians 4:1- 8, Philippians 3 9-12, 1 Thessalonians 3:12 ,13, 4:7, 5:15, 1 Timothy 6:11, 2 Timothy 2:22, James 3:14-18, 1 Peter 1:14 - 17, 3 : 11, 3 John 11**. There is simply no way out of the obvious conclusion from all these verses - this is the will of God for us! We are called to righteousness, peace, and holiness, and if we do not have these things as part of our character it is because we are not Holy Spirit filled, or we are not born again at all! **Romans 8:9**.

Verse 15. Watch out, look carefully at all things, and discern thoughtfully, for you are responsible! All of these things are tied up in the message here. We are to be very careful, to live our lives with great fear of failure, the holy fear of failing to live up to the Lord’s will for us. The fear of the Lord is not only the beginning of wisdom, it is the starting point for application. **Psalm 19:9, 25:14, Proverbs 1:7, 3:15, 16, 33**. The devils fear the Lord and they tremble, and so we must do more than them! **James 2:19, 20-26**.

It is easy to fall short (fail) of the Lord’s grace standard, by failing to apply what we know to life. The writer urges this church, and ourselves, to ensure that we do not fall short of the Lord’s will for our lives. The Lord’s will begins with grace orientation, the believer knowing that it is the Lord’s work not their own, and then walking in the strength and direction the Lord provides. We must not fall down to any other standard for living; only the revelation of grace in scripture provides a safe way for us to live. Grace means we do what God tells us, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and we obediently follow his will alone; putting our desires and the things of this earth second to his will and the things of eternity.

If we fall down from this standard of living to a level of legalism or other religious or pagan system all we will get is bitterness. This is the warning of this verse. The root of bitterness goes deep into the soul of the person who has left grace and adopted some other way of living. **Deuteronomy 29:18, 19**, record the warning to Israel that they had better not become bitter towards God’s plan, or the result would be great bitterness in their own souls. There is the Lord’s way to live and there is man’s. With the Lord there is great pressure, but greater power to deal with it. With the alternative plans (Satanic world viewpoint, or cosmos thinking), there is only deep bitterness as the result, and the bitterness springs up quickly like a weed in a garden, which if not seen and uprooted takes over it all.

The bitterness of evil backfiring on the foolish believer will always bring calamity in their earthly life and judgement and loss of rewards in eternity. The writer uses the word for harass to describe the impact of evil; we are attacked by it like a mob beating us up. The result is “miaino”, defilement! This was the word used to describe the results of being hit with the contents of some one’s toilet pot! It was meant to shock, and remind us that if we walk away from God we will end up having our lives stink!

Verse 16. Esau is introduced as, “an alternative mentor”, to the Lord, (whom we are to follow). If we do not follow holiness we will end up following something, and someone, and two alternative “life-styles” are given in this verse. Our word pornography comes from pornos, the first word used to describe Esau. It referred to the sexual immorality of one who has cast aside the Lord’s pattern of marriage, one man and one woman, and adopted alternative sexual couplings to

suit their own lusts. Immorality is sex in any context outside of the plan of God. Let us get some clear biblical principles on the subject of immorality.

IMMORALITY VERSES GOD'S PLAN WITHIN MARRIAGE

1. The Bible condemns and prohibits all sexual activity outside the safe and loving bond of marriage. Exodus 20:14, Deuteronomy 5:18, 1 Corinthians 6:18, Colossians 3:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:3.
2. Mental Attitude of fornication is condemned also. This covers directly lusting after another, or looking at any sexual material that excites lust towards any object outside of your marriage. Matthew 5 : 27, 28.
3. Very specific condemnation occurs for any form of child abuse or incest, 1 Corinthians 5:1- 7, Leviticus 18:6-17, 20:14, Deuteronomy 27:20. Homosexuality/Lesbianism is also condemned totally, Leviticus 18:23, 20:13, Romans 1:26. Bestiality is also condemned. Leviticus 18:23, 20:15.
4. All fornication is part of the pagan "frantic search for happiness" outside of the plan of God, but instead of making the person happy it destroys their soul and body, and hinders their ability to love. Proverbs 6:32, 1 Corinthians 6:13 - 18, Ephesians 4:18,19, 5:3.
5. Sex is sanctified and will produce great sustainable happiness only within a safe bond of love and mutual adoration = marriage as God intended it. 1 Corinthians 11:1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4, Hebrews 13:4.
6. Fornication is the only Biblically acceptable reason for divorce. Matthew 5:32, 19:9, Luke 16:18.

Esau became a type of fornication due to his life style; for whatever felt right with him he did. His attitude is common today amongst those who reject God's plan; it is expressed in the phrase, "if you've got an itch scratch it". In other words, it means, if you feel any sexual or other desire, meet that desire by some action, don't question desires, just follow them, for after all, isn't that the way you are made? This lie is dominant in our social-media world today and leads to suicides!

The logic is seductive for those who do not want anything to be difficult, and who want an excuse for their sins. Such logic goes right back to the first sin of Adam, when he blamed the woman for leading him astray. **Genesis 3:12**. The biblical message is that the lusts of the flesh are to be discerned not followed, for outside strict bounds they will lead you into danger. We make choices daily – God's path or evil's path – there is no third option.

Esau was not only immoral, but also he was "profane", (Greek – bebelos). This was the word for a mocker of religious practise and belief. Esau not only followed his lusts when-ever he felt them, but he was a mocker of those within his family who followed a holy life and worshipped God in a strict manner. As the twin son of Isaac with Jacob, he was in the family of blessing, yet chose to place himself outside of God's plan. **Malachi 1:2-3, Romans 9:6 - 13**. Esau is the mentor for all who reject God's grace, and using him is a powerful appeal to the Jews of Jerusalem, for the last thing they would want is to be like Esau, yet their actions have placed them in his category.

Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of lentils because he was hungry; his lust for food overcame his respect for his spiritual rights and responsibilities. He so despised his spiritual heritage in the family that he was prepared to cast it aside for the pleasure of a moment, and went out from that meal not even seeing what he had done. **Genesis 25:27-34**. What rules our life; is it spiritual values that are eternal or lusts that are temporary? The only non-temporary thing about lust is the untreatable sexually transmitted diseases caught!

Verse 17. There are things that we do that can be recovered from, and there are things that we get into that cannot be recovered from, for we have gone too far for the Lord to ever use us again! This is a sobering verse for the Jerusalem church and for ourselves. Esau's rejection of and despising of the Plan of God led him to a place that there was no forgiveness for.

He had cast away God's plan for him, and once cast away there was no getting it back, his own repeated decisions were binding finally upon him. He kept on desiring, later on, to receive the blessing associated with being the firstborn, but he had rejected it, and so he was declared rejected himself. There was no opportunity later to change his mind, even though he was very sincerely sorry for himself, the act that day and after had set his life on a path that could not be reversed.

Many believers find themselves in this situation. They fornicate, commit adultery once, and catch a sexually transmitted disease which is now with them for life. They may pray with tears for forgiveness, and if they pray for forgiveness, it will be granted, but they are left with the consequences of their actions in their body for the rest of their lives.

For the church at Jerusalem there is an even more serious point. They must "come out" from the city before the city is surrounded for the last time by the Romans. If they are not obedient they will be killed by the Roman Army when it breaks into the city. If they flee before the first encirclement of the city they will escape with their goods as well, but sadly few do this. The church has only one last chance to obey the Lord and leave the city, and any who are distracted by any lust of the flesh will perish. God does not want people who are sincere and tearful but don't act when ordered, he wants people who are obedient, as then they can skip being sincerely sorry and tearful, for tears will not save you if they come after the time when obedience was demanded. There is a time its too late to cry, for your decision is final and fatal.

APPLICATION**A. PERSONAL**

Depression is the “disease” of the modern world, and only embracing the Plan of God has an answer to the existential depression that afflicts people who have no psychiatric debility. There must be a confrontation with the truth of God’s Word daily so that we receive the necessary daily challenge to action application of the principles of the Word. In the power of the Holy Spirit we must strengthen our weak limbs and minds and obey the commands of scripture.

How well are we making straight paths for our feet to walk in without tripping ourselves up? Have we examined our path ahead for the coming week and ensured we are not going to a place that is a danger to us? Have we looked ahead and asked ourselves how can we keep ourselves safe from temptation? Have we established safe and sustainable routines to keep us fit, physically strong, socially safe from predictable temptations, and spiritually strong by regular Bible study? We are responsible to establish routines that are safe for us, so that we do not keep on making the same sinful mistakes as we have in the past.

We are personally responsible for ensuring we stay close to the Lord in daily moment by moment fellowship. If we wander away, it is we who must face the responsibility for this, and the dangers associated with it. Are we peace-makers and door openers for the gospel in our daily life, or do selfish concerns close the doors of the gospel to the lost? The writer challenges us to put selfish concerns aside and take the insults if necessary to keep the door to the gospel open towards the lost. What is our concern today? Is it to ensure we are personally vindicated or to see the Lord’s will done in other’s lives, as well as our own.

No bitterness! We are called to live in such a way that we do not ever get bitter towards God or mankind. How well are we doing in this matter? Bitterness comes from taking things personally, as if you have been insulted. If you are a child of God any insult is to be taken to the Lord for judgement. Have you done that this week, or have you sat on a slight, or insult, or hurt, for to sit on an insult is to allow a root of bitterness to go deeply into your soul and it will defile everything you do.

Does your life “stink” in the nostrils of those around you, due to your self centredness or sin, or are you a “sweet smelling savour” to man and God? Sin left unconfessed and unconfessed in life, stinks. Have you dealt with anything that would separate you from God today? If not, do it now!

Remember the principles that flow from the life of Esau. Not all “natural desires” are to be followed. We are to discern our desires, not just follow them. The Lord has a plan for our life and it is a plan to be followed not gone against, for some disobedience has permanent results, and cannot be got back from. Let us be in fear of disobedience to the plan of God for our lives. No one gets by with sin, but there are some sins that lead to death or disaster in life, and because in advance we do not see this, we need to be living lives that avoid all known traps of sin. Holiness is the standard for a godly life, and that is what the Lord demands of us.

B. PASTORAL

As pastors when we reflect on this passage we are confronted with the Lord’s demand that we accurately preach his standard of holiness, and that we ourselves live to this standard. The Lord calls us to be encouragers of the flock, calling on the Lord’s people to come out of depression into the place of strength, and that place is the place of obedience to the revealed will of God, to holy intelligent living that plans to avoid sin by living thoughtfully with routines that avoid known pitfalls.

We are to call on the Lord’s people to keep their eyes fixed on the reason they are here on earth; to keep running the race that the Lord has placed before them. To daily examine themselves to ensure that sin does not rise up from where it has been pressed down inside them, to defile them. Sinful tendencies are not to be suppressed, but confessed, and rejected. Suppression of anything leads to the root of bitterness going deeper into the soul, and only results in more defilement.

The Lord is our mentor and power source to live the Christian life, but if we do not follow him we may end up like Esau. How strongly do we picture the alternatives to holiness in our preaching? The Lord’s Word makes it clear that strong contrasts are to be drawn to underline the visible difference that the Lord calls us to, in contrast to the world. The Lord wants our obedience, not the tears of regret. In our preaching this truth must be mentioned weekly so that the believers get the message and see clearly that obedience is always better than sacrifice!

DOCTRINES**PSALM 51: FORGIVENESS AND RESTORATION**

The way back to full communion with and service for God is shown in Psalm 51.

51:1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. - Recognition of sin and the ability through grace of God to cleanse.

51:2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin - That sin is thoroughly judged before God and full cleansing is available.

51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. - We must admit our sin to God (1 John 1:9)

51:4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. - Acknowledgement that the sin is against God alone.

51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. - Recognising that we have inherited a sin nature from Adam.

51:6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. - The place of blessing is where one is free from sin.

51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow - Forgiveness and cleansing is through the blood sacrifice.

51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

51:9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me - The cleansing is complete. (v 7-10) (John 13:4-10, Ephesians 5:26, 1 John 1:9)

51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. - That as part of discipline the Holy Spirit could be taken away in the Old Testament. This is not the case in the present age, the Church Age as the Holy Spirit indwells all believers forever. (John 14:16)

51:12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. - Restoration means renewal of joy.

51:13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. - Once we are cleansed we are to teach others who are sinners and evangelise the unsaved

51:14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

51:15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. - True worship comes from a restored life.

51:16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. - God desires obedience not rituals. (v 16-17)

51:18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

51:19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar. - We then have full fellowship with God. (v 18-19)

FORGIVENESS

1. Forgiveness is by the death of Christ (Matthew 26:28, Revelation 1:5).
2. Divine forgiveness is to all who believe in Christ (Acts 10:43, Acts 16:31).
3. The penalty of sin was paid by Christ on the cross (Hebrews 9:22, 2 Corinthians 5:21).
4. When a believer sins his fellowship with God is disrupted. God forgives these sins upon confession and cleanses from the unknown sins in the believer's life as well as known sins (1 John 1:9).
5. Jesus Christ is our propitiation (1 John 2:1,2).
6. In human forgiveness we are told to forgive others even as God has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32). This can only be accomplished by the filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:22,23).

CONFESSION OF SIN

1. Examine yourself for genuineness of motivation. (2 Corinthians 14:5)

2. Act on what you see (Romans 4:7-8)
3. Deal with any sin by confession. (1 John 1:9, Psalm 66:18)
4. Forget the sin which you have confessed. Do not proceed into a pattern of guilt. (Philippians 3:13-14, Psalm 103:10-12)
5. Resume your active spiritual walk. Avoid areas where you might be tempted by the sin which so easily besets us. (Hebrews 12:12-13)
6. Be reconciled to others once you have been reconciled to God. (James 5:16)
7. Get moving and grow up. (2 Peter 2:17-18)

EVIL [See page 225 above]

PARAPHRASE

“For all these reasons, revive again your depressed state, lift up your drooping hands, and strengthen your weak knees. Do whatever is required (in your life) to keep on the path ahead of you, lest you become lame and get turned aside from the true running track, but rather receive the healing you need (to compete well). Keep on actively pursuing peace with all men, and live a life that is close to God, for without these things you will not even see the Lord! Watch these things carefully (for you are responsible for the outcome), lest any of you fall short of the grace standard of the Lord. Lest any root of bitterness against God spring up like a weed, and harasses you. Because of this many have been made to stink by sin’s stain. (I say this in order that), no immoral person, or mocker of religion (be amongst you), like Esau, who for a bowl of lentil soup sold his spiritual birthright. For you know, that later, when he knew what he had lost, he desired the blessing, but he was declared unfit to inherit the blessing, for he found no genuine opportunity for repentance, although he was seeking one, even with tears.”

HEBREWS 12:18-24 - KNOW TO WHAT PLACE IT IS THAT YOU HAVE COME

“ 18 For ye are not come unto the Mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and tempest, 19 and the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more. 20 For they could not endure that which was commanded. ‘And if so much as a beast touch the mountain it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.’ (Exodus 19:12, 13). 21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, ‘I exceedingly fear and quake’. 22 But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly, and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

KEY WORDS

Come	proserchomai	perfect , active, indicative; you have (not) come (with lasting results).
Touched	pselaphao	present, passive, participle; to the mountain that may be touched.
Burned	kaio	perfect , passive, participle; that was burning, with lasting results.
Blackness	gnophos	thick darkness.
Darkness	skotos	darkness.
Tempest	phuella	storm that invokes fear in sailors.
Intreated	paraiteomai	aorist, middle, indicative; they begged for.
Endure	phero	imperfect, active, indicative; they could not then bear the burden.
Commanded	diastello	present, active, participle; always before them (ringing in their ears) as commanded.
Terrible	phoberos	terrifying.
Sight	phantazomai	present, middle, participle; the appearing.
Afraid	ekphobos	greatly afraid.
Tremble	entromos	trembling. shaking.
Come	proserchomai	perfect , active, indicative; you have come (with lasting results).
General assembly	panerguris	festive gathering of celebration; religious or athletic meeting.
Written	apographo	perfect , passive, participle; having been written, with results that go on forever.
Made perfect	teleioo	perfect , passive, participle brought to perfection, completion/goal everlastingly.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

We could head this section, "Two mountains, two choices". The people have chosen by their actions to stay within Rabbinic Judaism, and so have chosen to stay at Mount Sinai (verses 18 - 21) rather than go to the heavenly Mount Sion (verses 22 - 24) where they will dwell forever. They have (to date), chosen to be part of a system, that has by this point, been fulfilled and replaced by a better one. The writer in this section tries to get them to see that their choice is foolish, and offers them the better alternative by stark contrast between the two mountains and what they mean. The perfect tenses in this section also remind us that our daily choices have eternal consequences.

The Jewish Messianic writer David Stern puts the issue well when he notes, "In both cases it is the same God revealing himself, his promises and requirements. There is but one conclusion to be drawn: see that you don't reject the One speaking (vv 25 - 29), the one who spoke through Moses then, and is speaking through Yeshua now. As the Sh'ma succinctly puts it, 'Adonai is One' (Deut 6 : 4); therefore anyone who rejects the God of Yeshua is necessarily rejecting the God of Moses." (JNTC, page 717). **Refer also, Luke 16:29 - 31, 2 4: 25-27, John 1:45, 5:45 - 46, 9:28 - 41, Acts 3:22-23, 26:22, 23, 28:23 - 27, Romans 3:29 - 31, 10:4 - 10, 2 Corinthians 3:6 -16, Hebrews 3:1- 6, Revelation 15:3.** All these verses make the same point that the writer reminds the people of in this section.

Verse 18. The awesomeness of Sinai demonstrated visibly the holiness of almighty God, and explains the reason why the Lord demands holiness of us. Note the perfect tenses of this verse. These are the clue that the writer is making some vital points about the permanent nature of the events and their implications for the people. They have not come to Sinai, with lasting results/implications for their lives. Sinai could be touched, it was a real solid mountain, but if you touched it you died! The writer, by using this phrase reminds the church at Jerusalem that it was a terrible thing to be at Sinai.

The mountain burned with fire, it was terrifying, and the smoke around it was thick and the sky was darkened with its smoke. It was an "experience", and that is the point the writer is making to this church. They love the rituals of Judaism, they are drawn and warmed by the emotional experience they get when they enter the temple in Jerusalem, but the writer is telling them, 'it is all smoke and fire!' The ritual may be awesome, and the feeling emotionally satisfying, but it is living in the dark and will soon be fatal when the Roman Army arrives! Sinai is about the Lord's presence being hidden, veiled by fire and smoke: Christ is about the Lord revealing himself to mankind. **Smoke and Fire or Light?**

There was thick darkness and tempest at Sinai (**Exodus 19:16, 20:18**). These words were used to describe the fear filled experiences of sailors in the midst of a storm that would tear their ship to pieces. They were not enjoying themselves here! Sinai was not a place they could stay and live; it was a place that had to be left behind. Everything about Sinai indicated that it was a temporary experience for the people to underline the holiness of God, the seriousness of their sin, and their need for a Saviour to lead them into a place where they could live with God's peace in their souls. Sinai and the Mosaic Law never provided that place.

Verse 19. In case the church has not got the point the writer reminds them of the terrible discipline of God over the people at Sinai. First there was the blast of the trumpet of judgement, **Exodus 19:12-16**, and then there was the, "voice of words", that they pleaded to stop. When the Lord spoke the people entreated that the words should stop, so frightening was the whole experience. Rabbinic Judaism has made the whole thing sound like a wonderful experience, and by the days of this letter, the temple was completed and shone like a star with its gleaming white marble, yet this was in stark contrast to the events of that day at Sinai. The writer recalls the people to the truth that has become hidden by the ritual.

Verse 20. The Israelites could not bear the burden that the words of God placed upon them. They were burdened down by the enormity of the Lord's commands – and they were meant to be – for that was the Law's purpose – to show up sinfulness. The Lord's words rang in their ears and they were terrified, and burdened by them, for they knew they could not keep the Law's requirements. By reminding the people of his day about this truth, the writer hopes that the Holy Spirit will convict them by this truth and bring them to the place of acceptance that the ritualistic system they love must be let go of, for it has not, and will not, help them draw closer to God.

Sudden death was the outcome for even an animal that touched the mountain, and the people were in fear of it. Why go back to a system that invokes fear, when the Lord's revelation brings joyful fellowship? The contrast is drawn starkly, between the holy purifying fear of God with joy held in the heart simultaneously that is to be the mental attitude of the believer, and the paralyzing fear of the Sinai experience.

Verse 21. Not only the people, but Moses himself was fear filled by the Sinai experience. Moses recorded that he kept on being terrified, **Deuteronomy 9:19**. This great fear is strongly contrasted to what the Lord accomplishes through the Cross, Empty Tomb, and the Day of Pentecost. These three events give us the foretaste of glory, the heavenly Mount Sion that contrasts totally with the earthly Sinai. **Galatians 4:19-31.**

Verse 22. The verse begins with the word, "but", indicating a strong contrast between the subject of the previous verses, Mt Sinai, and the subject of the next verses, Mt Sion. The perfect tense reminds the people that they have come to a different place, and the permanent results of that should keep them well away from wanting to return to Sinai. We have a home in heaven, where the Lord has prepared for us a city, **John 14:1-7.**

We have come, in our relationship with Christ, to the heavenlies, into the company of angels, not just the company of men. We have a new place to dwell, even while we still walk upon the earth, we have heaven within us and it's powerful

servants(the angels) around us. **Ephesians 1:3, 20, 2:6, 3:10.** We are children of heaven, not of the earth. The words associated with the angels indicate both a large number and also that they are having a great time, a party of celebration.

The Greek word, paneguris, was used to describe the religious festivity of song, feast and dance, or a party to celebrate an Olympic Games. The angels are our witnesses, and they are all partying there, as they celebrate our victories in the Angelic Conflict. As far as the angels are concerned the total victory is already won, and they celebrate every thing we do, for it is associated with the Lord's defeat of Satan, for it is done in the power of the Holy Spirit, and illustrates the reality of the victory of the Lord.

Verse 23. Not only are we in a superior eternal place (heavenly Jerusalem) to those at Sinai, but we have a far more extensive and powerful fellowship than they did. The fellowship of Israel was limited to one race with a few exceptions, and limited in number and coverage of the earth.

The fellowship of the church is vast, covering not only Israel but all nations where the saved dwell, uniting all mankind in Christ Jesus. It is the fellowship of the "firstborn". Through our union with Christ we share in his heirship, as heir of all things, as royalty of the universe of created things. **1 Peter 1:18-22, 2:9-10.** We are members of the Royal Family of God, with great rights and privileges and vast eternal rewards, and so let us get fully and obediently in tune with the plan for each of our lives!

The verse ends with two perfect tenses that teach us even more about our great position, "In Christ Jesus". The first is the word "written" (apographo), which means that our names are registered in heaven as members of God's eternal family. This is a permanent fact of life for believers – we are "hid in heaven" – secure forever in Him. **Ephesians 3:8-13.**

The second perfect tense verb is the word translated, "made perfect" (teleioo), reminding us that it is the Lord God, whose power brings the believers to the place of maturity, spiritual completion, and our eternal goal. In between these two verbs is the phrase that speaks of God as, "the judge of all". This reminds us that we are either perfectly entered into union with Christ, with our names registered in heaven as members of the royal family, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be brought to our heavenly goal, or we are facing God, not as father, but as judge.

Verse 24. For all those who are in union with Christ, they are members of God's eternal family, together with all the saved ones from the first man to die a martyrs death, Abel, right to the end of time. All of us are come to Christ, who is the goal to whom we are running our different races. The end point for us all is a personal meeting with Him. It is his work on the cross which has brought us through, and his blood has opened the door of heaven for us all. We stand in a holy blood sprinkled place.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Which mountain are we living close to today; Sinai or Sion? Are we living with a system of legalism, or are we living with power through the Spirit? Are we living in union with Christ, in active fellowship with the saints of all ages, or are we trying to "go it alone" in our own strength? Do we have a sense of our place in the royal family, or are we living like low class paupers without the dignity and holiness that is appropriate to our position?

Too many believers get emotional about past times rather than being focused on what the Lord demands of them here and now. We are not to glorify or get misty eyed about Sinai, it was not a pleasant place to be! The great fear and terror of that place was the indication that man was not to stay there, but rather move past it to the place of living fellowship with the God of Grace.

Whatever happened to heaven? Why do we not hear more preaching about heaven? Heaven is our goal, and the end of our life's race is a personal meeting with the Lord Jesus Christ. How much has this reality figured in your thinking this week?

The Lord is our Saviour, and we, through his work for us, have become members of the Royal family of God. How clear do we make this to our unsaved friends and family? He is our Lord, or we are under his jurisdiction as the judge of all! This is the flip side of the gospel message. It must be accurately and lovingly shared with all we know, lest they perish without realising the awful consequences of walking away from the sacrifice of God for them.

B. PASTORAL

Accurate preaching about the subject of "Law and Grace" is vital for the spiritual life of the church. How well are you doing on this subject pastor? Do the Lord's people understand the distinction between the age of Israel and our own? Are the people in the church you shepherd living in Grace or under Law?

Do they know about the spirit filled life or are they doing things in their own limited strength? Do they hear of heaven and see it as their goal, or are they focused on earthly prosperity and joy? It is not what we, as pastors understand, but what we have communicated and is understood; it is what the people understand, that is the basis for the assessment of our work performance.

Our God is a consuming fire! How clearly do the people of the Lord understand this? From our preaching do they have a sense of the majesty and power and awesomeness of God, or are they casual and flippant with the King of Kings, as if he is their "mate"? We can err on this point by too much unbalanced preaching which does not remind the believers of who they are in relation with, for he is King of kings and Lord of lords, the mighty God, the creator and judge of all. Let us bow down and worship before his holy name.

DOCTRINES

IN CHRIST [See page 56 above]

INDWELLING OF CHRIST

1. The prophecy of the indwelling of the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 14:18-20)
2. There is a distinction between the indwelling of the Lord Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
3. The Lord Jesus Christ indwells for fellowship (Galatians 2:20), and a sign of the believer's position. (Romans 8:10)
4. In contrast the Holy Spirit indwells to teach, guide, direct, empower and correct. (John 14:26, 16:8-15, Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
5. The purpose of the indwelling is that the believer may grow in fellowship with the Lord, learning to know and love him more. (Colossians 1:27, Ephesians 3:17-19)
6. We fellowship with the Lord within as we allow the Holy Spirit to teach us through the Word. (John 6:63, 8:31-32, Colossians 3:16)
7. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is permanent even though He may be quenched or grieved, but the Lord Jesus Christ can be locked out of the soul by the presence of sin or a negative attitude towards the Word. (2Corinthians 13:5)
8. When the Lord is locked out, the Holy Spirit convicts the believer, the believer is miserable, with the Lord knocking at the door for admission. (1 John 1:9, Revelation 3:19-20)

ABIDING

1. The word "abide" speaks of perfect provision, supply, sustenance and fellowship (Deuteronomy 33:27-28).
2. The key to "abiding" is living in the reality of God's provision (John 13:17).
3. "Abiding" means there is total provision for every need for every believer at every point in his life (Psalm 23:1,5, 91:1-10, John 15:4, James 1:2-4).
4. Earthly problems are temporal and variable but divine solutions are absolute (Genesis 50:20, Romans 8:28).
5. The only time Jesus Christ is at home in us is when we abide in Him (Ephesians 3:16,17, Colossians 3:15, 16).

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

1. SCRIPTURE (Galatians 2:20) "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. "

2. Evaluation or Literal Translation

a) "I am crucified with Christ". I have been crucified with Christ in the past with a result that I keep on being crucified with Christ forever (identification with Christ in His death). Passive voice - I have received this crucifixion (this occurs at the point of salvation). We are dead to the law after crucifixion with Christ because Christ fulfilled the law (Matthew 5:17). We are overcomers (1 John 5:4,5)

b) "yet not I" - I no longer live - my old life of sin and self has died

c) "but Christ lives in me" - Christ keeps on living in me (Galatians 4:19). Christ lives in us for fellowship as well - (Revelation 3:20, John 14:20, 2Corinthians 13:5, Romans 8:10, Colossians 1:27)

d) "and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith (or power) of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me."

3. The only way to fulfill the law is through the character of Christ formed in the believer through the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:2-4). In our own strength we are unable to keep the law because we have a sinful nature.

PARAPHRASE

"For you have not come to a real mountain (like Sinai) that can be touched, that burned with fire, nor to a place of thick darkness, frightening blackness, terrifying storm, the sound of the trumpet, and hearing words spoken, so that those who hear begged that the voice stopped speaking to them any more. For they could not bear the burden that they felt the commandments placed on them. Even if an animal should even touch the mountain it was stoned to death of thrust through with a spear. So terrifying was the appearing (of God there), that even Moses said, I am greatly afraid and I tremble (in God's presence). But you have come to mount Zion, and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, before multitudes of angels, the festive gathering and assembly of the first born ones who are registered in the heavens, and to the judge, the God of all, and before all the just men of the ages, who have reached their end goal, and before Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, whose blood sprinkled speaks of far better things than the blood of Abel."

HEBREWS 12:25-29 - THE 6TH WARNING - BEWARE OF INDIFFERENCE!

" 25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. 26 Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he has promised saying, 'Yet once more, I shake not the earth only, but also heaven'. 27 And this word, 'yet once more', signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; 29 for our God is a consuming fire."

KEY WORDS

See	blepo	present, active, imperative; keep on paying attention, beware.
Refuse	paraitomai	aoist, middle, subjunctive; that you do not refuse.
Speaketh	laleo	present, active, participle; keeps on speaking.
Escaped	ekpheugo	aoist, active, indicative; flee away from and escape.
Refused	paraitomai	aoist, middle, participle; refused.
Shook	saleuo	aoist, active, indicative; at the time when the Lord actively shook (to it's foundations)
Promised	epaggellomai	perfect , middle, indicative; he promised and the promise is still active.
Shake	seio	future, active, indicative; he will cause to tremble (Matthew 21:10).
Once	apax	once for all, only time.
Signifies	deloo	present, active, indicative; bring to light, reveals, make clear for all to see.
Removing	metathesis	the removing. Hebrews 7:12, 2 Peter 3:12.
Made	poieo	perfect , passive, participle; the things being made, receiving their form, with lasting results.
Remain	meno	aoist, active, subjunctive; in order that they may remain.
Moved	asaleutos	unshakeable.
Have grace	Echo	present, active, subjunctive; let us have and hold grace (charis).
Serve	latreuo	present, active, subjunctive that we may serve in the temple.
Well pleasing	euarestos	well pleasing to God.
Reverence	Aidos	modesty, reverence.
Godly fear	eulabeia	reverence, quietness in humble and careful service before majesty. some mss have "deos" reverence, godly fear, awe; the state of careful anxiety of a person in a forest who is aware that he is in danger if he is not careful.
Consuming	katanalisko	present, active, participle; he keeps on consuming things until there is nothing left.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Given who God is, who we are in Christ, and where we are going, we must be careful to live in a manner appropriate to our high calling. This passage introduces the sixth warning passage of the letter, and it is a warning that is totally appropriate to our casual day; **beware of indifference!** If the people of Moses day were held accountable for their response when the earth shook how much more will we be held accountable as the heavens themselves shake before the presence of the Risen Lord.

Verse 25. Keep on looking out (blepo) for this thing! Keep on being careful that you do not refuse to accept, believe and follow the one who is speaking. The subjunctive mood of the verb “to refuse”, reminds the hearers that there is potential for their refusal of this command.

The terrible consequences that followed for Israel when they refused to obey the Lord at Sinai are well documented in scripture, for that whole generation (except Caleb and Joshua) died in the desert. Just like the Exodus generation we face the daily choice of obedience to the revealed will of God for us, or rejection of the Lord's will. Just like for them, there are consequences for our disobedience.

No-one escaped the judgement of God during the Exodus; even Moses himself, paid for his moment of anger and disobedience. If they all paid for their disobedience, how will we fare when the stakes are so much higher, for the blessings of obedience for us are so much greater. If they did not escape, “how much more” impossible is it for us to escape the consequences of any action of disobedience on our part? If we turn away from the words of the Lord, to what are we turning? The only other thing to the truth is the fable filled lies of the world. **2 Timothy 4:3-5.**

Verse 26. At that time in history, at Sinai, the Lord's words shook the earth around the mountain. The impact was localised, but terrifying for those there. Then the earth shook, but “now”, we stand in a time when another promise of God may come into action at any point in time, and that promise is awesome and frightening above all things. The Lord has said, that when he moves in judgement on the earth again, he will shake not only the earth but the very heavens themselves. If you pause for a moment and consider what that means, you will be overwhelmed with the awesome power of the Almighty God, and will realise that unless you are with Him you will be in total despair. **Joel 3:16, Habakkuk 3:10, Haggai 2:6, 7, 21 - 23, Revelation chapter 6.**

Verse 27. The Lord's word is clear, that he will, “once more”, shake the whole earth. The last time the Lord shook the whole earth was during the great flood, when the fountains of the deep from within the earth were broken up. **Genesis 6:11, 12, 7:8 - 17.** The Lord's promise was that he will not destroy all flesh by water again, but the created world will be shaken during the Great Tribulation period before the Second Advent, and then finally destroyed at the right time in accordance with his plan, but to be replaced by an even better creation. The “best is always yet to come”.

The heavens and the earth shall pass away but the words of the Lord shall always be true and will be fulfilled, every one. **Psalms 102:25-27, Matthew 24:35, 2 Peter 3:10 - 13, Revelation 11:15, 21:1 - 8.** Our security is to rest upon the foundation of the person and work of the Creator of the universe, rather than the universe itself, for it is temporary, but the Word of God is forever, for only the Lord God is forever!

All that is capable of being shaken will be shaken and finally destroyed totally. As we draw near the Second Advent we approach that “time of shaking” that will occur, as described in Revelation and many other places. Its not the time for us to have fear, any more than it was for the church at Jerusalem in 65 AD; it is the time to draw closer to the Lord and live in faith and confidence in God's Plan for each of our lives – and obey the plan for us.

Only that which cannot be shaken will remain after the end of all that makes up this creation. All that can be seen has been made, as part of God's plan, with an eternal purpose, but the things themselves have no permanence. The only permanent things from this creation are the saved individuals within it, who gain eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ. **Matthew 19:16, 25:46, Mark 10:17, 30, Luke 10:25, 18:18, John 3:15, 16, 36, 6:53 - 71, 10:28, 17:1 - 10.**

Verse 28. This is the Lord's last appeal to these people in Jerusalem, to get them to leave their comfortable lives before their homes, temple and whole city are turned to ashes by the Romans. They are living in the “last days for Jerusalem”, just as we are living in the “last days” before the Second Advent. They see everything around them as solid and wonderful, but all of it can be, like the earth and the heavens, shaken, and it will be! Let us see the same truth today in the “last days” we face now. The call is strong to these people and to us, “let us have grace!” They have stood within the old Law and it's systems, and must come out. We are, with them, the ones receiving a kingdom that is unshakeable, and so what must our attitude be now towards the things of this very temporary world?

The attitude we are to have and hold is Grace; grace all the way, grace only. The Lord calls us to serve him with reverence and godly fear, or awesomeness. We are to serve the Lord the way he tells us to serve him, and it is with respectful awe, cautious and careful in all the things we do lest we get into trouble or danger.

Verse 29. No believer who knows the Word of God should ever be casual in their service of the Lord, for the nature of the Lord is awesome. He keeps on being a consuming fire that burns until there is nothing left! This is the description of the power of the Lord as he controls the destiny of this universe and decides when it will be wrapped up like a blanket and folded away, it's job completed. **Exodus 24:17, Numbers 11:1, 16 : 35, Deuteronomy 2:24, 9:3, Psalms 50:3, 97:3, Isaiah 66:15, Daniel 7:9, 2 Thessalonians 1:8.**

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

How casual are we with God and his Holy Word? How slack are we in matters of respect towards the Lord and his work, and his men and women? How attached are we to this world? Are we more patriotic towards our nation and it's flag than

we are towards the realities of heaven and our life there? Many believers will get more worked up over their nations achievements at the Olympic Games than they do in a discussion about heaven. Where is our heart today?

On what do we place real value? Do we see this world as a permanent place or do we see through the revelation of God and see that all this world and universe is a temporary thing, soon to be wiped away? What is the race we are running; is it for earthly rewards, or eternal rewards?

B. PASTORAL

These themes are the themes of eternity that the people of God need to hear to counter the seduction of the world. Satan's cosmos system of evil concentrates on making believer's more attached to earth than they are to heaven. If he succeeds, that believer becomes useless to God, for that person is then more concerned with the things of earth than they are with the things of heaven.

The focus of satanic attack is on encouraging worldliness amongst God's people, for attachment to things will soon lead to sin and all sorts of other evils. Once people love things they will serve them and worship them and they will be well and truly distracted from the Lord's service.

How clearly do we make this issue? The Lord's people in wealthy countries are so distracted by things that it is difficult to get enough people to serve the Lord in the most simple functions around a church, for they are too busy with the gathering together of more things. Few look up to the heavens and say, "all this too will pass", rather they look to the stars and fantasize about themselves reaching the stars, and then head off to a movie about space travel and science fiction. "Star Wars" is fun but it is fiction, yet even believers will dream of the days to come when we will fly to the stars, rather than seeing that God has always taught we will fly beyond the stars, for they will be no more!

Eternity and the "eternal life perspective" is to be a constant theme of all biblically based preaching. No-one must sit under our ministry and not be challenged every week to keep their priorities eternal rather than temporal; on things that matter for eternity, rather than things that will simply be part of the amazing bonfire that ends this present universe.

DOCTRINES

EVIL [See page 225 above]

LAST DAYS: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAST DAYS – (We are there!)

Just as world conditions just before the flood indicated judgment was overdue so conditions now show that we are at the end of the last days.

1. Preoccupation with physical appetites (Luke 17:27)
2. Rapid advances in technology (Genesis 4:22)
3. Grossly materialistic attitudes and interests (Luke 17:28)
4. Uniformitarian attitudes and interests (Hebrews 11:7)
5. Inordinate devotion to pleasure and comfort (Genesis 4:21)
6. No concern for God in either belief or conduct (2 Peter 2:5, Jude 15)
7. Disregard for the sacredness of the marriage relation (Matthew 24:38)
8. Rejection of the inspired Word of God (1 Peter 3:19)
9. Population explosion (Genesis 6:1,11)
10. Widespread violence (Genesis 6:11, 13)
11. Corruption throughout society (Genesis 6:12)
12. Preoccupation with illicit sex activity (Genesis 4:19; 6:2)
13. Widespread words and thoughts of blasphemy (Jude 15)
14. Organised Satanic activity (Genesis 6:1-4)
15. Promotion of systems and movements of abnormal depravity (Genesis 6:5, 12)

DENIALS THAT CHARACTERIZE THE “END TIME” CHURCH BEFORE THE LORD’S RETURN

1. Denial of God (Luke 17:26; 2 Timothy 3:4-5)
2. Denial of Christ (1 John 2:18, 4:3; 2 Peter 2:1)
3. Denial of Christ’s return (2 Peter 3:3-4)
4. Denial of the Faith (1 Timothy 4:1-2; Jude 3)
5. Denial of Sound Doctrine (2 Timothy 4:3-4)
6. Denial of Separated Life (Practical Sanctification) (2 Timothy 3:1-7)
7. Denial of Christian Liberty (1 Timothy 4:3-4)
8. Denial of Spirituality (2 Timothy 3:1-8; Jude 18)
9. Denial of Authority (2 Timothy 3:4)

ETERNITY PAST AND ETERNITY FUTURE [See page 21 above]

WORLDLINESS [See page 26 above]

PARAPHRASE

“Keep on being aware of the danger you are in, beware that you do not refuse to obey the one who keeps on speaking to you! For if the Exodus generation did not escape away (without punishment) for their refusal to heed his divine instruction, from the one who spoke to them upon the earth, then (we are in even more danger), if we refuse to heed the one speaking to us from the heavens! At that time his voice shook the earth. But he has eternally promised, saying, “yet once more I will shake the earth and the heavens!”. And this phrase, “yet once more”, makes clear to us that the things shaken were made to be removed, in order that the things not shaken might remain. From this we see that, we are receiving a kingdom unshakeable, so let us have grace to have and hold close that kingdom, so that we might serve the Lord in a well pleasing manner, with reverent fear, and awe, (remembering who he is). For our God is a fire who burns all things completely up!”

NOTES

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The example of Love to follow

1. The secret life of the believer 13 : 1 - 6

- 2. The social life of the believer 13 : 7 - 14
- 3. The spiritual life of the believer 13 : 15 - 19
- 4. Benediction 13 : 20 - 24.

HEBREWS 13 : 1- 6

“ 1 Let brotherly love continue. 2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. 3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. 4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the marriage bed undefiled: but whore-mongers and adulterers God will judge. 5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”. 6 So that we may boldly say, “The lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”

KEY WORDS

Let	meno	present, active, imperative; let it abide, imperative = an order!
Brotherly love	philadelphia	brotherly love, care and warm concern for others well being.
Forgetful	epilanthanomai	present, middle, imperative; another order, do not go on being forgetful.
Entertain	philoxenia	hospitality, entertaining of those who don't live in that place.
Entertained	xenizo	aoist, active, participle; have been entertaining strangers(who are angels = more “stranger” than the usual foreigners).
Remember	mimnesko	present, middle, imperative;; keep on bringing to mind this thing.
Bound	sundeio	perfect , passive, participle; as being bound permanently to/with them.
Suffer	kakoukeo	present, passive, participle suffering evil doing, being treated badly.
Honourable	timios	honourable, of good nature in and of itself.
Marriage bed	chamos+ koite	sex within marriage.
Undefiled	amiantos	having no hint of taint of sin or evil.
Whoremongers	Pornos	immoral engaging in sex outside of marriage.
Adulterers	Moichos	unfaithful to their marriage vows.
Judge	krino	future, active, indicative; the Lord will judge them.
Conversation	tropos	manner of life, both lips and life habits.
Covetousness	aphilarguros	without the love of money.
Content	Arkeomai	present, passive, participle; keep on being content with what you have and are.
Said	lego	Perfect , active, indicative; said.
Leave	ano	aoist, active, subjunctive; the Lord will not leave, let you go, leave without support.
Forsake	Egkatalaipo	aoist, active, subjunctive; will not leave you in distress, without help, dessert you.
Boldly	Tharreo	present, active, participle ; we can keep on boldly saying.
Helper	Boethos	one who brings help in time of need.
Fear	Phobeomai	future, middle, indicative; I will not be afraid.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

These first few verses remind us of the mental attitude of grace and the importance of the Holy Spirit filled life for each believer every day. The basics of the Christian life are simple and straight forward; they involve being Christ centred and Holy Spirit filled. The result of these two things will be a life that is characterised by the things mentioned in these six verses. These things are ordered, simply to remind the believers that this is the standard that God sets for us and to fall short indicates we are either not Christ centred (we are distracted by things), or we do not have the Holy Spirit active within us due to unconfessed sin, or acceptance of false teaching. Getting our spiritual status right is the starting place for blessing and service daily for each believer.

Verse 1. The writer does not say, “love others!”, he says, “ensure you keep on letting love abide within you”. For the believer in fellowship with the Lord, in the filling of the Holy Spirit, there is always love within towards the others in the family of God. Love abiding/growing within is the sure sign of the presence of the Lord and Holy Spirit in a life, for a life without love is a life without Christ or the Holy Spirit! **John 13:34, 35, 15:17, Romans 12:9,10, Galatians 5:6, 13 22, Ephesians 4:3, 5:2, Philippians 2:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 10, 1 Peter 1:22, 2 Peter 1:7, 1 John 3:1-24, 4:7 - 11, 20-21, 5:12, 2 John 5, 6, Revelation 2:4.** The hallmark sign/fruit of the Spirit and Jesus presence is love!

Verse 2. Do not go on being forgetful of the obligation to entertain strangers. This was the solemn requirement for all churches in the ancient world given the lack of safety for those staying in public places. The love for the fellow believers urged in verse one must overflow into practical action. There is no point in saying that you love someone if you do not care for them when they are in need, and wont give them food, clothes, and drink. Faith must outwork in action or it is not biblical faith. **Hebrews 6:10, 11, 10:24, James 2:14 - 26, Matthew 25:40.** We never know when we might be entertaining an angel from the Lord, as Abraham did, **Genesis 18:2 -10,** and Lot, **Genesis 19:1-3.**

Verse 3. Keep on remembering those in prison for their faith, but don't just say, "God bless the prisoners of faith", rather remember them as if you were there. What does that mean? The writer is challenging them to think before they pray, and to ask themselves, what would they wish for in prison, and then both pray for and do the things required to bring comfort to those who suffer for their faith, and find out the names of those suffering. Not just the prisoners are to be considered, but those who are easy to overlook are to be thought of; those who suffer persecution or discrimination and whose lives are hard because of their faith.

The prisoner can be seen as one in need, but the many who are discriminated against are not visible often, yet they slowly and quietly lose their livelihood, their jobs, their families support, their friends, and so they need the practical outworking of love from other believers to help them, and stop their suffering being made worse by isolation. The perfect tense for the word "bound" is a reminder that the results may be permanent for such prisoners, in death, but they are to be prayed for, supported in prayer, through their martyrdom into glory. We stand with them in prayer.

Verse 4. Marriage is an honourable divinely appointed institution for the stability of human society, and any attacks on marriage, and the family that stems from it, is from evil never from God. Marital stability is the Lord's will for the church member. To become casual with marriage to be disobedient to the direct commands of the Lord himself, and to play with adultery is to play with death! **Proverbs 5:3-23, 6:16 - 33,7:4 - 27.**

The Lord's hand is against adultery and he will judge firmly all who think they can "get by with" this sin. The Christian community has been disgraced by the adultery of leaders of the church all through history. Those who wrongly believe they can get by with this sin must consult their Bibles and tremble before they sin, rather than be judged after it. God's name has been disgraced too many times by his stupid and evil pastors, who placed lust above respect for their Lord's call upon their lives.

The sin of adultery is a deliberate sin, that a person has to set out to commit, by first not keeping themselves safe from temptation by good protocols, and then placing themselves in a place to commit the sin, and then being there, deciding to go ahead! Many barriers must be broken down to commit adultery, and it destroys all that is of eternal value. God judges believers severely when they fall here. **Psalms 50:16 - 23, 51:1 - 17, Malachi 3 :5, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 2 Corinthians 5:10.**

The marriage bed is undefiled. This allows for considerable openness in sexual activity between a husband and wife and notes that all sex between them is sanctified by the Lord, as long as both are in agreement (**1 Corinthians 7:2 - 5**). The Lord made us sexual beings, designed for sexual pleasure and satisfaction, but only with one other person, in a relationship that is loving, caring and equal, with no dominance being exercised by one over the will of the other.

True joy in sexual love is only possible within such a relationship, all else is one person trying to take pleasure from another, and will lead to dissatisfaction, impotence or immorality. Lust for sex from many others is just one form of the mental attitude sin of covetousness, and so the writer moves to the general subject of lust for what the Lord has not given to you on your journey through this life.

Verse 5. Let your life be lived without love of money, but rather than lusting after money be content with what you have, for as a believer, that is what the Lord has given to you. This verse does not teach the Calvinistic, "Insalah (God wills it)" viewpoint which can often be too passive. We are not to stop all striving for betterment of our situation, but all striving to do our best must be based on this principle of relaxation in the soul seeking the Lord's will in all things, and being content with little or much wealth, for our eyes are on where the Lord would have us serve, rather than on the things of this life. For the believer who seeks to truly serve the Lord, wealth is simply something to use to serve the Lord more, and assist others in their need, it is not a thing in itself to be enjoyed.

Lust for things shows that you have the wrong viewpoint on things. To desire what others have is to miss the reason you are here on earth for. You are here to live your life in the way God wants you to live; you are not here to live another person's life with the things they have. Eyes off what others have! Eyes onto what the Lord wants for you, and then relax with his provision, which will always enable you to do what he wants you to do.

How do we know this? His Word tells us, and his reputation depends on providing us with what is required to fulfil our mission here on earth! Our job is to focus on the task we have to do, pray for the support required, and do the job that is before us. Note the perfect tense again here; He hath **said!** God has promised that He will never leave or forsake us, either in victorious life or in victorious suffering and death, we are never forsaken. God's Word can be trusted.

We are to serve the Lord with relaxation into our role in the Plan of God, and contentment, without coveting others goods, for we are not even looking at what they have, for we see that it is of no relevance to us. **Genesis 28:15, Joshua 1:5, Psalms 37:1 - 16, 23 - 28, 34, 40, Isaiah 41:10, 13 - 17, 1 Chronicles 28:20, Matthew 6:19 - 34, Philippians 4:6, 11-13, 19, 1 Timothy 6:6 - 10, 17-19.** All that is relevant for the believer is God's will, His Plan for their lives, and then focusing on receiving his blessing and provisions on the path. Other people's paths are irrelevant to our journey; we must have our eyes on the Lord and His goal for us alone. We are called to be ourselves, not anyone else.

Verse 6. We can say with boldness and absolute assurance that the Lord is our helper. Boldness should characterise the life of the mature believer, for they depend on the promises of the Word of God as their strength, which is grounded deep within their knowledge of the dependable character of the God who can be trusted to do all he has

promised to perform. The only thing we are to fear is falling short of what the Lord requires of us, there is no other fear that should cross our minds. Any other fear indicates a lack of faith in God's provisions for us to fulfil his will for our life.

We are to be confident in him, and content in his provisions. When we have need the Lord we serve is the one who brings the appropriate help to meet that need. **Psalms 27:1, 56:11, 118:6, Isaiah 51:12, 13, Romans 8:31.**

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Love is the sign of the genuine believer, and without love for the Lord shown by feeding on His Word, and love for the brethren, shown by helping them, there is no solid evidence of saving faith. These things are clear, yet we need to be told constantly to have love for one another, for it is not a "natural" thing to love the unlovely! How easy it is to be angry at a foolish or sinful believer, and write them off and ignore them. This is why the writer emphasises the importance of stirring up love so that it is practised amongst the people of God.

Agape love is not referred to, rather it is the Greek word, philadelphia, the word for brotherly love, or love within the family, that is characterised by caring concern (agape), but also by filial affection and genuine warmth. We are being reminded that we should have warmth in our love towards our brethren, and such a thing is "easy" if we are seeing the Lord in them. It is a command believer, so how have you done with this order from the Lord today?

Entertainment, or hospitality towards other believers, is also a command for the church. Whether towards an angel or brother/sister we are to have an open home for the Lord's use. This may not be practical at all times, due to overcrowding, or the presence of sickness, but as far as is possible a believers house is not to be their castle, but their platform for practical love towards the saints. Believers in need of shelter, food or comfort should never be left without these things by the local churches in the area of need. We are our brother's keeper! We are to have a home that is open towards the saints always ready to use what the Lord has provided for the strengthening of his kingdom.

Now notice carefully, the command is towards believers only. The term "strangers" refers in context here, and else-where to members of the family of God who are unknown to you, but not to pagans, who have the places of their gods to seek shelter amongst. We are not asked anywhere in scripture to open our homes to unbelievers, rather we are to sanctify and protect our homes so that our children are safe, protected from evil, and brought up in the love and discipline of the Lord (1 Corinthians 7).

Many tragedies have been created by foolish believers who bring Satan's men or women into their homes to abuse their children, and they stupidly call it outreach towards the lost! **We go out to reach the lost**, and witness from our homes, and possibly at times within them, but we do not give the enemies troops a room in our house. This has become a way some Christian organisations work, but it lacks Biblical warrant and was never practised by the early church. Meditate upon these things and practise evangelism with safety for your children.

Practical ministry to those suffering for their faith is a vital part of the early churches life. In every age of history there has been opportunity to practise this ministry, and especially today with international banking allowing us to ensure no believer any-where on earth goes without and has daily opportunity to praise God for the provision that comes from God's people. Examine your giving today, and ask if there is not something you can do to support a pastor in the third world, or the family of a martyr somewhere. Just do it!

Keeping ourselves safe from adultery! In all places on earth this is a problem for sexual desire is the most powerful of desires, and leads astray the majority of mankind if figures produced by researchers are to be believed. How can we keep ourselves safe from adultery? As we have seen in chapter twelve, we are called to make "straight paths for our feet", and that means to remove known temptations in advance by careful planning of activities. No believer should be having any intimate 'one on one' meetings with any member of the opposite sex except in company with their spouse.

This may sound extreme to many, but if you do not allow yourself any opportunity for intimate feelings to develop then you keep yourself safe. Adultery is the cause of more men leaving the ministry in my country than any other reason! Does this shock you? It should not, for this is why the Bible warns so strongly against ignoring this powerful human desire. Are you keeping yourself as safe as you can from sexual temptation? Tighten up your protocols so that you do not make opportunities for Satan to ankle tap and disgrace you and your Lord!

Is your marriage being strengthened by the activities you make time for with your spouse, or are you ignoring your spouse and not spending the intimate time together that you need to keep your marriage spiritually, socially, and sexually strong. Sex between marriage partners is the physical bond of unity and when sex stops temptation enters; it is not God's will for us to stop our intimacy within marriage. Sex is a good thing (the marriage bed is undefiled), for it is what the creator has designed to be the physical bond of closeness. The writer to the Hebrews, and Corinthians, with God's will behind him, says, do not stop having good and mutually satisfying sex together as a godly couple, until you are too old or ill to enjoy it!

Covetousness is a danger for us all, if we get our eyes off the Lord and onto things around us, especially things that others have and we would like! The writer challenges us to keep our eyes under control. How well are we doing on this issue? Do we find ourselves looking with longing at the cars, houses, clothes, or holidays that others have and we cannot

afford? What matters is that we are doing what the Lord requires of us, and that we are using the things he has given us to achieve his goals for our life. If our focus is on the Lord's will for our life then we are called to trust him to provide what we need to achieve this, rather than waste precious time by longing for what others have. Let us focus our hearts and minds on the Lord's will today.

Have you prayed today the prayer that is in verse six? Have you affirmed the Lord's grace provision for you, and his protection over you today? He is our helper, who comes in time of need with exactly what we need, so that we might praise his name for his provisions. He is the answer to our fears, for he has known from eternity past what we need for each day of our short life upon the earth!

B. PASTORAL

Judgement is God's strange work, but it is his work, and he will do it against any believer who plays with sins that should be avoided at all costs. Are we doing our job as the heralds of the king? The herald's job is to give the policy of the king, and that is both the good news and the bad news! The good news is the gospel, and we normally get that bit right, but often forget that the theme of judgement is strongly represented in scripture and must be heard clearly from our pulpits. To ignore the Lord is to face judgement for the consequences that will always flow from ignoring the Lord! Let us raise our voices and warn the saints of the cost of disobedience so that they are without excuse, and we have truly done our job.

The great responsibility of the believing community to provide comfort to the suffering members of the church, hospitality when required, and support for all who are persecuted for the Lord's name, is an important one and not to be forgotten. As pastors do we emphasize this to the Lord's people. So many calls on the people's money are made, and they are often for things that don't eternally matter, where-as this is something that matters, and has specific eternal reward attached to it's fulfilment. Have we ourselves, at this point, financially "adopted" a pastor in a third world country whose life would otherwise be harsh?

Teaching and practising the celebration and sanctity of marriage is also a biblical theme we ought to be known for in our communities. Straight biblical teaching on sex is required in our corrupt and immoral world so that believers of all ages see the truth of scripture, and follow it in purity of life. Keeping our own marriages intact as pastors is a challenge in the devil's world, for this is the easiest way for satanic attack to trip us out of ministry. Are your protocols good enough to keep you safe from temptation to adultery? Are you careful enough of this matter? Tighten up your practises here!

If you are going without the things in ministry, that your old College friends all enjoy, it can become an occasion for covetousness and then bitterness. Do not let any bitterness or jealousy/resentment get hold. Where is your focus in the matter of the "things of this life"? "Contentment is great gain", when you are in ministry if your eyes are on the Lord. 1 Timothy 6:6. The Lord's promise to us is that we will never be short of what we need to fulfil his purpose for us in this life. That may mean we go without at times, and have plenty at others, for it is HIS PURPOSE for our lives that is being worked out, and our focus has got to be to understand that.

Attacks by evil people is the "norm" when in the pastorate. Remember that the definition of "evil" is, "all that is in accordance with satanic policy, in opposition to God's policy". Evil men and women may look to others very "nice" people, it's just that they speak and act in opposition to God's revealed Word and policy! Opposition within and from without the church is a "normal" part of pastoral life, and we must claim the promise in verse six often, remembering that the Lord is indeed our helper and will arrive in time of need to strengthen and defend us.

We stand for God's policy, and as long as we are sure of that, through prayer and our biblical studies, then we can stand secure in the sure knowledge that those who attack us attack the Lord's servant, and the Lord can both defend and vindicate his servants. We are to be an example in all things for the flock of God to follow, as the next verses make very clear.

DOCTRINES

LOVE

1. Love for God is total appreciation for all He is and has done.
2. Words for love in Greek language:
 - a) eros (sexual love) not used in the New Testament
 - b) storge (comradship) not used in New Testament
 - c) agape (concerned love for others, great esteem for the loved one, reverence, a love that springs from adoration and veneration, and is a love of the will that chooses the loved one and devotes self to them to the exclusion of lesser objects. It may mean a self denying and compassionate devotion to the loved one)
 - d) phile (a love that embraces and kisses. This love is that of the affections and speaks of friendship and all one will do for a friend).

3. Our Lord makes it clear to Peter in John 21: 15-19 that he wants Peter to love him with agape love that flows from a deep occupation with the Lord. Agape, as a love of the will, must work out in service of the Lord, and this will express the believers love (agape) for other believers also.
4. Do not love of the things the world has to offer (1 John 2:15-17).
5. True love of God will always lead to love of the brethren (1 John 1:3 -11, 1 John 3:1-3, 10, 4:7 -12, 19).
6. Love is expressed in worship and in service (1 John 5:1-5).
7. Love for God will flow and grow from knowledge of His word (1 Corinthians 2:9).
8. This deep love will be expressed in witness for the Lord to others (2 Corinthians 5:14).
9. God loves every believer with perfect and unchanging love because we are united with His beloved Son.

SUFFERING [See page 104 above]

MARRIAGE

1. Man and angels have personality but only men and animals have "nephesh" and experience physical death. Angels do not die because they are spirits.
2. Marriage requires both personality and life, therefore it is only applicable to man. There is no marriage in the angelic realm (Matthew 22:30).
3. Definition:- the personal relationship between a male and female member of the human race which typifies the saving relationship between Christ and believers.
4. God's instruction - "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish and the fowl and every living thing". This shows that man should subdue and have dominion over the animal kingdom.
5. If God was a solitary personality there would be no divine example of relationships, however with the three personalities in the Godhead relationships are demonstrated. He is a personal God and we can therefore have a relationship with him.
6. Marriage typifies the relationship between Christ and the church:
 - a) in the form of grace and faith (Ephesians 5:22), the word submit meaning to fall into line to the law of God which the carnal mind cannot do (Romans 8:7; 10:3).
 - b) you submit yourself by an act of freewill.
 - c) a family can strain marriage relationships if they are not submissive (Romans 13:1,5).
7. Grace is typified by the male and faith by the female. If this pattern is not adhered to it results in misery and suffering.
8. Grace and the man:
 - a) the man is in the role of an initiator
 - b) the man provides information to which the woman can respond but must not coerce her free will
 - c) the man has to show his character to the woman
 - d) the man has to be patient, a form of grace.
9. Faith and the woman:
 - a) the woman is in the role of a responder
 - b) the woman makes the choice of her free will
 - c) she is the one who uses faith
 - d) the woman needs time to grow.
10. Glory revealed:
 - a) The glory of God is shown in the man in the form of a changed life through regeneration.
 - b) The glory of the man is shown in the woman by changes in the woman.
11. Compatibility:
 - a) The important area of compatibility is that in the spiritual realm as one can be psychologically compatible with many people.
 - b) Spiritual compatibility is indicated by the phrase "one flesh" and is a picture of the union of Christ and the church.

12. Satan will attempt to blur the differences between man and woman and cause role reversals. The degree to which this occurs reflects the level of decadence in a society.
13. Legitimate reasons for the termination of marriage:
- a) the death of one of the partners
 - b) the desertion of a believer by an unbelieving spouse where one of the two partners has become a Christian after marriage (1 Corinthians 7:10-16)
 - c) inappropriate marriage partners such as close relations as specified in (Leviticus 18)
 - d) adultery or fornication as this causes the destruction of the one flesh principle by forming another one flesh (Matthew 5:32; 19:9).

ADULTERY

1. Definition - Sexual activity outside of marriage. This includes fornication, homosexuality, incest.
2. Adultery is prohibited by the Word of God (Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18; Colossians 3:5; 1Thessalonians 4:3).
3. Mental adultery is condemned (Matthew 5:27-28).
4. Adultery destroys the capacity of the soul to relate in faithfulness (Proverbs 6:32).
5. Sexual immorality has a destructive effect on the human body of both male and female (cf. 1Corinthians 6:13-18).
 - a) Male - impotence and inability to copulate.
 - b) Female - breakdown of response and pleasure in the sex act. Often frigidity or nymphomania, both are frustrating and a source of female misery.
 - c) Increased chance of sexually transmitted diseases.
6. Any sexual immorality ultimately leads to further frustration and an unfulfillable search for happiness (Ephesians 4:19,5:3).
7. Adultery is a bona fide basis for divorce (Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Luke 16:18). Adultery has a huge impact between husband and wife in both mental (trust) and physical ("one flesh") areas. However, forgiveness and the grace of God can overcome the effects of all sins.
8. Adultery or fornication is often used in the Bible to describe apostasy and unfaithfulness to God (Jeremiah 3:8-10, Ezekiel 16:23-43, 23:24-28; Revelation 17:1-5).

MONEY

1. Money in coin form was unknown until the 7th century BC. Prior to coins, money or valuable metal was measured in terms of ingots or rings. Croesus, King of Lydia first preserved his money in coins. When Cyrus the Great conquered Lydia, he picked up the concept of coinage and gave it to the entire world.
2. Money is not evil. It has a legitimate function. (Genesis 23:9, Jeremiah 32:44)
3. The believer is urged to be content with what he has received, in his position, from the Lord (1Timothy 6:6-10, Philippians 4:11-13, Hebrews 13:5-6).
4. It is the lust for money and goods that corrupts a man (Jude 11).
5. The giving of money is an expression of the believers' priesthood (1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 8 & 9).
6. Coveting money makes one a slave to his desire. (Matthew 6:24). Money is a useful servant but a harsh master.
7. The danger of money to the unbeliever:-
 - a) Salvation cannot be purchased with money (Mark 8:36-37).
 - b) Money causes the rich man to put his trust in the wrong things (Mark 10:23-25).
 - c) Money often hinders the unbeliever from seeking salvation (Luke 16:19-31).
 - d) Money has no credit with God (Proverbs 11:4,28).
8. The danger of money to the believer:-
 - a) Money can become part of a slavery to a vain search for happiness (Ecclesiastes 5:10-6:2).
 - b) Love of money becomes a root of all kinds of evil (1 Timothy 6:6-12, 17-19).
 - c) Money can contribute to pride and self-centredness (Acts 5:1-10).

9. Wealth is deceitful if a person believes it will buy him happiness or provide security (Matthew 6:24-33, Luke 12:16-21, Proverbs 18:10-12, Proverbs 13:7).

10. It is the believer's duty to wisely use his possessions, time, abilities and spiritual gifts which God has entrusted to us.

PARAPHRASE

Ensure that brotherly love abides with you all. Do not ever be forgetful of the obligation to give hospitality to foreign believers who are visiting, for some have entertained angels without being aware of it. Keep on remembering those who are in prison, as if you are permanently bound with them. And remember those who suffer adversity of any sort, for you are the same body (of Christ) as they are; (you are bound up with them all). The state of marriage is honourable, and sexual love within marriage is a good and wholesome thing, but all who have sex outside of marriage, and who violate their marriage vows, God will judge! Let your whole lives be lived without any list for others' goods, power, position, or money, and be content with whatever the Lord gives you, for He has said, "Listen, I am with you, I will never leave you without support, nor desert you in distress". Knowing all this, we may boldly say, The Lord is the one who brings help in time of need, and so I will not be afraid of anything man can do to me."

HEBREWS 13 : 7 - 14

“ 7 Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. 8 Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever. 9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. 10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. 11 For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp. 12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. 13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. 14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.”

KEY WORDS

Remember	mnemoneuo	present, active, imperative; keep on remembering.
Rule	egoumenos	those having the rule, your leadership.
Spoken	laleo	orist, active, indicative; truly spoken the words of scripture.
Follow	memeomai	present, middle, imperative; keep on imitating them.
Considering	anatheoreo	present, active, participle; keep on looking back on and examining closely as you move off
End	ekbasis	their going out, their goal, the way they end their life.
Conversation	anastrophe	life style, manner of life.
Same	ho autos	the exact same.
Carried about	periphero	present, passive, imperative; do not be carried off, away by.
Divers	poikilos	many different types of.
Strange	xenos	foreign, not of the nation and people of God.
Established	bebaioomai	present, passive, infinitive; to be stabilised, confirmed.
Profited	opheleomai	orist, passive, indicative; be useful, profitable.
Occupied	peripateo	present, active, participle; keep on walking.
Have	echo	present, active, indicative; we keep on having and holding.
Sanctify	agiazō	orist, active, subjunctive; in order that he might sanctify, make holy, set apart for God's service.
Suffered	pascho	suffered for others.
Go forth	exerchomai	present, middle, subjunctive; let us go forth/out.
Bearing	phero	present, active, participle bearing as a burden that is appropriate.
Reproach	oneidismos	insult, reproach.
Continuing	Meno	present, active, participle plus the verb to have and hold (echo), we are continuing to have and hold here, no continuing city.
Seek	epizeteo	present, active, indicative; we keep on seeking for.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Lord is our example, and all our behaviours are to be judged against the standard of Christ likeness. As we are stabilised in our path of following HIM, we will build and serve at the altar that we are called to serve at, and it is the altar of our daily service. It is outside of the ritualistic religion of legalistic systems; our altar is the altar of service that is everywhere we are, and the lost are, whereby we bring the altar of heaven into the lives of all we meet. Everywhere the Israelites marched they built altars to serve the Lord, and we are to do the same, for our altar, or place of meeting the

Lord, is everywhere we are, and the world is to see that they cannot 'cast down' our altar, for we carry it within, and that no matter where we are, there the Lord meets with us.

The writer is underlining again the need for these people to leave the city of Jerusalem, with its physical temple, and see that the true "temple of the Lord" is in their own body, for where-ever they go, there the Lord is with them, and is ready to meet others through them, and that this is the way HE wants us to worship HIM in this age.

Verse 7. Keep on remembering the leadership of the local church! What does such a command involve? It involves prayer, monetary support, practical support and encouragement to those who exercise their leadership through the teaching of the Word of God faithfully and often. Such leaders as teach constantly the living truth from the Word of God are to be supported and their example of faith in action is to be followed. The way we are all ordered to follow their example is interesting. The word for "consider" is *anatheoreo*, a word that means to look and think about what is seen, again and again.

It is a word that indicates real care and focus over time. Of particular focus is to be the "end" of their life style or example in life (conversation). What is the goal of these teachers? To what do they focus their lives towards? Look at what people aim at in life, the writer is urging the believers, then you will see their life in context, for only the goal, or end of life gives meaning to the journey.

Remember that the Greeks had a saying, quoted from Socrates, that was well known in the world of the first century. It said, "call no man happy until after he is dead". The saying recognised this principle of the chosen goal of each person giving meaning to their journey. Only once we have seen a person die do we really know that what they said they meant, and what they believed they truly trusted in. The end gives proof of the reality of the person's values and beliefs.

Look at what your teachers aim at in their lives and so draw inspiration from their lives, as well as their teaching. Once again we see the writer to the Hebrews underlining the principle so beloved of James, that a faith that does not work out in life and through death is not a real faith at all.

Verse 8. Our stability in all the troubles of life and facing death itself rests upon the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, who never changes. We have absolute stability only in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our union with Christ gives us a position that rests upon the one certainty, the one unshaken one in this universe. We are built upon the rock of the ages! The Lord's person and power is the same, yesterday, when he created the universe, today as he upholds it, and tomorrow when he will fold it up and place it away, to replace it with something new. **2 Peter 3:10-18.**

We are in union with the Alpha and Omega of creation. **Revelation 1:7-8, 19:11-17.** In the context of our death the only certainty we can have is the reality of our eternal destiny with our Lord, the Lord of this Universe, and the next creation, ready to be revealed once space and time are no more!

Verse 9. The only danger to our stability is to be carried away from a secure place into an insecure one by false teachings. **Matthew 24:35,** reminds us that the Lord will wind up this universe, but his words will never be proved false, nor changed, for he is truth! **John 14:6.** Being seduced away from the truth is the real danger for us all. If we hold the truth we are safe and secure and our minds will be stable and sound, but if we heed false teaching we are led away from the safe ground and become quickly ensnared by doubts and fears. There is certainty and security only in the place where the Lord wants us.

The false doctrines are of two sorts. Divers (*poikilos*), and strange (*xenos*) doctrines are teachings that stray away from the truth in many and various ways. Satan loves to entice the foolish with the new and "interesting", for novelty is his policy; anything to get the attention of those who want to have their ears tickled! The Lord is stable and his truth the same as it always was. Satan is the one who keeps changing his teachings to ensure he hooks in any who are foolish enough to desire what appears to be "the new", over the true and stable. **Ephesians 4:14.**

It is a good thing for the heart and mind to be stabilised with Grace, for the Grace of God is the only stabiliser. The question for each of us is, will we hold to the faith "once delivered", the old and true, or will we seek novelty and interest in the attractive things that Satan has to offer. At times the Christian faith will be called, "boring" by its detractors, and we are boringly stable to those who seek novelty all the time, but the truth does not change!

Let grace and truth stabilise the mind by means of Bible teaching that grounds you in the Lord, but do not seek anything by way of food or other externals. People are not spiritual by means of what they eat, **Matthew 15:11,** nor do food taboos do anything except make people think falsely that they are super saints! **Romans 14:1-4.** We are called to stand for truth, not make distinctions between people due to their dietary laws!

Diets may be healthy or unhealthy, but since the setting aside of the Kosher Laws of the Mosaic Covenant food is not a spiritual issue. **Galatians 2:11-21.** The only things to be abstained from are things that are associated clearly with pagan religious practises. **Acts 15:19 - 21, 29.** The Lord is to be the focus of the believer, not food; we are to be occupied with Christ, not occupied with diets, clothing, titles or any things that Pharisees were associated with.

Verse 10. We have an altar, and it is not in the earthly temple that the Romans will destroy, it is in heaven, where our sacrifices of prayer are always acceptable to our heavenly Father. We keep on having and holding this heavenly altar, it can never be taken away from us; for none can remove it from heaven, nor our access to it, in Christ Jesus.

Those who served at the earthly temple had the right and privilege of eating of the animals sacrificed, but they have no rights to enter heaven where we can go in prayer, and enjoy the sweet food of fellowship with the Lord.

They are stuck in a time warp, they do things that no longer have significance, and things that cannot enter them into union with, or fellowship with the God they are trying to serve. They serve within a replaced system, we serve within the will of the Lord God for this age. We stand either in the place of power and authority or we stand with the Levitical priests, in a place that has been superseded. "We have an altar" is an echo of an earlier statement in Hebrews 6:19 - "We have an anchor of the soul". The truth of God's Word is both the anchor and the altar of the soul!

Verse 11. Even within their replaced system there is the pointer to the new that has, by this time replaced it. The animals sacrifices for the burnt offering were taken outside the city/temple walls to be burned. **Leviticus 16:1 - 28.** Their blood was carried by the High Priest into the Holy of Holies, and then the remnants of the sacrifice were taken outside the camp, **Leviticus 16:27**, and completely burned up. The scape goat also was taken outside the camp(city walls) into a desolate place and let go into the wilderness. To be taken "outside the camp", was significant, and meant to Israel, impurity, disgrace, and separation from fellowship with the people.

Verse 12. The Lord suffered outside the gate, just as the Old Testament sacrifices prophesied he would, and by becoming our Red Heifer, our sin offering, he paid the penalty for sin, once for all. He suffered with a clear and prophetically announced purpose, "in order that", he might "sanctify" the people. The Lord's disgrace, cleared the way for our separation from sin and death, unto God for holy service. The Lord has opened the way for us to acceptance by taking the path that for him led to total disgrace in the eyes of the people; he didn't just take our sins, he became sin for us all! Greater love for His Creation and us as His creatures, could not be shown! **John 15:9-17.**

Verse 13. "Let us go out", is the Greek verb, "erchomai", (Present, Middle, Subjunctive). This is what is called the hortatory subjunctive, and is a command that has the force of the imperative voice, but recognises the necessity of a positive volitional response on the part of the believer. It is an urging to express faith in action, in accordance with the will of God for us.

We are called, not to come out of one system into another, but to come out, "to Him". We approach Him and associate with Him ; Christianity is a relationship, not a religion. We are to be, "growing in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, daily as we actively express our faith in action". **2 Peter 3:18.** To come outside the Gate of the city of Jerusalem, meant for the Jerusalem church that they had to identify them selves with the Lord as the suffering servant, as the one who bore ultimate disgrace, as far as the unbelieving people were concerned.

The phrase, "bearing His reproach", is taken from the Greek verb, "phero" (Present, Active, Participle). It means in this form, to bear or carry a burden constantly, volitionally, habitually. To the world of the religious unbelievers amongst whom the early church lived, the new faith was like a "burden", a burden of reproach and disgrace, for to serve a crucified one was awful to respectable people. We are urged not to minimise the disgrace of the cross, but rather to trumpet it, and take our place with our Lord, ready to be mocked as he was, but to pay honour to his work, which was the only way for sin to be solved.

Verse 14. The writer returns to the language of **Hebrews 11:9-10, 13 - 16, 12:22**, to remind us that here on this earth we have no lasting dwelling place. All this shall pass! The solidity of the earth and the heavens is an illusion, for it is but "dust", a temporary arrangement of atoms, that will be folded in on itself in the end. Genuine Christian faith is seen by it's heavenly aspect, by the on-going desire on the part of the true Christian to find their inheritance and sense of belonging in the heavenly Jerusalem, rather than focus on the earthly city.

The cities we live in on earth are all temporary. An earthquake, fire, flood or war can level them to the ground. What looked so solid can be dissolved in seconds by nature's forces, men's evils, let alone the direct work of the creator. The writer is constantly challenging the believers throughout this letter to select their option; will they live lives that are focused on the earthly realities that are temporary, or upon the heavenly realities which are eternal?

The author has been working in Christchurch helping the engineers through the terrible months of September 2010 through April 2014, when that city experienced over 12,000 felt earthquakes, including four powerful quakes over 6 on the Richter Scale leading to the loss of nearly 200 lives, with over a third of the city damaged. As I saw on each visit the broken lives, lost hopes and dreams that are represented by the shattered homes, I remember these words and they burn into my heart. We must not place any significance at all upon the things that an earthquake can destroy.

On earth there is no continuing city of any sort. The earth and even the very heavens are temporary, and will all be destroyed, having served their purpose, so the city of Jerusalem itself, is no longer "the holy city", for since the cross the true, "holy city", is the heavenly Jerusalem. **Revelation 21:10 - 27, 22:5.** The writer of Hebrews is directly asking them, "where do you want to belong?" He is bluntly reminding them that they have no lasting inheritance in Jerusalem on earth, even if their ancestors have lived there a thousand years, for we are the children of God, and our inheritance is heavenly, beyond space and beyond time.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Believer, how well are you doing with the first command of this section? How are you “remembering” those who exercise leadership over the church, and practically supporting the ministries of the Word in your area? If you are not in a place of worship where there are men of God to follow, then you should seek such leadership so that this command can be honoured. If the leadership of the local church cannot be honoured and their lives followed, then you are under false shepherds and need to change churches! We are all called to support those who feed us the Word of God, and we are called to honour and follow their example of focus upon the Lord’s will for us.

How stable is your faith in the Lord? For He never changes, and His truth is always the truth to live by. We are either stabilised by the teaching of faithful pastors of the Lord, or we will be in danger of being led astray by those who are false teachers, into new and strange teachings that have no significance for life and work in Christ Jesus.

Do you fellowship with other believers and draw strength from the local community of faith? Do you fellowship under the leadership of a godly and faithful teacher of the Word of God who truly proclaims the living Word of Truth? Do you ensure you receive true teaching from the Bible regularly, be it in person, by tape, by radio, CD, TV, computer, internet, any way you can? Are you as hungry for truth as you need to be in the devil’s world, so that you are stabilised in the truth of God’s holy word, and are less likely to be led astray by falseness.

Each of us are to build up our personal “altar in our soul”. Serving daily at the altar of our soul involves prayer, daily bible study, giving, witnessing by word and deed to the risen Lord, and growing more like Christ each day. This is our Christian walk, and should be our daily reality. How are we doing this last week? If we hold to the truth, and learn more of his grace we will grow strong in Christ, but if we walk away from the Lord and His Word we will suffer the rejection of the Lord.

Are we ready to take our place with the Lord, “outside the camp”, whatever the camp is for us? All of us have our earthly “camp”, the place where we belong here, and where we receive respect and fellowship for our fellows. Are we ready to join our Lord outside of all our earthly places of fellowship and respect, and take his shame and rejection upon ourselves, standing with him in the disgrace of the cross? We are not called to belong, or be popular here on earth, but to stand for the Lord and be content with what he gives us to do, and enjoy only the fellowship of like minded people.

Seeking a heavenly city is a constant background theme of this letter, and we are challenged again in this section to serve the Lord with a stable focus on eternity rather than time. How clearly do we see this truth? When you looked up to the heavens today, or looked at the buildings and hills or valleys that surround you, did you say, “all this too shall pass away”? Do you see the things of this universe as temporary, or are you still stuck in human viewpoint, not seeing the universe as God sees it? We are called to see all the realities of this universe in the context of eternity rather than the standard view of unsaved mankind.

All too often we are conformed to this world rather than transforming our viewpoint through the Lord’s perspective. We have no excuse, for the scriptures give us plenty of information about the fate of this universe, and our own destiny in eternity. Many believers get excited about science fiction stories, yet the teaching of the bible is far more exciting regarding our destiny. Let us get excited about eternity rather than being sidetracked by the things of this world!

B. PASTORAL

As pastors we must ask ourselves very directly the question, are we worthy of following? Do we set the example of scripture and Christ centred living? Are we faithful in our teaching? Are we regular and strongly biblical in our teaching? Would the flock grow under our teaching program, or would they starve to spiritual death? As pastors we are entitled to live off the people but only because we pour ourselves out for them! If we do not do the work of ministry then we cannot be entitled to ask for support or respect.

How stable and stabilising is the message we preach? Do the people of God get the message that the character of God is dependable and unchangeable? The perspective we are to put across every time we preach is the Lord’s way of seeing things, for after all we are his heralds!

The truth that is vital for all to see is the truth of the creator God who has made this earth, has a plan for this earth, suffered upon this earth, and will “fold up” this earth when the plan is complete. We are a part of a bigger plan than this present creation, and are to keep our eyes fixed on the future which is ours rather than the present where those who focus only on things appear to be having the best time.

We are called to lead, by example, and lead the people of God out from the cares and concerns of this world to focus upon the joys, rewards, and purposes of the next. We are to be the living example of obedience to all the commands we read of in this section. How is your perspective on the things of this world today? What is the reality that occupies most of your time? Where is your heart today pastor? **Matthew 6:21, 15:8, Luke 12:34, John 14:1, 27.**

CONCLUSION

Here we have no continuing city! Does this truth “grab” your attention? Get with it believer, this is the truth in whose sphere of reality we are to live.

DOCTRINES

ROCK

1. Christ is the rock of salvation (Exodus 17:1-7, 1 Corinthians 10:4).
2. Christ is the rock of judgement (Isaiah 8:14, 1 Peter 2:8).
3. Christ is the rock of provision (Isaiah 26:3, 4). Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever for in the Lord is the rock of ages.
4. Christ is the foundation rock (Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22).
5. Christ is the foundation rock of the Church (Matthew 16:16, 18, 1 Corinthians 3:11, Ephesians 2:20-22).
6. Christ is the destroying rock of the Second Advent (Daniel 2:35).

SATAN'S WORK

1. Satan's sphere of operations among mankind. (Psalm 109:6-13)
 - a) Satan blinds mankind to the truth of the Word of God by means of religion (v.7)
 - b) He has the power to shorten life (v 8a)
 - c) He can remove persons from a place of authority (v 8b)
 - d) Satan can kill (v 9)
 - e) He can persecute children (v 10)
 - f) He can remove wealth (v 11)
 - g) Satan can turn people against each other (v. 12)
 - h) He can cut off man's posterity to the second generation (v. 13)
2. Satan as a killer
 - a) He has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14, 15)
 - b) Killed Job's children (Job 1:12, 18,19)
 - c) Motivated Cain to murder Abel (John 8:44, cf. 1 John 3:12)
 - d) Often administers the sin unto death (1 Corinthians 5:5)
3. Satan as a source of disease
 - a) Was responsible for Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7)
 - b) Produced illness in Job (Job 2:6-8)
 - c) Uses his demons to inflict diseases (Matthew 12:22, Luke 13:16, Acts 10:38)
 - d) Causes certain types of deafness, dumbness, paralysis and crippling effect by means of demon possession (Matthew 4:24, 12:22, Mark 9:17, 18)
 - e) When demon possession causes the affliction, the removal of the demon or demons produces an instant cure (Matthew 10:1, Mark 1:32-34, 6:13, Acts 8:7, 19:12)
4. Satan as an instrument of discipline
 - a) Desired to discipline Peter (Luke 22:31, 32)
 - b) Was authorised to discipline the Corinthian adulterer (1 Corinthians 5:5)
 - c) Was called upon by the Apostle Paul to administer extreme discipline to Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Timothy 1:19,20)
 - d) May become involved in the discipline of ministers and deacons (1 Timothy 3:6, 7)
 - e) Attacks through a believer's lack of forgiveness and orientation to grace (2 Corinthians 2:10, 11)
5. Satan as a healer

- a) Healing was a temporary spiritual gift before the completion of the Canon of Scripture (Acts 19:11, 12, cf. Philippians 2:27, 2 Timothy 4:20)
- b) God still heals today (Philippians 2:27)
- c) Since Satan possesses the power of disease he often counterfeits healing by the removal of demons (Matthew 12:24, 24:24, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, Revelation 16:14)

6. Characteristics of Demon Possession

- a) Loss of individuality: the demon-possessed person no longer has control of faculties of the soul (Mark 5:1-13, Luke 8:27, 9:39, 40)
- b) Abnormal behaviour:-
 - i) Convulsions (Mark 1:26, 9:20, Luke 4:35)
 - ii) Violence (Matthew 8:28)
 - iii) Abnormal strength (Mark 5:4, Luke 8:29, Acts 19:16)
 - iv) Raving (Mark 5:5)
 - v) Foaming at the mouth (Mark 9:20)
 - vi) Nakedness (Luke 8:27)
- c) Loss of health:-
 - i) Dumbness (Mark 9:17, Luke 11:14)
 - ii) Deafness and dumbness (Mark 9:25)
 - iii) Blindness and dumbness (Matthew 12:22)
 - iv) Epilepsy (Mark 1:26, 9:20, Luke 4:35)
 - v) Mental illness (Mark 5:15)

7. Demon possession explains:-

- a) So called divine healing
- b) Alleged speaking in tongues
- c) Faked contact with the dead (1 Samuel 28)
- d) Success of self styled exorcists
- e) Rise of certain world leaders (2 Thessalonians 2.9, Revelation 16:13, 14)
- f) Cause of some wars (Revelation 20:8)
- g) Reincarnation
- h) Fortune telling (Acts 16:16)

SATAN'S STRATEGY

1. Believers are warned against him and his tactics (Ephesians 4:27, 6:11-13, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8).
2. We must be ready and alert (2 Corinthians 2:11).
3. Satan is a deceiver and a counterfeiter. He uses deception - not obviously wrong or sinful - but very subtle changes to the truth (Genesis 3:1). Remember, a counterfeit looks like the original.
4. Satan is described as an "angel of light" - often seeming attractive and "good" (2 Corinthians 11:14).
5. His tactics:
 - a) Towards unbelievers:
 - i) to blind them regarding the gospel (2Corinthians 4:3, 4, 2Thessalonians 2:9, 10).
 - b) Towards believers:
 - i) Satan seeks to hinder our growth and witness (1 Peter 5:8).
 - ii) Satan will mislead into false doctrine and legalism (1Timothy 5:14-15).
 - iii) He persuades believers to ignore the will of God through disobedience (Genesis 2:17, James 4:7-8).
 - iv) Satan often attacks our assurance of salvation so that we doubt God.
 - v) Worry (1 Peter 5, 7-9).
 - vi) Fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-15).
 - vii) He accuses believers of sin both to God and to the believer (using guilt) (Revelation 12:9-10, Job 1:6-11).
 - viii) He takes our focus off Christ by getting eyes on self (1Corinthians 1:10-11), on people (1Corinthians 1:12), on things (Hebrews 13:5-6).
 - ix) When we don't allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives, we open ourselves up to Satanic attack (1Corinthians 7:5, 2 Corinthians 2:11, 1Timothy 5:14-15).

- x) The Lord will allow Satan to attack a believer as discipline for unconfessed sin (1 Timothy 1:20 cf. 2 Corinthians 12:7).
- xi) Satan cannot indwell or possess a believer, only beguile them (Galatians 3:1).

c) Towards the world in general:

- i) The World - Satan tries to deceive the nations (Revelation 20:7-10).

PROPITIATION [See page 58 above]

THE CROSS [See page 183 above]

JERUSALEM

1. Jerusalem is the Holy City of three monotheistic faiths.

a) **JUDAISM:** Jerusalem has always been the focus of the Jewish homeland as it was the capital of the first Jewish kingdom. The Western Wall (the Wailing Wall) is a remnant of the great temple, built by King Herod and is the most sacred of all Jewish shrines.

b) **CHRISTIANITY:** For Christians, Jerusalem is the site of Jesus Christ's last days on earth. It is the place of His trial and crucifixion, and also of His resurrection.

c) **ISLAM:** The Arabs call Jerusalem "Al Quds", which means "The Noble (or Holy) Sanctuary". After Mecca and Medina, it is the holiest city in the Muslim world. On the place where the Temple stood now stands the Dome of the Rock (or mosque of Omar). It is built over a rock from where Mohammed is said to have ascended to Heaven.

2. The name 'Jerusalem' is sometimes abbreviated to "Salem" which is the Hebrew word for peace (Genesis 14:18; Psalm 76:2). Jerusalem means "City of Peace" (Psalm 122:6,7; Isaiah 66:12; Haggai 2:9).

3. It was the city of Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18).

4. Although the Israelites captured its "suburbs", they never took the citadel of Mount Zion (Judges 1:8,21 ; 19:12; Joshua 15:63). This fortress was called Jebus, after its inhabitants the Jebusites, descendants of Hittites and Amorites (Ezekiel 16:3). It was finally taken by King David and renamed City of David (2 Samuel 5:6-9).

5. It was a suitable place for a capital as it had not played a role in the history of any of the tribes and was not in any of the tribes' territory, but on the boundary between Benjamin and Judah (Joshua 15:8; 18:16).

6. It was a strong fortress and had its own water supply in the spring Gihon. This could be reached from the city through a tunnel (2 Samuel 5:8), later improved by King Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:30).

7. The real spiritual meaning of Jerusalem began when King David brought the Ark of the Covenant to the City of David on Mount Zion (2 Samuel 6:16). Zion became synonymous with Jerusalem as the place where God dwelt among His people. (Psalms 48:1-3; 50:2; 87:2,3; 132:13,14; 137:5,6; 1 Kings 12:26-28)

8. Jerusalem the "City of Peace", was the scene of many battles and it changed hands many times during its 4,000 year history. Since 1967 it has been back in Jewish hands. (Luke 21:24)

9. ITS FUTURE:

a) A new temple is to be built on the old temple site. The Antichrist will enter this temple to declare himself God. (2 Thessalonians 2:4)

b) The armies of all nations will be drawn against her. Its inhabitants will suffer terribly but they will be delivered by the Lord. (Zechariah 14:1-9)

c) The Lord will enter the city through the East Gate (Golden Gate) which, at present, is bricked in. (Ezekiel 44:1,2; Psalm 24:7-9)

d) Jerusalem will be the capital during the Millennium. (Zechariah 2:10-13; 8:22; Isaiah 2:3,4)

e) But this Jerusalem is only a shadow of things to come. (Hebrews 11:10,16). After the Millennium there will be a new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. (Hebrews 12:22; Galatians 4:26; Revelation 3:12; 21:2,10).

KINGDOM

1. The Kingdom of Heaven is distinguished from the Kingdom of God.
 - a) Kingdom of Heaven
 - i) The Kingdom of Heaven will be the visible future Kingdom of the Lord on the earth. (Luke 1:31-33)
 - ii) Entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, includes those physically alive going into the Millennium. (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50)
 - b) Kingdom of God
 - i) The Kingdom of God is spiritual (John 3:3, Romans 14:17, Luke 17:20)
 - ii) Entrance into the Kingdom of God is through regeneration. (John 3:3-7)
 - iii) The Kingdom of God covers the divine authority over all creation for all time. (Luke 13:28, 29, Hebrews 12:22, 23)
2. The King was born as prophesied of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14 cf. Matthew 1:18-25), and in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2 cf. Matthew 2:1).
3. The Kingdom was announced as at hand (Matthew 4:17) but was rejected by the Jews both from a moral (Matthew 11:20) and official viewpoint (Matthew 21:42-43). As a result the King was crowned with thorns.
4. Afterwards He announced His purpose to build His church. (Matthew 16:18)
5. The mysteries of the Church and the Kingdom of Heaven were seen as concurrent - they both refer to the spiritual kingdom. (Ephesians 3:9-11)
6. When He returns at the Second Advent, the Lord Jesus Christ will establish the Kingdom for 1000 years before eternity resumes. (Matthew 24:27-30, Luke 1:31-33, Acts 15:14-17, Revelation 20:1-10)
7. At the end of the Millennium, Jesus Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father. (1 Corinthians 15:24-28)
8. The eternal throne is of God and the Lamb. (Revelation 22:1)

KINGDOM - MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

1. "Thy will be done on earth, " will be fulfilled in the Millennium. (Matthew 6:10)
2. The Kingdom is the Millennium, the first 1,000 years of Jesus' eternal reign. It will be after the Second Advent, on the old earth. (Revelation 20:4-6)
 - a) Promised (2 Samuel 7:8-17, Psalm 89:20-33)
 - b) Prophesied (Isaiah 2:1-5, 2:11, 12, 35, 55, 56, 62:11)
 - c) Presented (Matthew, Mark, Luke) (Israel, not the church)
 - d) Postponed (Epistles of New Testament) (for church age)
 - e) Proclaimed (Revelation 10) (Angelic herald) (Revelation 11:1-14) (Human heralds)
 - f) Plagiarized (Revelation 13)
 - g) Perfected (Revelation 11:15-19)
3. Issues relating to the Kingdom:-
 - a) The Character of God - will He keep His word to Israel? Yes. Jesus Christ will reign.
 - b) Unconditional Covenant - will He keep Covenant? Yes. Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, New - all fulfilled in the Millennium.
 - c) Dispersion of Israel - will He recover them again? Yes. At the Second Advent.
 - d) Advent - will He return to earth at the worst period in history? Yes. At the end of the Tribulation.
 - e) Millennial - The Kingdom of Jesus Christ is eternal, why the emphasis on the first 1,000 years? Jesus will do what Satan has been trying to do for 6,000 years; He will create perfect environment in an instant, as a demonstration to prove that perfect environment is not the answer. After 1,000 years of Christ's rule, there is a revolt against God's perfect provisions (Revelation 20:7-8), proving that perfect environment is not the answer, regeneration is.
4. Principles from Micah 4:1-8
 - a) The Kingdom will be supreme. (Micah 4:1)

- b) The Kingdom will be universal. (Micah 4:2)
- c) The Kingdom will be peaceful. (Micah 4:3)
- d) The Kingdom will secure universal prosperity. (Micah 4:4-5)
- e) The nation of Israel ruled by the Lord for the Kingdom. (Micah 4:6-8)

PARAPHRASE

“Keep on remembering them that are your leadership, those who keep on communicating to you the Word of God. The faith of these people keep on imitating, closely examining their life style, and where it leads in eternity. Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday today and forever! Do not be carried away (from the truth) with different types of teachings that are foreign to the people of God! For it keeps on being a good thing for a heart to be firmly stabilised in grace, not in physical things, which do not benefit those who are walking according to those beliefs. We keep on having an altar, from which those who serve at the Temple on earth, have no right to eat. For, remember, the bodies of the animals slain for a blood sacrifice are taken outside the city to be burned. For this reason also Jesus, in order that he might sanctify the people with his blood sacrifice, suffered for sin, outside the city gate also. Let us therefore go outside the city and temple gate bearing the same insults he did. For we have here no lasting city, but rather , we keep on seeking one that is to come.”

HEBREWS 13: 15 - 19

“ 15 By him therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. 16 But to do good and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. 17 Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch over your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you. 18 Pray for us; for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. 19 But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.”

KEY WORDS

Offer	anaphero	present, active, subjunctive; let us bring up, offer up.
Praise	aineseos	praise, a thanks offering of praise.
Continually	dia pantos	through all (situations).
Giving	omologeō	present, active, participle; keeping on confessing/acknowledging.
Thanks		
Communicate	koinonia	fellowship.
Forget not	epilanthano	present, active, participle; keep on habitually not being forgetful of these things.
Well pleased	euaresteo	present, active, participle; God is always well pleased.
Obey	peitho	present, middle, imperative keep on obeying (below for another usage of the same word)
Rule	egoumenos	leaders.
Submit	upeiko	present, active, imperative; keep on yielding/submitting to the rulership of.
Watch over	agrupneo	present, active, indicative; they keep on going without sleep through their watchfulness.
Give account	apodidomi	future, active, participle; they are about to render (an account of their work, stewardship)
Grief	stenazontes	groanings of grief and distress.
Unprofitable	alusiteles	no value, but more, even a harmful outcome for you.
Pray for us	proseuchomai	present, middle, imperative; keep on praying!
We trust	peitho	present, passive, indicative; we keep on being persuaded by evidence.
Willing	thelo	present, active, participle; keeping on desiring to.
Live	anastrepho	present, middle, infinitive; to conduct our lives.
Honestly	kalos	intrinsically good and noble.
Beseech	Parakaleo	present, active, indicative; I keep on urging you.
The rather	perissoteros	even more earnestly.
Restored	apokathistemi	aorist, passive, subjunctive; restored back to be with you again.
Sooner	tachion	more quickly.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The writer now goes on to speak more of the sacrifices that we are to bring to our heavenly altar, and specifically for the first recipients of this letter he gives personal encouragement as to how they can bring sacrifices of prayer for the writer and his team.

Verse 15. All we do of value as believers is “by him”, and all we do that does not count for anything of significance is “by ourselves”, in our own power. The Lord calls us to serve him in the strength he alone gives, and in his

power, in his name, through his provided Holy Spirit. We are reminded again of the need to be spirit filled, for the Christian life is a supernatural life, lived in the power that the Lord provides, or it is not genuine.

The hortatory subjunctive, "let us offer up", reminds us that the decision is ours to obey this command to be through all situations of life in prayer for the Lord's will, guidance, and direction. All prayer is to be made with thanksgiving, **Philippians 4:6, Colossians 2:7, 4:2**, for that is a praise offering to the Lord, and is not only acceptable to Him, but is a right and proper sacrifice to bring. The fruit of our lips ought always to be thanksgiving towards the one who has given us all things that we need to fulfil our role upon the earth. Fruit comes automatically from a tree that is well fed and nourished, and so it is from us. If we are genuinely believers in the Lord and are regularly feeding on the living Word of God and applying it in our lives, then the fruit of such growth will be constant praise to the one who has provided all this blessing and direction. Being a genuine, spirit filled, and hungry believer for the Word of Truth - we will be fruitful!

Verse 16. God is also well pleased with the sacrifices of good deeds and Christian fellowship. It is easy to forget these things and so the writer reminds them all of the need to constantly remind themselves of the importance of expressing their love and praise in and through fellowship with others, and doing good works for others within the family of faith. Every lovely act done for another in Jesus name is done for him, and to him, and is another of our sacrifices of praise to him. Fellowship is active, not passive, and we are all called to actively encourage each other by sharing time, our goods, and love with each other. **Romans 12:9-16, 2 Corinthians 9:12 - 14, Galatians 6:6, 1 Timothy 6:17 - 19.**

Verse 17. Keep on obeying your godly and devoted leadership, so that you might benefit from their work for you. The purpose of the pastor teacher is to instruct and assist all the believers under their care on the road to maturity. Under the guidance and direction of the Lord they do have the "rule" or authority over the church. They are to rule through their role as the heralds of the king, for the pastor has no authority in and of himself, it stems only from their role as the under shepherds of the Lord. Our "rulership" as pastors, elders/bishops is as "servant leaders" of God's flock. We do not rule and lord it over God's people as the pagan/gentiles rule! **Matthew 20:25-28.**

All of God's people are to submit themselves to the authority of one of God's pastors, for that is the way the Lord has ordered the church he left behind. We have a role and we have a place, and that is firstly under the authority of God's called "under shepherd", so that we might learn more than simply the bible teacher he instructs us through. We are to learn humility, obedience, authority, and draw from the life example of that person that the Lord has placed over us. Those things can only be learned in relationship, under authority, and those people who do not come to the place where they accept another's godly rule over them will never come to the place of service for their Lord.

The reason for submission is that godly leadership exercises oversight for the benefit of the saints; they watch out for the soul health of the believers under their care. The word translated watch out for, is an interesting one, and means to be careful, concerned and watchful, even staying up all night to exercise this level of care. The pastor teacher of God's flock is one who will go without sleep, and work at times others wouldn't to exercise his caring concern for the flock of the Lord. The Lord demands focused service and absolute dedication from those who would serve his people.

The soul is the area of combat in the angelic conflict, and the soul of the believer must be protected by the pastor by accurate teaching, and constant prayer on behalf of the flock he has oversight for. The true pastor of the Lord must give an account of their stewardship in such matters. Every pastor is personally responsible for their service of oversight. Every pastor must give personal account for how well they have led and cared for the flock of God that they were delegated responsibility for by the Lord. The pastor is going to be judged, possibly in front of his people, and will win or lose eternal rewards on the basis of how they fulfilled their ministry towards others, in their soul care over them. **Philippians 4:1, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20, 1 Peter 5:4.**

The pastor must give report about their flock, and the writer's concern is that each pastor will be able to give good reports with happiness rather than sadness and the groans of deep regret and distress. For some there will be happiness as they recall the great growth and strength of their flock, but for others they will have deep distress as they recall that the flock had every opportunity but did not take it.

The pastor must ensure they have "no regrets", and the flock must individually also ensure they have no regrets about not serving or obeying more than they did. The pastor's role is to provide teaching, **John 21:15-19**, but the sheep must exercise their own positive volition and eat the food provided. If there is grief on either part it is a disgrace and a disaster! The word translated unprofitable, *alusiteles*, means more than just not making a profit; it indicates that there is great regret, great loss, and an outcome at the end of time that is harmful to the eternal destiny and blessedness of the people involved! It is a serious thing to get this wrong, from either side.

Verse 18. The writer is direct, we need prayer from you; you can help us through prayer, so please pray! We do not know for sure who the writer is but the recipients of the letter clearly did, by this point at least. He asks for prayer for himself, but also for his whole team. Ministry is never alone, it is meant to be a team activity, with people with us in the work or at least with us in prayer support. The writer then says a curious thing, and it makes us wonder what had gone on between this church and him. "We are persuaded that we have a good conscience towards you all". This tells us that in some way the writer has been maligned or verbally attacked in some way within this church, and is asserting that he is innocent of whatever criticism has been directed against him. This is one reason I believe the author to be Paul.

We cannot be without criticism in the Lord's work, we can only ensure we are without guilt over whatever we are accused of, and he tells them that he is without guilt of any offence, and that his belief in this innocence is based on good

evidence. He affirms that he is in all things living a life that is characterised by honesty (Greek word = kalos), or all things that are noble and of good character. He is saying that he has lived a life that is beyond reproach before them all.

Verse 19. He then urges them to fulfil all he has commanded them in the Lord's name, in order that he might be restored to them quickly again. Some believe that the writer must have been a previous pastor of this church and been cast out, but that is not a necessary assumption. He requires their obedience to all that has been ordered before the Lord, and then their prayers for him and his team, which from their new standpoint of obedience, will surely be answered by the Lord. He will be restored to them through their obedience and believing prayer, even if it is in heaven.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Praise his holy name! Let all the people of God express themselves in praise of his name. This must be at the heart of our daily service to the Lord, and it is the natural outpouring of this joy that should characterise the believer. How much praise and worship characterises your daily life believer? Is it the natural and joy filled outpouring of a person who is known for their joy, or do you have to "work it up" on a Sunday and the rest of the week you are miserable to be around? Deal with this if you are convicted by the filling of the Holy Spirit!

Doing good deeds to others and enjoying the fellowship of other believers should also be a natural and pleasant part of daily life, without any special fanfare or planning. These things are the fruit of the Holy Spirit and are to characterise the lives of all who claim to be believer priests of the King of Kings.

Obedience, without complaint or resentment is to be the norm within the churches of the saints, for God's way is that we might be under the authority of his called men. The true pastor will not lord it over the flock, but will rather lead by example, pray always for the flock, and teach often the Word of God. How much prayer has been offered by yourself this week for your pastor? Have you taken any time out to do any work to assist in the local church?

If you look at the last week only, how much is there through that week over which you can rejoice, and how much has been a waste of time? Time wasted will be grieved over at the throne of God, for it was a precious commodity the Lord gave you and you failed to use it as you were meant to. There is a very serious tone to these verses, and the clear indication is that failure to action the commands here will bring not only great regret, but losses for ourselves that are significant in eternity.

Have we lived with a good conscience this last week? Are there things that you would not want broadcasted for all to see? At the Lord's throne all of us will see, and perhaps all others will, our failures writ large, then they will be gone, but the consequences of our failure to follow through on opportunities are significant.

B. PASTORAL

How well are we watching over the flock of God as the Lord's pastors. We are His, and the flock is His, and we are accountable for the work we do with the Lord's people. How well have we been exercising our responsibility over this last week? Is there opportunity within the church service for all the people to offer up sacrifices of praise as a body? Do we teach the Lord's people about their privilege and responsibility to offer up acceptable sacrifices that are the outflow of the Holy Spirit's presence in their life? Have we taught about praise and worship so people know what is involved in praise?

How well have we watched over souls this week? Have our prayers been regular, our study been thorough or last minute? Have we taken the opportunities to encourage the sheep the Lord has put before us this week? We cannot stop some from attacking us and our ministry, but we can stop them having anything true to say; let us ensure that in the coming weeks we live worthy of our Lord and Saviour who gave his all, that we might give our all for his precious ones.

DOCTRINES

SATANIC ATTACK

1.- Pre Adamic

	Scripture	Remarks
Original Creation	Genesis 1:1	Perfection and unity.
Creation of Satan	Ezekiel 28:13-15	Created the most beautiful creature, a genius.
Fall of Satan	Isaiah 14:12-15	"I will" 5 times. Satan sets himself up as God.
1/3 of Angels follow Satan	Revelation 12:4	
God's Judgment	Matthew 25:41	Lake of fire created for Satan and his angels.
Satan appeals		Man created with a free will to show the fairness of God's judgment.

Man having been created, Satan wages war firstly to get man to sin, secondly having had a Saviour promised to attack the line of Christ, thirdly an attack on the Saviour until He completed His work, fourthly to attack the Word of God and the individual believer.

2. - Stage 1 - Innocence-Sinfulness

	Scripture	Remarks
Man created	Genesis 1:26, 27	God provides everything. One tree a test of free will.
Woman falls	Genesis 3:1-6	Through ignorance of God's Word
Man falls	1 Timothy 2:13, 14	Man chooses deliberately to go against God's provision.
Salvation promised	Genesis 3:15	

3. - Stage 2 - Attack on the Line of the Saviour

Object:- If Satan can prevent the Saviour being physically born he has proved that God does not keep His promise in Genesis 3:15 and is therefore not perfect.

Attack 1. Cain kills Abel (Attack on the seed of the woman)	Genesis 4:8, 9	An unbeliever kills a believer but Seth, another believer is provided for the line of Christ.
Attack 2. Infiltration of Fallen Angels. (Attack on the humanity)	Genesis 6:1-8	Infiltration until only Noah's family left as the humanity. Flood removes angel/men demons incarcerated in Tartarus (Hades)
Attack 3. Tower of Babel (Attack on nationalism)	Genesis 11:1 –7	An attempt by Satan to bring in the Millennium without God. The original U.N. God forms nations and confuses their tongues.- Tower of Babel.
Abraham promised the Saviour will be descended from him.	Genesis 12:1-3	Attack on the line of Abraham.
Attack 4. Pharaoh of Egypt.	Exodus 1:22	Using Pharaoh by ordering the slaughter of the male Jews Satan attempts to eliminate the Jews.
David promised a King descended from him will reign forever	2 Sam 7:12-16	Satan now attacks the descendants of David
Attack 5. Against the Kings of Judah	2 Kings 22:1, 2	Josiah, boy King of Judah divinely protected comes to throne at age of 8 after coup d'etat eliminates every other member of the royal line.
Attack 6. Against the Jews	Esther 3:6	Satan attempts to destroy the Jews using Haman. Haman eventually executed.
Attack 7. Against Jerusalem.	Isaiah 37:36	185,000 Assyrian troops under Sennacherib killed by God outside Jerusalem.

4. Stage 3. Attack on the Person of Christ

Attack 1. Possible stoning of Mary	Matt 1:18-20	The nobility of Joseph defended the as yet unborn Jesus.
Attack 2. Herod the Great.	Matt 2:16-18	Satan using Herod attempts to eliminate the Christ child by murdering all the young males in Bethlehem. Joseph takes Jesus to Egypt.
Attack 3. Temptation in Wilderness	Matt 4:9	A sinner cannot redeem other sinners. Satan offers the crown (Millennium) before the cross. Jesus follows God's plan.
Attack 4. Temptation not to go to the Cross.	Matt 16:21-23	Jesus follows God's plan although the cross was obnoxious to him.
Attack 5. Attempt to stone Jesus.	John 8:59	It was prophesied that the Saviour would die on wood. Stoning would have cut across this prophecy.
Attack 6. Attempt to tempt Jesus down from the cross.	Matt 27:40	If Jesus had come down from the cross there would have been no salvation.
Attack 7. The drugged wine.	Matt 27:34	Gall was a drug which if Jesus had accepted it would have impaired his free will and there would have been no salvation.

5. Stage 4. - Attacks since the Cross.

Attack 1. Against Scripture.	Attempting to get false books accepted in the canon of Scripture. Liberalism and Moderism, Humanism and Evolution.
Attack 2. Revival of Roman Empire	Under Charlemange in 800 and Charles V in 1500. Roman Catholic Church.
Attack 3. Massacre of Jews.	Hitler's final solution attempts to eliminate Jews. No Jews no Kingdom for Jesus to reign over. Inquisition, Crusades, Russian pogroms.
Attack 4. One World Government.	Revival of the Tower of Babel concept under the League of Nations and U.N.
Attack 5. Socialism.	Satan's millennium.
Attack 6. Persecution.	Nero, Reformation, Inquisition

6. Strategy of Satan at the Present Satan's strategy is divided into 3 sections.

(a) Towards unbelievers. -

To blind them regarding the gospel. (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10)

(b) Towards believers.

He accuses believers. (Revelation 12-9, 10, Job 1:6-11)

He persuades the believers to ignore the will of God through disobedience (Genesis 2:17), through worry (1 Peter 5, 7-9), ignoring doctrine (1 Chronicles 21:1)

He seeks to entice the believer from the will of God. (James 4:7, 8)

He seeks to destroy the believer's focus by getting eyes on self (1 Corinthians 1:10, 11 on people (1 Corinthians 1:12) by getting eyes on things (Hebrews 13:5, 6)

To get the believer frightened of death. (Hebrews 2:14, 15)

(c) Towards the world in general.

Satan tries to deceive the nations. (Revelation 20:7-10)

Principle:- The more you know about the Word of God the more you will be able to be effective as a Christian. c/f. Jesus in Matthew 4.

SOUL AND HUMAN SPIRIT

1. The real person is in the soul (Genesis 2:7), the body is merely a house for the soul (2 Corinthians 5:1-4).
2. The soul and the spirit are separate (Hebrews 4:12).
3. In creation, Adam received soul and spirit (Genesis 2:7).
4. It is the soul that is saved, not the body (Romans 5:12, Psalm 19:7, 34:22, Mark 8:36,37, Hebrews 10:39, 1Peter 1:9).
5. The unbeliever has body and soul only (1 Corinthians 2:14).
 - a) The unbeliever does not have an activated spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14, Jude 19).
 - b) The Holy Spirit acts as the regenerator of the human spirit (Genesis 6:3, John 16:8-11, 1 Corinthians 2:14-16).
 - c) At the point of salvation the human spirit is activated.
6. The believer has body, soul and spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
 - a) The believer has an activated spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
 - b) The human spirit deals with spiritual understanding.
 - c) He understands spiritual phenomena (1 Corinthians 2:14).
 - d) The believer grows in grace and knowledge (Ephesians 3:16-19).
7. Characteristics of the Soul
 - a) Deals with human understanding.
 - b) Self awareness (Genesis 35:18, 1 Kings 17:21) - either focus on Christ, or on self (either pride or self-pity).
 - c) Thinking (Luke 12:19) - either divine viewpoint, or human viewpoint.
 - d) Freewill (Acts 3:23) - either obedient to God's will, or self will.
 - e) Emotions (Song of Solomon 1:7, Luke 12:19, 2 Peter 2:8) - either controlled, or pleasing self.

- f) Conscience (Acts 24:16, Romans 2:15, 9:1,2) - either God's standards, or (either lawlessness or self-righteousness).
- g) Sin nature (Leviticus 5:1, Psalm 58:2-5, Ezekiel 18:4, Matthew 15:19) - either controlled, or in control.
- h) Departs from body at death (Job 27:8, Psalm 16:10, 2 Corinthians 5:8).
- i) Area of love (1 Samuel 18:1).
- j) Area of misery (Psalm 6:3, 106:15, 119:25,28,81).

CONFIDENCE [See page 191 above]

CONSCIENCE [See page 75 above]

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT [See page 124 above]

SERVICE [See page 9 above]

PARAPHRASE

“Through him therefore, let us keep on in all situations, bringing up (to the father), our thanks-offering, our sacrifice of praise; for that is the fruit of our lips, as we keep on acknowledging his holy name. Do not ever forget to keep on doing good, and fellowshiping, for with such sacrifices as these God keeps on being well pleased. Keep on being obedient to them that are your leaders, and yield to their instructions, for they go without sleep to watch out for your souls safety. They do this as those who remember that they must give an account of their care to God, so ensure they can present their report with joy, not with the groanings of grief and distress, for such a report would be harmful to you. Keep on praying for us, as we keep on being persuaded that we do have a good conscience and in all things we conduct our lives in goodness. I urge you earnestly to do all this, in order that I may be restored again to you all the faster.”

HEBREWS 13 : 20 - 25

“ 20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever , Amen. 22 And I beseech you brethren, suffer the word of exhortation; for I have written a letter unto you in few words. 23 Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. 24 Salute all them that have a rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. 25 Grace be with you all. Amen.”

KEY WORDS

Brought	anago	aorist, active, participle; brought/lead up again.
Perfect	katartizo	aorist, active, optative; God's wish is to supply all that is lacking in order to bring you to completeness.
Do his will	Poieo	aorist, active, infinitive; in order that you might do.
Working	poieo	present, active, participle; keeping on doing.
Forever and ever	eis tous aionas ton aionas	to the ages of the ages.
Beseech	parakaleo	present, active, indicative; I keep on urging, exhorting you.
Suffer	anecho	present, middle, imperative; keep on bearing the burden.
Exhortation	Paraklesis	the summons to action, word of encouragement, exhortation to action. The result of such a word is always action, or judgement!
Set at liberty	Apoluo	Perfect , passive, participle; set free with eternal results in ministry
Salute	aspazomai	aorist, middle, imperative; greet.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

It is appropriate that the writer mentions the shepherdhood of the Lord, given that he has mentioned so much about our being either obedient sheep or faithful shepherds. In these final words we see more of the writer's heart for these people in Jerusalem, and get some personal glimpses that help us identify where he is writing from and who was with him.

Verse 20. The first thing to note is his reference to God the Father, as the “God of Peace”. The Lord's peace is gained through the cross and empty tomb, and it is this work that has won our salvation and position in relationship with the Lord of glory in glory. We have eternal life because of him, and we have his peace through his wonderful completed work. **Ephesians 2:16, 2 Corinthians 5:18.** God is the one who has made peace with man, and we are recipients of all the blessing that flow from God's work; it is all of grace, our role is to respond appropriately in obedience.

God's power is seen in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. God's power is over all that man fears, and his power has been expressed over death to defeat it, as it will be expressed over the whole universe to dissolve it,

and bring in another creation. We serve a risen victorious Saviour, we serve the mighty God! Not only is he the mighty resurrected Lord he is also the good shepherd, who cares for those he has delivered.

The Lord's loving care is expressed in the past through his blood shed for us, and in the presence, with his intercession on our behalf, from the right hand of the Father. His blood opens up an eternal covenant; it is the door that opens into eternity and opens only through his perfect sacrifice. Redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, and sanctification are all ours through the blood shed for us alone.

Verse 21. The purpose of the work of the Lord is that we might be transformed and made fit to serve him as we are left here to do. The word for perfect, *katartizo*, has a military usage that is probably in view here. It means to thoroughly equip the soldier for the coming campaign, to supply all they need to be able to do their work. The completeness of provision is in order to do the work to which we are called as the Lord's soldiers. We are here to do his will, nothing less! We are equipped by the Lord to do his will. We stand without excuse if we fail to perform his will, for all we need is provided to us.

The Holy Spirit is ever working in us to do the will of the father, to do things that are well pleasing to him. Our eyes are to be focused only on pleasing our lord, and he will ensure we have all we need to achieve this. All this is possible through Jesus Christ our Lord, who opened the door to it all!

To him will be the glory for ever and ever. By doing the will of God the Lord Jesus Christ gets the glory, and that is one of our acceptable sacrifices to him. We are left here to ensure he gets the glory that is his due, and all we do in the Holy Spirit's power wins glory for our Lord; that is our role here and now, and our privilege, and must become our joy!

Verse 22. Once again he urges them to listen to the Word of God, even though they may feel "got at" by the teaching. The writer's appeal is strong, for he knows this is the last chance this church has before it is possibly destroyed. The word translated suffer, is that Greek word, *anacho*, again, meaning "bear the burden". We would say, 'accept your punishment', 'take it like a man', 'take the punch', 'sit with your pain', 'take it on the chin'.

Every culture has its own way of saying what the writer says here, but the significance of it is the same. When you are being told off it is hard to sit still and take the criticism and the demands for action, but our life may depend on it, and in the case before us, this church will not survive unless they get the truth of this letter.

His next words are surely said with a smile! This is not a letter of "few words", it is a long letter, one of the longer letters of the New Testament, yet given what could have been said it is short, and given its weighty matter it is an easy read and hasn't taken them long to cover. It is short but the consequences are long(eternal) if they fail to get with its truth.

Verse 23. The strongest direct hint of the author being Paul is given here in the mention of the author being a close companion of Timothy. Timothy has apparently been free from jail himself and the writer hopes to join him soon and for both to travel to Jerusalem to be with them and in person follow up what the letter has covered. This may coincide with the events described in **2 Timothy 4:11, 21**.

Paul urges Timothy to join him in Rome during his last imprisonment, perhaps he did and was imprisoned, but has just been released. Certainly the timing of Paul's last imprisonment is the timing of the writing of this letter. Enough speculation! We do not know that it is Paul writing, but we do know the writer rejoices in Timothy's release, and rejoices in it as if it is his own. In this he illustrates the mental attitude of the genuine believer who rejoices with the joys of others and weeps with others sadness. Paul will die at the end of this second imprisonment, but he is not focused on that, but on the believers world wide, that they might be blessed. **2 Timothy 4:6-8**. He wants this church to find God's path.

Verse 24. We ought always to pay our respects to the brethren, and the writer greets all the church personally now. He has pleaded with them, urged them on to obedience, and taught them through the letter, but now he reminds them in this greeting that he is their brother and he cares for them all, and loves them as his family. He greets the eldership of the church and all the members as brethren. We learn that he is in Italy, if not Rome itself, and that he has the greetings of the church there for those at Jerusalem. There is a fellowship in Christ that transcends all age, national and racial barriers.

The families of the church members in Italy will probably have relatives in the occupation armies that will soon besiege Jerusalem, yet they are brethren of their Jewish counterparts. They can be brethren rather than members of enemy forces. It is another reminder for believers to be cautious of political and military involvement, and be very sure of the Lord's direct guidance into those two areas of work. We are called to express the brotherhood of all believers, and that involves crossing all other barriers in love.

Verse 25. It is fitting that the last word the writer wants this church to have from him is, grace. It is grace to which he calls them, and grace he leaves them with. Grace is our theme, for that is the message we have from him, for he has done the work, we get the benefit, and he wants us to do his work now in his grace provision.

APPLICATION

A. PERSONAL

Are we peace bringers, and peace makers in our church and communities? We represent the God of Peace, and that is what we should be known for also.

Have we praised him today for the sacrifice of his blood and for his resurrection power? Through his great provision for us we are fully equipped for all good works that the Lord may call us to perform. Are we as active as we ought to be? Are we on the job or off track?

We are here to do good work for the Lord, to serve him as his soldiers. How are we serving? We are here to bring glory to our Lord; have we done anything this week that will win glory for the Lord?

Grace is the theme of this book. Is it at the centre of our life?

B. PASTORAL

Resurrection power is what the gospel is all about, and we must ensure we preach the full gospel, for the Lord is victor over sin and death. We serve a risen Saviour, and he wants us to serve him in faith, by Grace. What an example of pastoral life we have in the writer to the Hebrews. Let us take him, with all the others authors of scripture as our mentor, and so show the love and grace of God to those the Lord has called us to serve amongst.

DOCTRINES

PEACE [See page 83 above]

RESURRECTION [See page 116 above]

SHEPHERD: CHRIST THE SHEPHERD

1. In the Bible, sheep represent believers - Matthew 25:33,34 - they are contrasted with goats (unbelievers).
2. Sheep are helpless, they need to be led, fed and protected.
3. Israel was called the sheep of his fold (Psalm 74:1, 79:13, 95:7, 100:3 Jeremiah 23:1).
4. The Lord himself is the true Shepherd (John 10:10-16).
5. The Lord Jesus Christ is seen as the shepherd in five different ways in 1Peter 2:21-25.
 - a) The suffering shepherd (v 21).
 - b) The sinless shepherd (v 22).
 - c) The submissive shepherd (v 23).
 - d) The substitutionary shepherd (v 24).
 - e) The seeking shepherd (v 25).
6. The Shepherd as Christ appears in three successive Psalms.
 - a) Psalm 22 - the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep (John 10:11). He is the Door (John 10:9).
 - b) Psalm 23 - the Lord is my shepherd - the great shepherd of the sheep (Hebrews 13:20).
 - c) Psalm 24 - the chief shepherd appears as the Man of Glory (1Peter 5:4).
 - d) These show the shepherd dying for His sheep, the resurrected shepherd tending and caring for His sheep and the future shepherd ruling over His sheep.

PROPITIATION [See page 58 above]

RECONCILIATION [See page 60 above]

REDEMPTION [See page 59 above]

BROTHERHOOD OF BELIEVERS

1. All believers are referred to as brothers (gk adelphos), the Greek word used indicating family relationship with both male and female included. As members of the same family who will rule throughout all eternity together it is of the greatest importance to have a special attitude towards our fellow believers (1 Peter 2:5, 9-10, Revelation 5:10).
2. This attitude should be one of agape love or caring for the ultimate well being of others (1Peter 2:17, 3:8, 1John 3:23, 4:12).
3. We are our brothers keepers, not by way of interference but by being active and alert for their good (Genesis 4:9 cf. James 5:20, 2 Thessalonians 3:15).
4. Because of family closeness there is a danger that one member may lead another astray, so discipline is required (1Corinthians 5:11).
5. In our family there must be a readiness to forgive (Matthew 18:21).
6. The world has its own brotherhood of evil and sin (John 15:19).
7. The soul and fruit of a person shows the family to which they belong (Matthew 12:33).
8. All of us were born into Adam's family (1 Corinthians 15:22).
9. We either stay there in sin or become a member of the Lord's family (John 8:42-44).

GRACE [See page 159 above]

PARAPHRASE

"Now, the God of peace, who brought back again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of his everlasting covenant, he has one desire for you all, and that is to perfect you; to supply all that is lacking to ensure you reach your spiritual purpose, that you might do his will. He is always working in you to produce that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory, unto the end of all the ages, Amen. So I keep on exhorting, urging you my brethren, bear the burden of the words given to you for application, for I have written only a small letter(given what I could have written). Be aware that our brother Timothy is set free, with whom I will come to you shortly, if he arrives in time. Greet all those who are you leaders from me, and all the saints. The church that is in Italy greets you. Grace be with you all. Amen".

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