

Study Guide

Hebrews

*In the past God
spoke to our
forefathers through
the prophets*

*... But these last days
He has spoken to us by His Son.*

By Gerald Paden

SUNSET
International Bible Institute



THE BOOK OF HEBREWS



INTRODUCTORY NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

Arranged for study by
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DISCLAIMER

The textbooks used in this course were selected because we consider them two of the best and well adapted to this course of study. ***The Commentary on Hebrews***, by Gerald Paden, **SIBI Institute Press**, and ***Jesus Christ Today*** by: Neil Lightfoot contain a wealth of knowledge which will increase your understanding of this important book. The insights these two men present on this study will enhance your understanding and help you to appreciate the overall content of this study. As with all books written by men, there may be some things with which you and I would not agree. The principle: “use what is good, and discard what is not good” applies to all textbooks used with our courses. Please be wise enough to discard all teachings that are not biblical.

Instructions and Requirements

Level II

(Non-Transferable)

Each lesson is built around the instruction in either the video or the audio lectures. Listen to the recorded lecture as you follow along in this course Study Guide book.

There is a Self Exam at the end of each lesson. Preview each lesson by reading these questions first.

Reading: You are required to read the book of Hebrews in a modern version (NIV, NASV) or some other newer version.

Tests: There will be only two tests to complete for this course. One test is to be done at the end of lesson twelve (12), and the other will be taken at the end of the study.

Memory Work: All memory work will be done on the honor system. You are asked either to write your verses on the Self Exams or to quote them to someone at the end of each lesson where memory work is required. (**You need to bring the version out of which you memorized to him/her**) All memory work assigned must be completed in order to pass this course. You have a total of eighteen (18) verses to memorize. (**This will be 10% or your final grade**)

Due by the first test: (11 verses)

Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:1-4; 4:14-16.

Due by the final test: (7 verses)

Hebrews 12:1-3; 11:1-3,6.

Assignments:

- * The Self Exam for each lesson is to be read previous to listening or viewing the material on the tapes.
- * All the memory verses assigned must be completed either by being written out or quoted before the mid-term or final test is taken.
- * All Self Exams are to be completed at the end of each lesson.

Instructions and Requirements

Level III

(Transferable)

The following assignments must be completed in order to be able to transfer this course of study over to the resident school. This will also be necessary for credit in the Sunset School of Preaching External Studies program.

Reading: Two books are required: *The Commentary on Hebrews*, by Gerald Paden, SIBI Institute Press, and *Jesus Christ Today*, by Neil Lightfoot. These books must be read by the time the course is completed and **a one page evaluation for the book by Lightfoot must be written.** You must also read the *Book of Hebrews* two times during this course of study. One of those readings must be in a modern speech translation (**20% of your final grade**)

Memory Verses: You will have fifty (50) Bible verses to memorize. These may be written or quoted to your test administrator throughout the course and must be completed by the time the course is finished. **If you write your memory work, please indicate which Bible version you are using.**

Due with the Mid-Term Test: (26 verses)

Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:1-4, 14-16; 3:7-11; 4:14-16; 5:11-14; 7:23-25.

Due with the Final Test: (24 verses)

Hebrews 8:10-12; 10:19-28; 11:1-3, 39-40; 12:1-3, 22-24

Self Exams and Tests: You must complete all the “Self Exam” questions in your Course Guide and you must complete the Mid-term and Final tests with a grade of 70% or higher.

Research Papers: Research and write a two-page paper, giving the evidences for who may have written the book of Hebrews. You may use any resource material you choose including the material in this study. Include the following men in your research: (**10% of your grade**)

- a. The apostle Paul.
- b. Apollos.
- c. Luke.

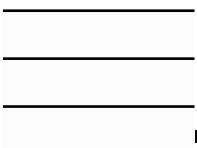
NOTE: Show your filled-in study guide to your administrator at the end of the course.

Grade Value Percentage:

Readings & evaluation:	20%
Research papers:	10%
Memory work:	10%
Tests:	60%
TOTAL	100%

*C*ONTENTS

LESSON	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK	1
2. JESUS, THE SON, IS DEITY (1:1-14)	7
3. HUMANITY OF JESUS I (2:1-10)	12
4. HUMANITY OF JESUS II (2:11-18)	16
5. MOSES OR CHRIST (3:1-19)	21
6. THE PROMISED SABBATH-REST (4:1-16)	26
7. THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST (5:1-10)	30
8. PROGRESSING TO MATURITY (5:11 - 6:8)	34
9. THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION (6:9-20)	40
10. THE ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST (7:1-19)	45
11. THE SUPERIOR HIGH PRIEST (7:19-28)	49
12. THE BETTER HIGH PRIEST (8:1-8)	53
13. A BETTER COVENANT (8:9-13)	58
14. THE BETTER TABERNACLE (9:1-10)	62
15. THE BETTER MINISTRY (9:11-22)	67
16. THE TRUE MINISTRY OF JESUS (9:23-28)	71
17. CHRIST'S SUPERIOR SACRIFICE (10:1-18)	74
18. THE CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE (10:19-25)	78
19. THE PENALTY OF FORSAKING (10:26-39)	82
20. THE TESTIMONY OF FAITH (11:1-40)	86
21. CHRISTIAN ENDURANCE (12:1-13)	91
22. THE DIGNITY OF THE CHRISTIAN POSITION (12:14-29)	95
23. REMEMBER... (13:1-16)	99
24. FINAL EXHORTATIONS (13:17-25)	102



LESSON ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

INTRODUCTION:

He welcome you to the study of the Book of Hebrews. You will find this an extremely interesting study. It will challenge and clarify your concepts on the entire Bible. It will enrich your appreciation for the priesthood of Christ. It will establish and confirm new views about Christ, His claims, and the biblical rights to those claims. Hebrews will set forth the benefits that come from a strong faith and conviction in Christ's present ministry. And this book outlines the privileges Christian people enjoy because of who He is and what He did.

LESSON TEXT: The Book of Hebrews

LESSON AIM: To learn several things about the Hebrew system which will help us understand the reasoning of the writer as he encourages the early Hebrew Christians not to turn away from Christ.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that the old system of Hebrew religion was inadequate and temporal and intended to be replaced by the new system of Christ.
 2. Learn ten topics and their general locations discussed in the book of Hebrews.
 3. Memorize four suggested rules for studying Hebrews.
 4. Know the date of the writing of the book of Hebrews and why this date is preferred.
- **Memorize:** The six vital topics presented in Hebrews with chapter designations.
-

A PREVIEW OF THE BOOK

A. The End of the Old Mosaic Law

1. You will find in this book the strongest declaration and demonstration of the total removal of the old Hebrew system: its law, its sanctuary, its priesthood, its covenant agreements, and everything that was a part of the Law of Moses.
2. The new system inaugurated by Christ stands unique and unparalleled with all the exclusive benefits and privileges that Christ came to give.
3. Hebrews gives the best demonstration of the limited purpose of the Law of Moses.
 - a. The Law was only a "shadow" of coming realities which Christ introduced.
 - b. That "shadow" quality of the Law was shown in every aspect of the Mosaic arrangement: its priests, its sanctuary, its sacrifices, etc.

B. The Hebrew Religious System

1. The Hebrew system of religion is built around a number of qualities and

personages. The Mosaic system was developed around:

- a. The Aaronic priesthood (the high priestly family).
- b. The Levitical priesthood (the ordinary ministering priestly family).
- c. The old tabernacle erected in the wilderness (its basic structure being later incorporated into the Hebrew temple).
- d. The sacrifices of worship and atonement which were continually offered.
- e. The covenant that God made with Israel at Mount Sinai.
 - 1) The basic law of the Old Covenant was the Ten Commandments.
 - 2) There were another 613 complementary ordinances and statutes that explained and illustrated the original Ten Commandments.

C. Christ Removed the Old and Began the New

1. Christ fulfilled every demand of the shadow system.
2. Christ completely removed the old system. He totally replaced everything about it with the new “realities” of which the old was only a shadow. Thus the new system of Christ:
 - a. Has its own priest.
 - b. Has its sanctuary.
 - c. Has its covenant.
 - d. Has its sacrifice (Christ), all of which are uniquely exclusive to Christianity.
3. There is absolutely nothing of the old Hebrew system that is still in force today. There is not even one single rule, command, ceremony, obligation imposed in the Law of Moses that is to be imposed on or practiced by Christians today!
4. Paul ably shows in Galatians 5:3ff that if any part of the Law of Moses is still binding, then all of it is binding upon us today.

D. Christ’s New World Order. “The world to come.”

1. The “world to come” has effectively arrived (Hebrews 2:5).
2. The new world was subjected to Messiah the man and to His people.
3. The Hebrew prophets anticipated it. Peter tells us of the excited anticipation the Hebrew prophets felt as they foretold of the coming age of Messiah.

D. Justifying the End of the Old Covenant

1. We have a better covenant based upon greater promises.
The imperfections of the Old Covenant.
 - a. “*The law made nothing perfect*” (Hebrews 9:18).
 - b. It was never intended to accomplish what the New Covenant of Christ ALONE could do.
2. This new system brings privileges that the old system could never give.
 - a. The glorious relationships between God and the subjects of the new system could only be promised in the Old Testament for the coming age of Messiah.
 - b. The old law did do what it was given to do: prepare Israel for the coming of Messiah (see Galatians 3:24).

E. Elements of the New System

1. A new priest - Jesus (after the order of Melchizedek).
2. A new sanctuary inaugurated.
3. A new covenant “mediated with His blood” (9:15).
4. Based upon better promises. His blood shed on the cross terminated the incessant need for sacrifices under the old order, and brought in “eternal redemption” with His one-time-for-all-time sacrifice.
5. Jesus Christ ministers in a heavenly sanctuary, not in an earthly temple.

NOTE: His is a heavenly ministry because that is where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. That explains why the writer refers to the new sanctuary as the “true tabernacle” (8:2). Such a statement does not mean that the old Hebrew tabernacle was “untrue,” it just means it was the “shadow” of the future “reality” or “true” sanctuary.

F. The Nature of Shadows

1. Shadows do not have independent existence.
2. Shadows prophesy and demand the substance that cast them.
3. These includes the Law, the priests, the sacrifices and the sanctuary.
 - a. The old tabernacle is a “shadow” (8:6).
 - b. The old sacrifices are “shadows” (10:1).
 - c. The law and its priests were part of the “shadow”.
4. They serve as a kind of blueprint of the structure to be built in the future.

NOTE: The shadow of the Law of Moses came before the reality of the Christian system. That is the way the Hebrew writer explains the passing of the shadow system. Once the reality has arrived, the shadow is no longer needed, though it still confirms in part the nature of the reality itself.

G. The Old System Is Imperfect

1. The Levitical priesthood is imperfect (7:11). The Hebrew writer will show that if the former priests could have brought perfection to the Hebrew people, then there would have been no need for the new priesthood of Christ.
2. The Law “made nothing perfect” (7:18).
 - a. The old Hebrew tabernacle could not “make the worshipers perfect” (9:9).
 - b. The sacrifices of the Law could not bring “perfection” (10:1-2).

NOTE: So having inscribed the word “shadow” over the old arrangement, the author then writes the word “imperfect” over it also. The first term implies that the “reality,” which the “shadow” predicted, is now present and that the “perfection,” which the “imperfect” could not give, is now a living part of the new system. The obvious intent of the author is to encourage his readers to “leave” (abandon) the old and “go on” to the perfect that only Christ can give (6:1-2). He assures them that “with one sacrifice Christ has perfected forever all those who are sanctified” (10:14).

H. Other Confirmation of the End of the Law

1. The Law of Moses was designed in its very temporary nature to prepare the people of Israel for the coming of the Messianic age.
2. The Law of Moses was like a school bus driver whose assignment was to gather up the children of Israel and deliver them at the feet of the coming Messiah (Galatians 3:18ff).
3. Other Scriptures that insist upon the limited tenure and purpose of the Law of Moses are: Romans 7:1-6; 2 Corinthians 3:1-11; Galatians 3:15-19; 4:21-31.
4. Moses affirmed that his Law was not the final revelation from God; rather, he looked for the coming of Christ (Hebrews 11:26; cf. John 5:45-47).

I. Vital Topics Presented in Hebrews. The topics and their general locations are listed as follows:

1. The deity of Christ – chapter one.
2. The humanity of Christ – chapter two.

3. The priesthood of Christ – chapter seven.
4. The covenant of Christ – chapter eight.
5. The sanctuary of Christ – chapter nine.
6. The sacrifice of Christ – chapter ten.
7. Then the author will blend all these qualities together and formulate his explanation of the Christian privilege under the new order of things – chapter ten.

NOTE: We must understand that the author is dealing with a people who have been living, as far as their heritage is concerned, under the Mosaic system for 1500 years. And now, he must convince them that their time-honored system has been abrogated. So he must explain the removal of that system, and he will justify his argument for its removal from the Scriptures and, in particular, from the Old Testament itself! Now how can Gentile Christians of today understand what the Hebrew writer had to say to these Jewish Christians?

SUGGESTED RULES FOR STUDYING HEBREWS

A. It Was Written to Hebrews Converted to Christ in the First Century

1. The early church had its roots firmly planted in Jewish soil. Its first converts were exclusively Hebrews.
 - a. The Jews did have privileges that were granted and acknowledged by God.
 - b. They also were first in responsibility. Just as they were first into the blessings of Christ, they were also first in God's judgment if they rejected the Messiah.

B. Four Basic Rules for Studying Hebrews

1. **RULE ONE:** *We must go back in time and adopt the way of thinking of the first readers of this book.*
 - a. They were Hebrew people converted to Christianity.
 - b. Some of those converts were considering leaving Christ and returning to the Hebrew religion.
 - c. One of the major reasons this book was written was to halt this regression. “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, CONSIDER JESUS” (3:1).
 - 1) Consider His Deity, His humanity, and His priesthood.
 - 2) Consider the new covenant between God and His people and all the better promises and privileges His people now enjoy under the new system.
 - 3) You need to consider the advantages that come from a one-time-for-all-time sacrifice as it contrasts with the old Hebrew system that required a new sacrifice for every menacing sin the Hebrews committed.
2. **RULE TWO:** *We must try to think as the Hebrew thought.*
 - a. All the terminology used in the book will have an initial Hebrew meaning and connotation.
 - b. That imposes that we understand something of the original meanings of the terms used, and then we must adopt their definitions.
3. **RULE THREE:** *We must recognize our lack of familiarity with the Jewish system.*
4. **RULE FOUR:** *We must keep in mind which topic is under discussion in each particular chapter.* For example:
 - a. In chapter one the author will discuss the Deity of Christ.

- 1) He will talk about a *Son, the Firstborn*, the Father *bringing the Firstborn into the world* and then about *enthroning Him*.
 - 2) This terminology must be understood by the context.
 - 3) These terms must not be understood as relating to His birth in Bethlehem.
 - 4) These words have to do with Jesus' inauguration as King upon His throne.
- b. In chapter two the author will discuss the humanity of Christ in detail.

NOTE: These comments about the thrust of chapters one and two help illustrate the importance of keeping the major topic in successive chapters well in mind as we go through the study of each. It is clear that the author will have one major topic that dominates the discussion in each chapter.

C. Date of the Writing of the Book

1. A number of years after the Day of Pentecost.
 - a. The readers are asked "to remember the former (or early) days".
 - b. Those former days would refer to the early days of that generation.
 - c. The book of Hebrews was probably written during the latter days of that first generation of Christians, (some 35 years after Pentecost).
 - d. The actual time seems to have been just a few months before the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D.
2. So, when was Hebrews written? It was written probably around 68 or 69 A.D. According to chapters 9 and 10, it was just before the Roman triumph over the Jews.

NOTE: Christianity and Judaism were never intended by God to co-exist. They are two completely different systems that have nothing in common as it relates to atonement for sin and worship of God. The only relation the two systems ever had was defined by the author as the relation between a shadow and the substance that cast it. It is clear to the author that the old Hebrew system had to be terminated before the new system of Christ could begin.

Write from memory the six vital topics in Hebrews with chapter designation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE:

1. Complete the following sentence: "The Law was only a _____ of coming _____ which the Christ introduced."
2. Name five qualities and personages around which the Hebrew system of religion was built.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
3. What is meant by the phrase "the world to come" as used by the Hebrew writer?

4. What are two imperfections of the old system that indicated a need for the new system of Messiah?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
5. Give five elements of the new system of Messiah.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
6. What are three things which reveal the nature of shadows?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
7. To whom is the Hebrew letter addressed? (Do not just say "Hebrews")

8. Give four basic rules which help in the study of Hebrews.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
9. Give the date of the book and why you think this date is correct.

LESSON TWO

JESUS, THE SON, IS DEITY

INTRODUCTION:

In lesson one, several things were presented including the information about the ending of the old system of Hebrew religion, including the Law of Moses, the Levitical priesthood, and the old tabernacle. Also, there were presented four rules suggested to help us in our understanding as we study the epistle. We studied a little about when the book was written, and we presented some reasons why we choose the date of A.D. 68 or 69.

In lesson two we want to look at two things: (1) The continuity and consistency of revelation, and (2) Seven claims to divine excellency for the Son of God. Each of the seven qualities affirm the divine nature of Messiah. The author will make claims for the Son's deity and then proceed through the study of the Old Testament prophets to confirm every one of the claims.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 1:1-14

LESSON AIM: To see the continuity of revelation and the seven excellencies of the Son.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See the pattern of revelation in both the past and the present.
 2. Learn seven things the Hebrew writer states about the Son and the texts he uses to prove his points.
-

THE CONTINUITY OF REVELATION

A. Revelation in the Old Testament

At various times and in various ways.

1. God's message was given in both the prophets' words and in the lives they lived.
2. None of the prophets had the total message of God.

B. Revelation in the Present Days

1. **The same source.** The same God who spoke in times past is now speaking through His Son.
2. **The same message.** The Old Testament and the New Testament is united.
3. **The same purpose.** Continuity of purpose in the complete message.
 - a. Messiah delivered God's final message to mankind.
 - b. The "last days" relates to the last days of the Jewish age. (See 1 Corinthians 10:11; 1 Peter 1:20; Hebrews 9:26.)
4. **A new Messenger.** Jesus is God's spokesman for the new age that began on the day of Pentecost.

SEVEN EXCELLENCIES OF THE SON

In this section the writer will present seven claims to divine excellency for the Son of God. Each of the seven qualities affirms the divine nature of Messiah. The author

will make the claims for the Son's deity and then proceed through the study of the Old Testament prophets to confirm every one of the claims.

A. Jesus Is Heir Of All Things. “*. . .appointed heir of all things.*”

1. Before He became “heir” He was no different from a servant.
 - a. He is potentially “owner of the whole estate” (Galatians 4:1).
 - b. He is “Lord of all.” This makes Jesus the sovereign over all things.
 - c. He is the King, the Ruler of all (Matthew 28:18).
2. Jesus “was appointed heir” by the Father. (Foreseen in Psalms 2:6-7).
3. This is the same God (Father) that spoke to the fathers through the prophets in times past.

B. Jesus Is Creator Of All Things

“*And through whom he made the universe*” (v. 2).

1. Jesus is co-equal with God in nature; He is “the word of God” (John 1:1).
2. All things were made by Jesus (John 1:2). See also Colossians 1:17-18; Hebrews 2:10; 3:4.
3. The Messiah in His incarnate, human condition. When He became a man:
 - a. He gave up the expression of His sovereignty over His creation.
 - b. He gave up His right of rule in order to become a man, and thus make Himself subject to the same laws of nature that you and I must obey.
 - c. He became human in totality, which demanded that He empty Himself of all His divine power and prerogatives.
 - d. That He might be appointed heir of all things. The author sees Him after His earthly ministry, now appointed heir of all.

NOTE: He returned to His throne of glory and assumed once again all the privileges of rule and reign over everything He had made.

C. Jesus Is the Radiance of Divine Glory. “*The Son is the radiance of God’s glory.*”

1. The word “radiance” implies the brightness or effulgence of Jesus’ divine glory.
 - a. He is co-equal with the Father in heavenly brilliance.
 - b. When Jesus came to earth, He emptied Himself of the expression of His divine glory (John 17:5).
2. The Hebrew root concept for “glory” relates to those qualities of God’s own essence, power and actions that are impressive to man. The word implies fullness or completeness.

D. Jesus Is the Representation of Divine Nature. “*And the exact representation of his being.*”

1. The Greek word is KARAKTER, which we would spell “character.”
2. The same word “karakter” was used in New Testament times to indicate an engraving or a signet ring.
 - a. Jesus is not a representation or reproduction of the divine seal; HE IS THE SEAL.
 - b. As to His deity, Messiah is everything in essence that the Father is.

E. Jesus Is Sustainer of All Things. “*. . .sustaining all things by his powerful word.*”

1. The word “upholds” implies that **Messiah governs, rules, and controls the destiny of all things** (See Colossians 1:17).
 - a. It is His powerful word that keeps everything together.
 - b. If Jesus were to withdraw His power, the universe would explode into oblivion.

2. The word “uphold” also suggests the concept that **Jesus is now conducting the universe toward the consummation of its ultimate purpose.**
 - a. It was created with a divine purpose in mind.
 - b. Christ is moving the world and everything and everybody in it toward its ultimate destiny.

F. Jesus Is the Purifier for Sins. *“After he had provided purification for sins.”*

1. Since sin exists, sin must be purified.
2. Man’s relationship with God depends on this act of Christ.

G. He Has a Superior Position and Name. *“. . .he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”*

1. His superior position – seated at the right hand of God – This indicates His priestly job is finished. The Father had accepted the sacrifice of Christ to be the completion of everything necessary for human redemption.
2. His superior name, “SON.” *“So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.”*
 - a. The name “Son” is not native to His eternal deity.
 - b. “Son” has to do with the redemptive function of Jesus.
 - c. The “names of Angels” have to do with their work, their function.
 - d. The angels are communication tools used by the author of Hebrews to show both the deity and humanity of Messiah.

NOTE: So in chapter one the angels will be used to affirm the deity of Christ. Then in chapter two, when the argument shifts to a study of the humanity of Jesus, the author will again insert the figure of the angels and show that Jesus, in becoming a man, *“was made a little lower than the angels”* (Hebrews 2:9). The angels, then, are a common denominator to illustrate the deity and humanity of Jesus.

THE EXCELLENCIES PROVEN FROM THE PROPHETS

Having made those seven affirmations about Messiah, the writer will then proceed to prove them. Going back to verse one, the writer states that God “spake in the prophets” in ages past. There was no serious Hebrew who would doubt that the prophets were inspired by God.

A. The Testimony Concerning the Son Being Heir (v. 5)

“For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father?’” (Psalm 2:7).

Note that in this section the writer will limit himself either to prophecies written by David or about David.

1. This Psalm presents Messiah both as “heir” and as “king.”
2. The word “Anointed One” is Messiah in the Hebrew text of Psalm 2, and it definitely relates to Jesus!
3. The Father decreed the inauguration of the Son’s reign as King. God had said: *“I have installed my King.”*
4. The day of installation of Messiah as King over His kingdom was on the day of Pentecost. Read Acts 2:30-36.
5. The term “son” did not always imply an offspring.
 - a. Used to define a person’s nature, his personality.
 - b. James and John were called “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17).
 - c. Barnabas was known as “the son of consolation” (Acts 4:36).
6. The term “son” to the Jew was a claim to co-equality in deity.
(See John 5:17; 10:30; 19:7)

B. Testimony to the Father and Son Relationship. “*Or again, ‘I will be his Father, and he will be my Son’*” (2 Samuel 7:15).

This confirms to us that even in the Old Testament the Father referred to the coming Messiah as “my Son.”

C. Testimony Concerning the Firstborn. “*And again, when God brings his first-born into the world, he says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship him’*” (Psalm 97:7).

1. It means “**the unique one**,” the “**doubly-honored one**.” In this passage, the term “firstborn” does not relate to the first of a series.
 - b. In relation to the Father, Jesus is consistently called the “only begotten Son of God.”
 - c. In the context of Hebrews chapter one, He is unique as King and Lord.
2. Firstborn into the world speaks of **His entrance in the world of the Messiah**. It relates to His entrance as King into the new world of the Messianic age.
 - a. The “world” into which Jesus was brought was in fact the new age He inaugurated.
 - b. On the day of Pentecost, Jesus was brought into the world He rules.

D. Testimony of His Relationship to Angels. “*In speaking of the angels he says, ‘He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire’*” (v. 7; Psalm 104:4).

1. God has made the angels to be Messiah’s “messengers” and “servants.”
2. No Angels are ever called “my Son.”
3. Angels are called “worshipers of Christ” and are classed as His messengers and servants.

E. Testimony of His Eternal Throne. “*But about the Son he says, ‘Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom’*” (v. 8; Psalm 45).

1. The same God acknowledges titles of deity to the Son.
2. Psalms 45 is devoted to the theme of the exalted reign of King Messiah.
 - a. He is seated on His throne.
 - b. Angels stand before His throne.
 - c. He rules over His kingdom with the “scepter of righteousness.”
 - d. His rule and His kingdom are as eternal as He is eternal.
 - e. Both His deity and kingship are affirmed in this Psalm.

F. Testimony of His Righteous Nature and Exaltation. “*You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy*” (v. 9).

1. Messiah is personally “righteous” and therefore He rules His kingdom out of His righteous nature.
2. He hates wickedness and has given His life to remove all iniquity from the citizens of His kingdom.
3. His sacrifice made it possible for Him to share His personal holiness with His subjects (Hebrews 2:11).
4. Jesus has been “anointed” as King by the Father, and that with the symbolic “oil of joy.”
5. The “companions” of this context seem to refer to other kings of the earth.

G. The Eternity of Messiah (vs. 10-12). “*He also says, ‘In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands’*”.

1. Called “Lord” by the Father.
2. Said to be the builder of all things.

H. The Complete Victory of the Messiah (v. 13; Psalm 110:1)

1. Invited by the Father to sit on the throne of deity.
2. This event took place upon the ascension of Jesus.

I. The Involvement of Angels (v. 14; 1 Peter 3:22)

1. Messiah does the “sending” of angels.
2. The providence of God is accomplished through the ministry of angels.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO:

1. How does the Hebrew writer say that God made His will known?

- 1) In the past: _____
- 2) In the present: _____

2. What is the meaning of “In these last days” as used by the Hebrew writer?

3. List the seven claims presented by the Hebrew writer to divine excellency for the Son.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____

LESSON THREE

HUMANITY OF JESUS (1)

INTRODUCTION:

As we introduce the third lesson of this series out of the book of Hebrews, we must remember that the writer had deliberately and very systematically established the fact that Jesus is divine. He will now present some warnings based on the deity of Jesus and then proceed to discuss the humanity of God's Son who has become man. It was in His incarnate state that Jesus delivered the final message of heaven to the sons of men. This message is that man must "pay attention" to today.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 2:1-10

LESSON AIM: To present some of the warnings based on the deity of Jesus and then proceed to discuss the humanity of God's Son who has become man.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn of the danger of drifting from the Son and the penalty for that drifting.
 2. Consider the "great salvation" announced by the Lord, confirmed by the apostles, and testified to by God.
 3. See that the great salvation is really an expression of that which was the original plan of God for man.
 4. Understand that God's original plan for man was accomplished in Jesus Christ.
-

REVIEW:

THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST TO ANGELS (1:5-14)

- A. Christ's enthronement as King (v. 5). See Psalm 2:6-8; Acts 2:36; 2 Samuel 7:7-16; 1 Chronicles 17:9-13.
- B. Christ worshiped by angels (v. 6). See Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9; Psalm 97:7
- C. Angels are ministering servants (v. 7). See Psalm 104:4.
- D. The Son is God of Righteousness and King of Kings (vs. 8-9). See Psalm 45:6-7.
- E. The Son is Lord of the universe (vs. 10-12). See Psalm 102:25-27.
- F. The Son of God rules at the right hand of the Father (v. 13). See Psalm 110:1.
- G. Angels are ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of those who shall inherit salvation (v. 14).

THE SALVATION WE DARE NOT NEGLECT

- A. The Danger of Drifting from the Son (v. 1).** Therefore . . .
 - 1. Pay more careful attention. What “we have heard” refers to God speaking in Jesus.
 - 2. Do not drift away. The dignity of the spokesman for this age demands greater attention.

- B. The Penalty of Breaking Moses’ Law (v. 2).** “Just punishment.”
 - 1. The “word spoken by angels” relates to the Law of Moses.
 - a. To refuse a servant (Moses) is serious enough.
 - b. To refuse the Master when He personally speaks is more serious. (See the Parable of the Tenants in Matthew 21:33-41.)
 - 2. Stephen substantiates this truth (Acts 7:38).
 - 3. Paul says that the law was delivered *“through angels by a mediator.”* That mediator was Moses the “Law-giver.”

- C. The Penalty for Ignoring the Son’s Words (v. 3).** Bondage to sin.
 - 1. The “great salvation” is our rescue from sin.
 - 2. The “great salvation” was and is the content of the message first spoken by the Messiah.
 - a. He is the source of the message and of the “great salvation” itself.
 - b. It was He who brought it to the human family.
 - c. The apostles were the authentic channel through whom the message was delivered to us (Luke 24:48).

- D. The Great Salvation Announced**
 - 1. First by the Lord.
 - a. Testified is a past, completed action, signifying that the confirming process is over.
 - b. God is no longer giving miraculous testimony to any man’s message.
 - 2. Confirmed by the Apostles.
 - 3. Testified to by God by signs, wonders, and miracles.

NOTE: Therefore, the writer says do not drift away from it. Give heed; pay strict attention to it. Do not depart because even the law distributed by angels was a law that could not be violated without punishment. So punishment will be much greater for those that violate a greater law delivered by a greater messenger, Himself divine, Jesus Christ.

THE RECOVERY OF MAN’S LOST IDENTITY (2:5-9)

- A. The Original Plan Of God For Man.** The great salvation is really an expression of that which was the original plan of God for man.
 - 1. Man was created in the beginning of time for fellowship with God.
 - 2. Sin intervened and the plan was distorted.
 - a. The purpose of God was frustrated by human sin.
 - b. God will ultimately restore the plan through Christ.
 - 3. Angels were not placed in charge over “the world to come,” as they had been over the Mosaic world.
 - a. Messiah, in the quality of His humanity, will rule “the world to come.”
 - b. This is Messiah’s world.

NOTE: This tells us, among other things, that “the world to come” has already come. When the author writes about the world to come and adds the

statement: “about which we are speaking”, it is clear that this new “world” inaugurated by Messiah has been his topic from the first word of the book of Hebrews.

B. The Original Plan Not Accomplished (vs. 6-8)

1. The Puzzling question. *“What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you cared for him?”*
2. The answer: He is God’s creation.
 - a. Made with dignity.
 - b. A little inferior to angels.
 - c. Made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26).
 - d. Crowned with glory and honor.
3. **He is God’s “fallen” creation.**
 - a. Man is unable to rule because of sin.
 - b. Man has marred his glory and lost his sovereignty.
4. Man is no longer the master in the universe he was created to rule over.

C. God’s Plan Accomplished in Jesus (vs. 9-10)

1. Jesus came down to the very level of man.
 - a. Jesus was crucified and still crowned with glory and honor.
 - b. Jesus suffered death, so that by the grace of God, He may taste of death for every man.
 - c. He gave up His qualities of deity in order to become man.
2. As a man He tasted of death for every man.
 - a. As God, He could not die. One of the qualities of deity is immortality.
 - b. By God’s grace, His death becomes a substitute for our death.
3. Christ did not die like Adam did. With his glory marred, and with his honor compromised, Adam lost his sovereignty. Christ did not!

D. The Necessary Suffering of Christ (v. 10)

1. The reason for the suffering death of the Messiah was “*to bring many sons to glory.*”
2. Man needed to be returned to his Eden condition and privilege.
3. As a man, Jesus would have to live the kind of life God had intended for Adam to live in the beginning.
4. The “perfection” does not relate to His moral condition for He “*died still crowned with glory and honor.*”
5. His perfection relates to His function as our sacrifice.

CONCLUSION: So now we can be as free and innocent as Adam and Eve were before they committed their transgression. Jesus came to the earth to place the crown of glory back on our heads. We can read in Revelation 14:10 that together with the saints of all ages, we will stand before the throne of God and cast our crowns before Christ, crowns that he placed there, crowns of restored glory, of the unmarred image of God that has been accomplished through the sacrifice of Christ. How do we receive again our lost crown? By our faith, our trust, and our obedience to His teachings, in the message that He came to give. The “author of salvation” is Jesus. It was He that originated our existence in the beginning. And it is He who recreated, though “suffering,” our restoration to the spiritual condition of the Garden of Eden, thus restoring our fellowship with God. It is He who recreated life and restored the fellowship we have with God.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE:

1. According to verse 1, what is crucial to not drifting from the Son?

2. What relation did the angels have to the law of Moses? What was Moses' relation to the giving of the Law?

3. Concerning the great salvation announced, complete the following statements:

1) Announced first by: _____

2) Confirmed by: _____

3) Testified to by: _____

4. It is said that: The great salvation is really an expression of _____

5. Over what world were the angels placed in charge and over what world were they not placed in charge?

1) The angels were in charge of: _____

2) The angels are not in charge of: _____

6. God's original plan was that man have dominion over all creation. What prevented this from being so? _____

7. How was God's plan accomplished that man have dominion over all things created?

LESSON FOUR

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST (2)

INTRODUCTION:

In our last lesson, we covered the material of Hebrews chapter 2, verses 1 - 10. We covered the discussion of Jesus taking the human family back to glory, back to the spiritual relationship that Adam had before his fall in the Garden of Eden. In this lesson we would like to continue our study of the section that covers Hebrews chapter 2, verses 11 through the end of the chapter, verse 18. There will be several arguments that the writer will make about Jesus and his humanity.

We have a little bit of difficulty understanding what happens when God becomes man. Quite evidently He must void himself of all external expressions of His divine nature. If He had come to the earth in undiluted deity, He would have destroyed the human family. Scripture tells us no man can see God and live (Exodus 33:20). Therefore, He had to suspend the external expression of all of the qualities of His divine nature so that He could become a man. **He manifested all the qualities of humanity without expressing at any time His own divine nature. Therefore He received his message by revelation like the apostles did, by inspiration. He performed His miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit just as the apostles did.** In other words, He walked on the water with the same power that the Apostle Peter did. He raised the dead with the same power Paul and Peter raised the dead: powers of the Holy Spirit. He had emptied Himself, divested Himself of all of the external expressions of His deity so that He could come down to the level of man, live among men as a man subject to human trials, subject to human temptation, and yet to live victoriously without sin.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 2:11-18

LESSON AIM: To understand the writer's arguments concerning the humanity of Jesus. He emptied Himself of His divine nature in order to become completely human.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that the fruit of Christ's humanity is a family united in holiness and confirmed as brethren who put their trust in God.
 2. See that the mission of Christ's humanity is to vanquish the power of the devil and to free believers from the slavery of fear.
 3. Understand that Christ's credentials to fulfill His mission are His priesthood and His experiences in His humanity.
-

THE FRUIT OF CHRIST'S HUMANITY

A. A Family United in Holiness – One Spiritual Nature. *"Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers."*

1. Christ is able to make man holy.
 - a. Never committed sin – He is able.
 - b. He shares with us His own sinless nature.
 - c. He restores our innocence by forgiving our sins.

NOTE: Perhaps for this very fundamental reason, He wanted to prove to the human family that God did not shortchange us in the creation. God did not make us vulnerable to the point that we could not have overcome Satan. Jesus overcame him with the same resources that we have at our disposition. And so the writer begins in verse 11 to tell us some of the fruit that grows out of the humanity of Christ.

2. He considers us to be holy and to be brethren with Christ (Hebrews 3:1).
 - a. God restores to man the purity of Eden.
 - b. Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren.

- B. **A Family Confirmed as Brethren.** He says, "*I will declare your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation will I sing your praise.*"
1. It is a brotherhood of holiness (Psalm 22:22).
 2. A man that is contaminated and ruined by sin, who does not have fellowship with God, is no spiritual brother of Christ!
 - a. A brother in humanity.
 - b. But not a brother in faith or in spiritual unity.
 3. The "brothers" are children of God that have been made holy by the blood of Christ.

- C. **A Family of Humanity, Who Puts Their Trust in God.** "*And again, I will put my trust in him. And again he says, Here am I, and the children God has given me*" (v. 13; Isaiah 8:17).
1. Just how human was Jesus?
 - a. Made lower than angels.
 - b. He suffered like a man.
 - c. He died like a man.
 - d. He calls man His brothers.
 2. He put His trust in God. If Jesus were expressing the full qualities of His deity that we noted in Hebrews chapter one, then as God, He would not have to trust in anyone.
 3. Just as surely as Isaiah put his trust in God, so Jesus as a man also put His trust in God.
 4. Jesus' dependency upon God is described in Psalm 22:9. "*Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother's breast.*"

THE MISSION OF CHRIST'S HUMANITY

- A. **To Vanquish the Power of the Devil.** "*Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil*" (v. 14).
1. The writer assures us that just as surely as we became flesh and blood, Jesus also shared in our humanity.
 2. This verse also informs us that He was born to die! And it tells us why He had to die: "so that through the death" of His human nature, He could destroy Satan's hold on the human family.
- B. **To Free Believers from the Slavery of Fear.** "*... and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death*" (v. 15).
1. Sin on man's part had given Satan a strangle hold on humanity.
 2. Jesus paid our debt caused by sin, and thus eliminated the Devil's claim on us.
 3. So why did Christ become a man? Two great reasons in this context:
 - a. **For conquest** – He destroyed the Devil, the arch enemy of man.
 - b. **For delivery** – He has delivered man from the fear of death.

NOTE: When Jesus went to the tomb on our behalf and came forth out of that tomb victorious, there was and still is confirmation that human life survives the tomb. It also says that His death stands good for our death before God. He who went to His death for our sin was raised for our justification. He was accepted as the sacrifice that would cover our transgressions and make it possible for God's grace to flood our lives. That grace makes us free from sin, and spiritually takes us back to Eden. Now we know that our fellowship is restored with God. And we stand as one with Him because we are one with Christ in His personal holiness.

C. The Objects of Christ's Mission of Redemption. *"For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants."*

1. The physical descendants of Abraham, i.e., the Jews.
2. Jesus did not come to help angels. I do not know why. Angels have rebelled against God and lost their relationship with God. But as far as the book of Hebrews is concerned, there is no redemption for angels.

CHRIST'S FUNCTION IN HIS MISSION

A. His Humanity Qualified Him. *"For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way . . ."* (v. 17).

1. Not only physical but also emotional. In verse 17 the author is making a different statement about the humanity of Christ from the one presented in verse 14. There He was made flesh and blood. But in verse 17 He is made "in every way" like His brothers.
2. Under discussion in this verse is the emotional nature of Christ. He had the same hurts and pains and feelings, the same appetites, the same zest for life, the same urge for survival that you and I possess. In other words, He was as much a man physically, flesh and blood, as you and I (v. 14). But He was also as much emotionally as you and I (v. 17).
3. Two great benefits that grow out of Jesus' physical and emotional identification with the human family.
 - a. First, Jesus became a faithful and merciful high priest in service to God.
 - b. Second, He made purification for the sins of the people.
4. He qualifies as a priest to serve both God and man. Then, as a priest, He has two qualities:
 - a. He is faithful and merciful: faithful to God and merciful to man.
 - b. As a high priest, He is able to make "*atonement for the sins of the people*."
 - 1) The word "atonement" in sacrificial terminology means "to cover" or to make satisfaction.
 - 2) The Hebrew as well as the Greek would tell us He paid the price for human reconciliation. In other words, He paid the penalty for human sin. He gave God satisfaction therefore God is now able to grant redemption unto those of the human family that believe in Christ, because of His sacrifice.

B. His Suffering and Temptation Qualified Him. *"Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."*

1. The great suffering in the temptations of Christ (See Matthew 4).
2. The high price of Christ's sinlessness. ". . . resisted unto blood in his struggle against sin" (Hebrews 12:4). Further the writer invites his readers to "consider Jesus as He endured such opposition from sinful men."
 - a. He was slandered and endured opposition but He maintained His

- integrity and innocence.
- b. He resisted to the point of blood.
- c. He resisted to the point of hurt; to the point of pain; even to the point of death.
- 3. His attitude must have been “better to lose an arm than to sin; better to lose both arms than to violate My mission; better to lose My life than to sacrifice My integrity.”
- 4. He was sinless by choice, not by divine manipulation.
- 5. He was just as susceptible to temptation as we, it was just as easy for Him to commit sin as it would be for us.

CONSIDER:

The author holds up the innocence of Christ and His willingness to suffer in the face of temptation to convince us that if we will pay that kind of a price, we, too, will enjoy greater innocence in our life, greater holiness, and greater unity in the expression of that holiness that we have with Christ. 1 Peter 4:1 challenges us by saying that since Christ also suffered: “Now arm yourselves with the same mind because He that has suffered has ceased from sin.” If you’re tired of sin in your life, if you are frustrated with sin then begin to pay the price of innocence, and innocence will come. Begin to resist and to deprive the physical appetites of gratification, especially when the gratification would compromise morality. If we will pay the price of suffering then holiness will become more characteristic of our spiritual life also, as it was consistently characteristic of the life of Christ. He suffered being tempted, and that as a man. He was tempted even to a greater degree than you and I, simply because His temptations were not only human, (common to us); His temptations were also Messianic.

His temptations grew out of the fact that He had suspended the expression of His deity, and had refused to avail Himself of divine qualities and abilities to assist Him when He was being tempted. As a matter of fact, you go back to the study of the temptation in Matthew chapter 4: the very point of His deity is the appeal that Satan makes to Christ. “If you are the Son of God, then use that divine power. The physical body is hungry. You have divine ability to supply that food and to satisfy that hunger, to cease the suffering, so why don’t you give in? If you are the Son of God, then use your power to display yourself. Jump off the pinnacle of the temple, dazzle the people with the powers of display. If you are the Son of God, then fall down and worship me, and I will give you all of the kingdoms of the world.”

Jesus was tempted as man for God cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:12). But at the same time, Satan was appealing to the use of His divine qualities. And Jesus refused to use those divine qualities because He would not separate Himself from the common experience of the human family to whom He had come to give help.

Therefore, He is able to help us when we are tempted. We will find in Hebrews chapter 4 that He was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin. And that fact gives us boldness to draw near to the throne of God that we may receive two things: grace and mercy. Grace is available to help us when we are under temptation; mercy is there when we have already given in to temptation. And Jesus can provide both.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR:

1. What three things are seen as the fruit of Christ's humanity?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
2. List four things which show just how human Jesus really was.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
3. In verses 14-15, what are two statements that show the mission of Christ's humanity?
1) _____
2) _____
4. Two great benefits grow out of Jesus' physical and emotional identification with the human family. What are these?
1) _____
2) _____
5. Jesus is said to be a faithful and merciful high priest. To whom does each characteristic have reference?
1) Faithful: _____
2) Merciful: _____
6. What qualifies Jesus to be able to help those who are tempted?

LESSON FIVE

MOSES OR CHRIST

INTRODUCTION:

In Hebrew thinking, Moses was second only to Abraham in importance. Therefore, the presentation of any religious system that would replace the Law of Moses would have to deal properly with the great law giver.

In this section, the writer will present a number of parallels between Moses and Christ. Then he will proceed to several contrasts that will leave Christ as the uncontested successor to the Mosaic order of things.

Both Moses and Christ are viewed as great leaders. And both of them inaugurated what we may call an “exodus.” Moses was leading the people out of Egypt and from bondage to Pharaoh. The final destination of Moses’ “exodus” was physical Canaan, the land God had promised to Abraham centuries before.

Both in parallel and yet in contrast, Jesus inaugurated a new “exodus” of a spiritual nature. Jesus freed His people from the bondage of a worse “Pharaoh,” Satan. By redeeming them from their sin, Jesus is seen as the *“author and finisher of our faith,”*, with the ultimate “promised land” being heaven itself. So the writer begins by calling to mind a statement that made in Hosea 11:1: God says, *“When Israel was a child, I loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt.”*

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 3:1-19

LESSON AIM: To present a number of parallels between Moses and Christ and a number of contrasts which show Christ as the uncontested successor to the Mosaic order of things.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See several parallels between Moses and Jesus which will exalt both.
 2. Examine several contrast between Moses and Jesus which will exalt Christ above Moses.
 3. Learn of the Holy Spirit’s warning from the past, the application to Israel and the application to us.
-

MOSES’ PHYSICAL AND CHRIST’S SPIRITUAL EXODUS

The historical failure of Israel in Moses’ exodus only underscores the greater peril of those who fail under the spiritual exodus of Christ.

A. Parallels Between Christ and Moses

1. Both were God’s apostles.

“Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess” (Hebrews 3: 1).

- a. Jesus was God’s “apostle” (one that is sent). *“As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world”* (John 17:18 NIV).

When Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah, the three were discussing His departure (His exodus – in Greek), which He was about to bring to fulfillment in Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). His “exodus” had its beginning on the cross, making Jesus the counterpart to the Hebrew Passover lamb.

- b. Moses was a God-sent messenger (Exodus 7:16). *“Then say to him, The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you: Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the desert. But until now you have not listened.”*
- 2. **Both were God’s “appointed.”** *“He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house”* (Hebrews 3:2).
 - a. It was God who appointed Jesus, and Jesus was faithful to the appointment.
 - b. Such was also true of Moses. He was appointed by God and was “faithful” to God. The Hebrew writer is evidently citing a famous statement God made about Moses on the occasion of the protest Aaron and Miriam raised against Moses. There God said, *“Moses is faithful in all my house.”*
- 3. **Both were involved in a “calling.”**
 - a. Under Moses God “called his son out of Egypt” (Hosea 11:1) toward Canaan.
 - b. Christ has issued “a heavenly calling” (3:1).
- 4. **Both were faithful to God.**

B. Contrasts Between Christ and Moses

- 1. **Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses.** *“Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself”* (Hebrews 3:3 NIV).
 - a. Jesus was the “real” builder of the house in which Moses served.
 - b. Jesus was the builder of Moses’ house, therefore he is greater than anyone in it, including Moses.
- 2. **Christ is God – Moses a mere man (Hebrews 3:4).**
- 3. **Christ was the object of Mosaic testimony** about the future and the final revelation Jesus gave, *“Moses was faithful as a servant in all God’s house, testifying to what would be said in the future”* (Hebrews 3:5; Deuteronomy 18:18-20).
 - a. Moses was a servant in the house.
 - b. Moses was “IN” a house Christ built.
 - c. Moses was a witness to the end of his law and the beginning of the new law Christ would bring.
 - 1) Moses testified to the transient nature of his system.
 - 2) Moses spoke of the coming Messiah with new heavenly laws.
 - d. “Servant” – (Greek, THERAPON) That word comes directly out of the Hippocratic Oath. This is where the word “therapy” has its roots. A therapon was a highly skilled, and highly trained assistant to a surgeon, and therefore he was a dignified servant. Moses is that kind of a servant in the Hebrew writer’s terminology.
- 4. **Moses was “in” the house of Israel as a “servant;” Jesus was “over” his own house as a “Son” (v. 6).** *“But Christ is faithful as a son over God’s house.”*

PARALLELS

<u>Moses</u>	<u>Christ</u>
Appointed by God	Appointed by God
Faithful to God	Faithful to God
Sent by God	Sent by God
Related to God's house	Related to God's house
A spokesman for God	A spokesman for God

CONTRASTS

<u>Moses</u>	<u>Christ</u>
A servant	A Son
In God's house	Over God's house
Part of God's house	Builder of God's house
Simply a man	Eternal God
Witnessed to Christ	Witnessed to by Moses
Began a physical exodus	Began a spiritual exodus
Led to earthly reward	Led to heavenly reward

5. Believers are the new “house of God” on two conditions. *“And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.”*
 - a. That they hold onto their courage (See Hebrews 4:16; 10:19).
 - b. That they hold onto the hope of which we boast.

WARNING FROM THE PAST

Warnings based on the failure of the Mosaic exodus from Psalm 95.

A. The Holy Spirit’s Warning (vs. 7-8)

1. “Today” stands for a day of opportunity.
 - a. Moses’ generation had wasted their “today” of God’s offer to enter the Promised Land.
 - b. David’s generation was in danger of doing the same thing.
 - c. The Hebrew writer is concerned for many of his day.
2. The necessity is to “hear His voice.”
3. All but two families of the original exodus failed.

B. The People’s Response to the Voice of God (v. 9)

1. They hardened their hearts (Hardened – GK. SKLERUNETE) is taken from a Greek medical term: SKLERUNETE, implying “sclerosis” of the heart.
2. They rebelled against Moses. “Rebellion” refers to the rebellion of Israel, as they threatened revolt against Moses because they had no water to drink.
3. They tested and tried God in spite of what they saw Him do.

C. God’s Pronounced Judgment (Hebrews 3:10-11)

1. God’s anger was kindled only after long provocation and trial.
2. Their unbelief led to their spiritual apostasy from God.
3. **Six times God** “swore in His anger” that those who would not “hear His voice” would not “enter His rest” (Numbers 23:23; 14:23, 28, 30; 32:11 and Deuteronomy 1:35).
4. This is a sober warning to all subsequent generations.
 - a. Paul – 1 Corinthians 1:1-12.

- b. Hebrew writer in this context.

NOTE: David is concerned about his generation and he fears that many in his day would “provoke” God’s anger by turning away from Him to pagan idolatries.

The interesting thing about the citation from Psalms 95 is that David’s generation was ALREADY IN THE LAND OF PROMISE! So what is the “rest of God” that they are in danger of losing? It is not the Promised Land of Canaan. It is clear that David made a Holy Spirit approved extension to the events in Israel’s history. The “rest of God” then is extended to embrace ETERNAL LIFE IN HEAVEN after this life is over. David is warning the people of his age that they are in jeopardy of losing their eternal reward.

THE EVER PRESENT APPLICATION

We have seen three generations that are in great danger: Moses’ generation and the failure in the wilderness of his Exodus; then, David’s because his generation was repeating the same mistakes as Moses’; and finally, the contemporaries of the Hebrew writer in their loss of faith in Messiah. These latter are in danger of reverting to the now defunct, abrogated Law of Moses.

A. The Power of Encouraging One Another (Hebrews 3:13-14)

1. Christians need mutual encouragement in their common faith in Christ.
 - a. The time of opportunity is “today.”
 - b. The reason for encouragement is the deceitfulness of sin.

NOTE: For the author of Hebrews, the possibility of born again Christians falling away from God in apostasy was a real danger. It is amazing that in spite of all the warnings already given by the author, together with those he will yet give in this context, some believe that it is impossible for born again Christians to be lost. The inspired writer certainly **does not agree**.

Israel fell after their escape from Egypt! David’s generation was in danger of losing eternal redemption. The writer’s generation is in definite peril of making the same mistake and thus, *“fall away from the living God.”* The Word of God **never** gives warnings against that which is impossible!

2. Sharing in Christ is conditioned on faithfulness to the end.
 - a. To “share in Christ” is to appropriate all the benefits that come from the new religious system He inaugurated.
 - b. It is conditioned on continued fidelity to primary commitments and convictions about Him.

B. The Need of Continued and Constant Encouragement (Hebrews 3:15-19)

1. A repeated warning: As has just been said: *“Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.”*
2. Israel did not fail because there had been no promise to “hear” (v. 16).
3. The provocation of God was a forty year travesty on faith (v. 17).

CONCLUSION:

Disbelief is the root of disobedience! And disobedience is the fruit of unbelief. The author will unite those two infamous twins in further declarations about Moses’ generation (Hebrews 4:2 and 6).

Their condemnation was not arbitrary on God's part. It was the product of their own making. The "rest" in this verse must again embrace the extension of purpose given by the Holy Spirit in Psalms 95, and therefore it relates to eternal salvation.

The failure to "enter" Canaan only forecasts their ultimate failure to enter God's rest in heaven. But both those failures still stand as a warning to God's people of every generation. It is again "unbelief" that bears its terrible fruit of damnation.

In the next lesson from Hebrews chapter four, the author will proceed from this context of history to make direct application to his readers' generation.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE:

1. List four areas in which Moses and Christ paralleled.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

2. List at least four areas in which Moses and Christ are contrasted.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

3. What are three attitudes which reflect the people's response to the voice of God in Moses' day?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4. How many times did God swear in His anger that those who would not hear His voice would not enter His rest? _____

5. What three generations are said to be in danger of apostasy in Hebrews?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

6. Define the Greek word SKLERUNETE. _____

LESSON SIX

THE PROMISED SABBATH-REST

INTRODUCTION:

Lesson six will present the study of the entire fourth chapter of the book of Hebrews. The topic of discussion in this lesson is closely united with the discussion that was presented in lesson number five. Remember the presentation of the “exodus” of Moses and that begun by Christ. As we recall, the Mosaic exodus ended in almost total failure. The people disbelieved God, they disobeyed God, and therefore He swore in His wrath: “*They will not enter into my rest.*” And the Psalmist David pointed the attention of his generation to the failures of the Mosaic exodus as a warning to his own generation. David extends their failure to enter in to the land of Canaan to their ultimate failure to enter into God’s eternal rest. In other words, they will not go to Heaven when they die. The Hebrew writer uses the examples of both Moses’ and David’s generations, as a warning to his own generation. Some of his readers are on the verge of making the same fatal mistake as those preceding examples.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 4:1-16

LESSON AIM: To understand the purpose of God in bringing all obedient believers into His Sabbath-rest through Jesus Christ and His living word.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn the reality of God’s promise concerning His promised Sabbath-rest and its “today” application.
 2. Discover that the “living promise” offering a “living rest” is based on a “living word.”
 3. See that Jesus’ entrance into heaven does not sever His ties to humanity and the needs of humanity.
-

GOD’S SABBATH-REST DEFINED

A. God’s Promise of Entering His Rest Still Stands (v. 1). *“Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it.”*

1. The word “therefore” is the automatic tie in. As David had warned his contemporaries not to imitate the failures of past ages, otherwise they could not “enter God’s rest,” the Hebrew Christians must also heed the same warning.
2. The Law of Moses stood as a kind of spiritual “Egyptian slavery” to all who were under that law.
 - a. Paul’s vivid illustration of Sarah and Hagar (Galatians 4:21-31).
 - b. The Jews were “bound” to the Law as a wife is bound to her husband (Romans 7:1-6).
3. The Law of Moses could not liberate those who had violated it (Galatians 3:10).
4. The obligations of the Law could not be kept (Acts 15:10).

NOTE: The reason all of those passages of scripture are mentioned is because the Hebrew writer does not want his readers to return to Judaism because that would be a return to the enslaving powers of the Law of Moses that could not give liberty from sin. And that would be parallel to the children of Israel, having been delivered from the land of Egypt, now returning at least in heart to the land of Egypt and being enslaved once again to Pharaoh. So the writer then builds on this concept, and he wants his people not to even consider or even flirt with the idea of returning back to Judaism.

B. The Gospel Was Preached to Both Israel and Christians (Hebrews 4:2)

"For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith."

1. Their “good news” was preached by Moses and related to the land of Canaan.
2. Our good news story relates to heaven itself.
3. Both gospels are of no value without accompanying faith.

C. God’s Finished Work – Since Creation (Hebrews 4:3-6)

1. The verb tense of “enter” is present indicative. The implication is that Christians are in the process of “entering God’s rest.”
 - a. The rest Jesus promised (Matthew 11:28).
 - b. Extends throughout their life in Christ and into heaven.
 - c. God’s rest is still available to those who believe.
2. The never ending nature of God’s rest (v. 4). (The “somewhere” is Genesis 2:2.)
3. The danger of missing out on God’s rest (Psalm 95:11). The “they” was limited to the unbelieving Hebrews in the wilderness.
4. The promise of God is still open to all.
 - a. Some of the Israelites did enter in.
 - b. The condition of entering was faith.
 - c. Those who did not enter were unbelievers and therefore disobedient.

D. Appeal to David’s “Today” Argument (Hebrews 4:7-8)

It proves the open option of eternal salvation, on condition they did not “harden their hearts” as in past generations.

1. “When a long time later” affirms that David’s generation was already in the promised land of Canaan.
2. Evidence that physical Canaan was not “God’s rest.”
3. Possibility of future participation in God’s rest was still available to them.
4. If Joshua had given them “God’s rest,” David could not have spoken of future entrance into that rest.

E. Sabbath-Rest Still Available (Hebrews 4:9-11)

1. The promise of God remains, so the “rest” of God remains. It is called a “Sabbath-rest.”
 - a. The Greek word “SABBATISMOS” is unique to this verse, and it has a rough translation of “Sabbath-keeping.”
 - b. It is not the Jewish observance of the Sabbath day.
 - c. This “Sabbath-rest” is not a law to keep; it is a promised “rest to enter.”
2. “Anyone” speaks of the universal “today” God offers all men of “entering His rest.”
3. Heaven is for those who “make every effort to enter.”
 - a. It requires sober, serious effort.
 - b. Israel’s failure is a stark example of what could happen to the readers of Hebrews.

THE LIVING WORD OF GOD

- A. God's Word Living and Active (Hebrews 4:12-13).** A “living promise offering a “living rest” must be based upon a “living word”.
 - 1. God’s living oath – the disbelieving and disobedient shall not enter His rest.
 - 2. The “promises” and the “rest” are living; so is the “warning!”

- B. God's Word Personified with the Qualities of God**
 - 1. God’s word is living.
 - a. He is the “living God” (Hebrews 3:12).
 - b. His word is “living and abiding” (1 Peter 1:23).
 - 2. God’s word is active.
 - a. God’s word accomplishes its purpose. Isaiah 55:11 – *“so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”*
 - b. God’s word is life-giving (John 6:68). *“Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”*
 - 3. God’s word is judicial.
 - a. His word judges the total man; the physical – joints and marrow.
 - b. It judges man’s spiritual side; the soul and the spirit.
 - c. It judges man’s rational side; his motives – thoughts and intents.
 - 4. God’s word is all pervasive and invasive.
 - a. Nothing is hidden to this judicial word of God.
 - b. Every conviction, action, motive, thought, and purpose of man is “uncovered” before this word.
 - 5. God’s word makes all men accountable before its promises and warnings.
 - a. Every man will “give account.”
 - b. His accountability is based on God’s revelation of Himself and His purpose for the human family.

OUR MAN IN HEAVEN

- A. His Relationship with Humanity Is Eternal (Hebrews 4:14).** Jesus’ entrance into glory does not eliminate His tie with the human family of which He became a part.
 - 1. The connection between the “written word” and the “incarnate Word.”
 - 2. He is our “great High Priest.” His position as our “great High Priest” encourages us to “hold firmly to the faith we profess.”

- B. His Exaltation at the Father’s Right Hand.** His identification with humanity is not diminished.
 - 1. He can still sympathize – implying that all His human emotions are still intact, with ever fresh memory of common human frailties.
 - 2. He is able to minister to our needs out of all His human experiences and His Divine benevolence.

- C. His Temptation Was All Encompassing.** His exposure to temptation was not spared the common human lot, for in “every way,” and “just as we are,” He was tempted.
 - 1. He did not have an edge over mankind. He stood on common ground with common resources at His disposition when He faced Satan’s temptations.
 - 2. He resisted every temptation in His struggle “against sin” and “even unto blood” (Hebrews 12:4).
 - 3. He was without sin. The cross was a high price for His innocence!

- D. His Throne of Grace Is Available.** He intercedes on behalf of all Christians.
1. Through Him ,they find “mercy” when they sin.
 2. Through Him, they find “grace to help” them stand when they are tempted.

NOTE: We will come back in lesson seven for further discussion of this glorious privilege. The Hebrew writer will want to convince us that Jesus thoroughly and completely identifies with our human feelings and our human needs.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX:

1. What statement in what verse would indicate that God’s promised rest is still available for believers?

2. What was the difference in the “gospel” preached to the wilderness Jews and the Christian?

3. What was God’s “living oath” concerning those who were disbelieving and disobedient?

4. List five things about the living word of God that show it to be personified with the qualities of God.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
5. What two great helps are promised the faithful, prayerful believer in verse 16?
 - 1) _____ when they _____.
 - 2) _____ them stand _____.

LESSON SEVEN

THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

INTRODUCTION:

Lesson number 7 deals with the priesthood of Christ as it compares with the Levitical priesthood. Our study begins with Hebrews 5:1. There is a certain definite parallel between Christ and the Levites, because there are certain common characteristics. Let us begin by making some observations about the priesthood of Christ, and then see how the writer draws the parallels between Christ and the Levites.

In our last lesson, the writer had mentioned that we have a great High Priest who has ascended to the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the Heavens (4:13). But His exaltation has not caused Him to forget his family ties with humanity. He has not forgotten His human roots. He still has all His human sympathies intact, and he is able to respond to our needs out of a total sense of humanity. So, the writer wants us to understand that our high priest is still a human being. He is able to intercede in our behalf. And though He is seated at the right hand of God in the Heavens, that does not eliminate His ability to identify with the human family. Now, the writer would like to establish some major parallels between Christ and the Levites.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 5:1-10

LESSON AIM: To understand the priesthood of Christ as it compares with the Levitical priesthood. We will particularly look at the parallels between the two.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See that Christ meets all the qualifications for a priest according to the Law of Moses as to function.
 2. Learn that the Hebrew writer uses the intense sufferings of Jesus during the agonies of Gethsemane, the trial before Pilate, and His sacrifice for His people, to point out Jesus' acquaintance with suffering.
 3. See that "perfection through obedience" has reference to function and not moral nature.
-

QUALIFICATIONS AND FUNCTIONS OF PRIESTS

Jesus shares with the Levites the qualifications of priesthood that make it possible for him to minister to us. He is a valid and faithful High Priest in things that belong to God.

A. The Levitical Priesthood (5:1-4)

1. Qualifications for priests according to the Law of Moses.
 - a. **Selected from among men** (Exodus 28:1). Jesus was human (man). The Hebrew writer demonstrated in chapter two that Jesus was totally human.
 - 1) He was made lower than the angels – like a man.
 - 2) He suffered like a man.
 - 3) He died like a man.

- 4) He had flesh and blood like a man.
 - b. **Appointed by God.** Not a position that any man can invent and claim for himself. Exodus 28:1; Numbers 18:6 – “*I have selected the Levites from among all of the tribes of Israel to serve as priests.*”
 - c. Priestly functions **relate to gifts and sacrifices.**
 - 1) Gifts expressed the concept of worship toward God. These would involve worship sacrifices as the burnt offerings, grain offerings and peace offerings.
 - 2) Sacrifices had to do with atonement (sacrifices for sin). These would involve trespass and sin offerings, Day of Atonement, red heifer, etc.
 - d. **Priests were required to “deal gently” with the ignorant and those going astray.**
 - 1) To “deal gently” in Greek is METREO-PATHEIN, and means that he must be able to “melt” out gentle sympathies.
 - 2) The demands for “gentle dealings” sprang from the Levite’s own need for atoning sacrifices.
 - 3) The “ignorant” were those who sinned in ignorance of the Law. Their ignorance did not decrease their guilt; sacrifice was still demanded.
 - 4) Those “going astray” did so in rebellion to known law. (Read Leviticus 6:1ff for a list of deliberate sins.)
 - 5) Priests and common Hebrews stood on common ground, both needing atonement sacrifices for their sins.
 - e. The Levitical high priest, being man, had to offer sacrifices for his own sins first (7:27).
 - f. The priesthood is not a self-assigned position (v. 4). God selected Aaron to be high priest and He alone chooses His priests.
- B. The Priesthood of Christ (5:5).** The priesthood – Levitical or Christ’s – was an “honor” but neither was a self-appointed position.
1. God alone chooses His priests.
 2. He alone assigns their qualifications and their functions.
 3. Certainly Christ’s priesthood is divine in origin.
 - a. Psalm 2:7 – “*You are my Son*” is language of appointment for Christ to His kingly office.
 - b. Psalm 110:4 – “*You are a priest forever*” is God’s language for Christ’s priestly appointment.
- NOTE:** The Hebrew writer brings those two passages together.
- JESUS’ HUMANITY QUALIFIES HIM FOR THE PRIESTLY OFFICE**
- A. Jesus’ Incarnate Existence.** “*During the days of Jesus’ life on earth . . .*” (v. 7).
1. Reference to the total human experience of Jesus.
 2. Though this context seems to focus on the Garden of Gethsemane, His human suffering there certainly shows His ability to identify with any human trial.
 3. Therefore, He is able to “deal gently” with sinners.
- B. Jesus’ Prayers and Supplications.** Prayers and supplications are often used interchangeably, but when used together:
1. “Prayers” relate to requests growing out of deep need.
 2. “Supplications” relate to requests growing out of a deep sense of helplessness.

3. Both “prayers and supplications” were offered with certain physical, emotional, and spiritual feelings.
 - a. “With loud cries” (from the Greek: KRAUGE, which means unverbalized groanings of one enduring searing pain).
 - b. “Tears” growing out of strong desire for relief.
 - c. Mark 14:30 describes the emotions of Gethsemane.

C. Jesus’ Surrender to the Father’s Will. *“...not my will, but your will be done.”*

His prayers were heard because of this surrender to the will of the Father.

1. “Reverent submission” comes from the Greek word EULAMBEIAS, which suggests deeply focused piety.
 - a. It involved surrender in the face of devastating sacrificial assignments.
 - b. But it insists on His human reluctance to give up His life, but He did so anyway.
2. God could not save Him and us too. *“To the one who could save Him from death”* would imply that God could save Him.

D. Jesus’ Sonship and Obedience. Sonship did not mean exemption from obedience.

1. *“Although He was a son,”* such a position brought Him no exclusions from God given assignments.
2. If anyone could have claimed exemptions, surely it was He, but His position with the Father was respected.

E. Jesus Learned From Suffering. *“He learned obedience from what He suffered.”* Though He had never been disobedient, He did learn several things.

1. Sonship does not exempt Him from the demands of obedience.
2. The high cost of obedience.
3. He learned to obey when He did not want the “cup He was given to drink.”
4. He obeyed in the face of death.
5. He learned the dignity of obedience.
6. He learned the duty of obedience.
7. He learned the fruit of obedience.
8. He learned the glory following obedience (Philippians 2:5-10).

F. Jesus’ Functional Perfection. *“Having been made perfect”* is a phrase often used in Hebrews to insist upon the functional perfection of Christ.

G. Jesus the Source of Salvation. *“He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey”* (vs. 8-9).

1. Jesus has the right to demand obedience from us.
 - a. His obedience demanded of Him pain, humiliation, and death.
 - b. Our obedience brings us peace, joy, and life.

NOTE: The summary of all the above affirms that He is well qualified by Divine appointment, human suffering and sacrificial atonement to be our “great High Priest.”

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN:

1. In Hebrews 5:1-5 the qualifications of the priesthood shared by Jesus and the Levitical priests are given. What are these qualifications?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

2. What is one great difference in the qualifications of the Levitical priest and of Jesus as priest in relation to sin?

3. What is the significance or meaning of the phrase “having been made perfect?”

4. List eight things Jesus learned from His suffering in His humanity.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____
8) _____

5. What three things does the Hebrew writer use to point out Jesus’ acquaintance with suffering?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

6. What does the phrase “perfection through obedience” have reference to in relation to Jesus?

LESSON EIGHT

PROGRESSING TO MATURITY

INTRODUCTION:

o begin this lesson it will be necessary to return to verse 10 for the statement the writer made about Christ being a priest after the order of Melchizedek. “*. . . and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.*”

The “**much to say**” in verse 11 does not relate to Melchizedek, but it relates to the priesthood of Christ. He has only a few things to say about Melchizedek. But he has a lot of things to say about the priesthood of Christ. Some things about Christ are hard to understand, not because they are too complicated but because the readers are slow to learn. He seems to say, “You are not quite ready for us to begin the discussion of the priesthood of Christ. That is because you are still having difficulty giving up your attachments to Judaism. As long as you are devoted to your time honored past under the Law of Moses, you will never be ready to understand the new order that Christ inaugurated.”

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 5:11 – 6:8

LESSON AIM: To show the possibility of not going on to perfection and the danger of reverting back to a former standard of life.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Understand the importance of telling to others the knowledge imparted to us.
 2. Learn that the ability to discern good from evil is dependent upon the constant use of the knowledge attained.
 3. Discover the reasons that the Hebrews, who had left or were leaving Christianity, could not be brought again to repentance.
-

THE EXPECTATIONS STATED

“You ought to be teachers.”

A. Their Actual Condition

Immature in God’s word.

1. The sufficiency of time. “By this time” refers to an expected state of growth.
 - a. They should have been teaching other Jews.
 - 1) About the passing of the Law of Moses.
 - 2) About the arrival of the new age of Messiah.
 - b. Instead they needed someone to teach them again.
2. The forgotten instruction. “. . . elementary truths of God’s word.”
 - a. The initial instruction in the Law of Moses about the coming new revelation from God through Messiah.
 - b. Three words in the Greek that need special attention.
 - 1) STOIXEIA (elementary) – generally relates to the ABCs of any topic under discussion.
 - 2) ARXES (beginning) – The initial or first foundation notions contained in the Old Testament about the future arrival of Christ.

- 3) LOGION TOU THEOU (God's word) – Generally refer to the Old Testament writings. See Acts 7:37-38; Romans 3:1-2; 1 Peter 4:11.
- c. The problem – a limited understanding of the Law. They were too sentimentally attached to the old system. See Deuteronomy 18:18.
- 3. Their immediate need. “*You need milk, not solid food.*”

B. The Expected Goal

Trained and mature (vs. 13-15).

- 1. Acquainted with the teachings about righteousness.
 - a. “The teachings about righteousness” is information about the new system of Christ Jesus.
 - b. “Not acquainted” really means that the person is unskilled in understanding about Jesus.
 - 1) “Milk” would indicate feedings on the Old Testament.
 - 2) “Solid food” – the feeding of God’s people out of the instructions about Christ in the New Testament.

NOTE: In review, there is a strong statement being made in this context about unused information. Christians are expected to teach other people what they have learned about Christ. But when they do not involve themselves in the spreading of their faith, they begin to lose their grasp of its implications. Then, rather than being “teachers,” they need someone to “teach” them “all over again.” They should “by this time” be able to handle all “solid food” of Christ’s covenant, but they cannot since they have reverted to the “infant” stage of Judaism and can only handle the “milk” of the Law of Moses. They who do not teach what they have been taught are found to be lacking in “acquaintance” (experience) in the Gospel of Christ and cannot therefore grow in their knowledge and enjoyment of the Gospel. On the other hand, those who are involved in “teaching” gain “acquaintance” in the “word of righteousness” and, therefore “mature” in their “training” and can easily “distinguish good from evil.”

- 2. There are some important contrasts in this context:
 - a. “Able to teach” versus “needing teaching.”
 - b. “Elementary truths” versus “the word of righteousness.”
 - c. “Milk” versus “solid food.”
 - d. “Infants” versus “mature.”
 - e. “No acquaintance” versus “distinguishing.”

The cure for perpetual immaturity is seen to be in teaching others about Christ.

THE MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH IT

Leaving and going on.

A. Leave the Elementary Teachings about Christ (6:1)

- 1. Giving up devotions to the Law of Moses is a prerequisite to the enjoyment of all the new and better privileges in Christ.
 - a. Not teachings given by Christ.
 - b. Old Testament prophecies and teachings about Christ.
- 2. “Leave” (Gk. APHENTES) means “to divorce, to go away, to depart, to abandon or disregard.” See Matthew 15:14; 22:22; 1 Corinthians 7:11-13.
- 3. “Go on to maturity” (Gk. perfection). The Law could not give perfection.
 - a. *“If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical, priesthood . . . why was there still need for another priest to come . . .”* (Hebrews 7:11 NIV)?

- b. “*For the law made nothing perfect*” (Hebrews 7:18).
- c. “. . .*The gifts and sacrifices being offered did not make the worshippers perfect*” (Hebrews 9:9).
- d. “*For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship*” (Hebrews 10:1).

NOTE: Neither the Old Testament priests, law, tabernacle nor sacrifices could make the Hebrew worshiper “perfect.” That explains why they must “leave” the old and “go on to perfection” under the new system of Christ.

B. Specific Aspects of the Old to Be Replaced with the New

- 1. **Performing acts that lead to death.** “. . .*repentance from acts that lead to death . . .*”
- 2. **Faith in God manifested in those acts that lead to death.**
- 3. **Ceremonial washings practiced by the Jews.** The Greek word for “baptisms” in this verse is the same in 9:9, where it is translated “ceremonial washings.”
- 4. **The symbolic transfer of their sins to the animal sacrifices.** “. . .*the laying on of hands . . .*” See Leviticus 1:4; 3:2; 4:4; 4:15; 16:21, et.al.
- 5. **Resurrection of the dead – connected to animal sacrifices.** There was an element of faith behind every sacrifice of the Law.
- 6. No eternal judgment to be concerned about.

NOTE: Now all of these formed the basis of the Law of Moses in its worship to God and in its atonement for sin. But these ceremonies of Judaism must now be “left” (or divorced) for the new order introduced by Christ. The new covenant elements by which our relationship with God will be presented are in verses four and five below.

THE REAL DANGER OF THEIR CONDITION

Just as there were certain fundamental elements of Judaism that had to be “divorced,” there were also some fundamental elements of Christianity that had to be embraced and held to for life. The writer lists six aspects of Christ’s new order, just as he listed the six aspects of the Mosaic order in verses 1-2.

A. An Impossible Possibility (vs. 4-6)

- 1. **The impossibility of repentance.** There are three other “impossibilities” in the book of Hebrews: 6:18; 10:4; 11:6.

NOTE: There is one word that has much to do with the “**impossible**” situation under discussion. The word is “**once**.” It comes from the Greek word: HAPAX, and it means a “one-time-for-all-time” event. It is an event never to be repeated. The word “apex” is a transliteration of the Greek word: HAPAX. The author used the same word to refer to the “**one time only**” sacrifice of Christ: 7:27; 9:26, 27, 28.

- a. For the “once-enlightened.”
 - b. Those who “once tasted” the heavenly gift.
 - c. Those who “once shared” in the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Those who “once tasted the goodness” of the word of God.
 - e. Those who “once tasted the powers” of the coming age.
 - f. Those who “fall away.”
- 2. **Their reconversion would not be possible for that generation.** The elements that first brought them to faith in Christ are no longer present.
- a. The apostles are now dead (Hebrews 13:7).

- b. The miracles that confirmed their preaching was then a thing of the past.
 - c. Their preaching “**was confirmed**” (2:3-4), and that is a past tense verb.
 - d. The process of miraculous confirmation was over when this book was written. That means that those first converts had eyewitness testimony about Jesus and miraculous demonstrations to confirm their witness. How could a person who was not an eye-witness and who had no miracles to back up his message reconvert those who apostatized from Christ back to the Law of Moses? Such an apostate would have already rejected more authoritative voices with more divine verification. What first brought that first generation to faith was no longer in place when this book was written. Therefore, it is quite possible that the writer is placing a “**one-time-for-all-time**” condition before his readers, that would not relate to later generations.
3. **The major reason from the context.**
- a. They have “**crucified the Son of God all over again.**”
 - b. They have rejected His claim to be the Messiah.
 - c. They have lost their faith that was once so well established on apostolic preaching and Holy Spirit miracles.
 - d. “**To their loss,**” they have repeated the scene that unfolded in Pilate’s judgment hall when the Jews cried out: “**Let Him be crucified.**” In other words, having once believed in Jesus, they now, having lost their faith in Him, would confirm the cry of that Jewish mob that led Jesus to be crucified.
 - e. They “**subject Jesus to public disgrace.**” An apostate Christian, in effect, exposes Jesus to public shame. For they seem to be saying: “I have seen the evidence and have heard the claims, but the evidence is not convincing, and the claims are false.”

BLESSINGS AND JUDGMENTS

A. Those Who Are Blessed

- 1. The “land” relates to those of the Jewish nation that became Christians and who remained faithful.
- 2. The “rain” would relate to the words of the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles who preached about Jesus.
- 3. If faith were born in their hearts and it remained, then the land would have been blessed by God with eternal salvation.

B. Those Who Are Judged

- 1. This “land” relates to those Jews who became Christians but then returned to Judaism. It would also refer to those Jews who were never converted to Christ. The whole unbelieving nation would be involved.
- 2. The “**thorns and thistles**” would relate to their unbelieving rejection of Jesus, in spite of all the evidence accumulated to verify every claim He made about Himself.
- 3. Then three things were true of those who never believed, and those who once believed and then “**fell away.**”
 - a. That land “**is worthless**” in God’s judgment. The Greek says that such land is “rejected” by God.
 - b. That land “**is in danger of being cursed.**” The Greek says such land is “nigh to a curse.” The curse seems to have reference to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year A.D. 70, not many months after this book was written.
 - c. That land’s eternal destiny is that “*it will be burned.*” Just as God had

sworn in His wrath that unfaithful Israel who had come out of Egypt “*shall not enter my rest.*” So the same judgment will be applied to that generation who fell by the same example of unbelief.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT:

- What was it that the Hebrew writer could not talk about because of their slowness to learn? _____
 - Give a brief definition of the following statements:
 - "By this time" _____
 - "Elementary truths of God's word" _____
 - "Teachings about righteousness" _____
 - "Milk" _____
 - "Solid food" _____
 - From what Greek word is the word "leave" translated and what is its definition?

 - Explain the meaning of the following statements:
 - "Repentance from acts that lead to death" _____
 - "Instructions about baptisms" _____
 - "The laying on of hands" _____
 - "Once been enlightened" _____
 - "Once tasted the heavenly gift" _____
 - "Once tasted the goodness of God's word" _____
 - "Once tasted the powers of the coming age" _____
 - Explain why the apostate Jewish Christian to whom this letter was written could not be brought back to repentance.

 - The "land" and the "rain" refer to what in verse 7? _____

7. The “land” and the “thorns and thistles” refer to what in verse 8?

8. What three things does the writer say about those who never believed or once believed and then “fell away”?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

LESSON NINE

THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION

INTRODUCTION:

Lesson 9 completes the rest of Hebrews 6, beginning in verse 9 and continues through verse 20. The major thrust that the writer wants to present in this context grows out of the severe warnings that he had just been giving. He talked about the impossibility of that first generation of believers ever being restored to faith in Christ if once having become a part of Christianity, they reverted to Judaism and lost their faith in Jesus. Simply because that which had brought them to faith in Christ is no longer present.

It would be important for any believer to consider the promises that the writer makes in this context. He does give his words of warning, but then at the same time will proceed almost immediately to give words of comfort, consolation and assurance. The very fidelity of God, the writer will tell us, becomes an anchor to our souls, and that is the message that he wants to present to us today.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 6:9-20

LESSON AIM: To understand that the hope of the Hebrew Christians (and today) is based upon the immutability of God's counsel (His promises) and the work of Christ as a forerunner.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Review lesson eight and the plight of those who fell away then and the condition of the fallen Christian today.
 2. Learn of five things taught in this lesson that accompany salvation.
-

A REVIEW OF LESSON EIGHT

Before we begin looking at this context, one or two observations need to be made from our last lesson.

A. The Plight of the Fallen-away. The writer said, “*. . . for those who have been once enlightened if they fall away it is impossible to be brought back to repentance*” (Hebrews 6:4),

1. The reason being because that first generation of believers lived in a context that was unique to them.
2. Similarly as the first generation that came out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses lived in a situation unique to them.
3. They fell in the wilderness, and it was impossible for them to reclaim themselves and ultimately enter into the land of promise because God swore in His wrath that they would not.
4. The Hebrew writer seems to be drawing a parallel between the failures of that generation of Moses in the wilderness and the failure of those who

lived in this first generation of the church. Because having been “**Once Enlightened**” there will be no further enlightening.

B. The Condition of the Fallen Christian Today

1. What he says about the impossibility of restoration, would not necessarily be true of our generation of time.
 - a. You and I were not taught directly by the living voice of the apostles as was that generation.
 - b. You and I did not see the miracles that accompanied the proclamation of the gospel at the hands of the apostles.
 - c. That which brought us to faith is still available to us because we were convinced by the written word of God. If we depart from the message and perhaps lose temporarily our belief in Christ, we could be reclaimed and could be brought back to fidelity because that which brought us to faith is still available to us. That which brought them to faith is no longer available to them. It is important that we make that clarification as we begin to study the rest of this chapter.
2. The writer had given three specific warnings about “*the land that drinks in the rain often falling on it*” (verse 7).
 - a. If that land produces good fruit, God is pleased, and God blesses the land.
 - b. If the land produces thorns and thistles, the land is “*worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end, it will be burned*” (v. 8).

NOTE: God is talking about that generation of Jews who lived in the time when Jesus Himself was on the earth, and His apostles preached the gospel during that first generation of the gospel age. Jesus had told the Jews that because they had rejected Him “*upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah son of Berachiah*” (Matthew 23:35). Such guilt was going to come upon the generation then living. That generation lived in the days of Jesus, heard His teaching, and saw His miracles that gave confirmation to His message.

Even His enemies could not deny that He raised the dead, healed the lame, and gave sight to the blind. Everyone could see that His miracles were authentic. Nicodemus recognized that “. . . no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.” (John 3:2).

But when a men see those miracles and rejects them, reject the message those miracles confirmed, then Jesus considers that “*an adulterous and wicked generation*” (Matthew 12:39).

Jesus foresees the destruction of Jerusalem, which He discussed very much in detail in Matthew 24. Abel was the first individual that was slain for a righteous cause. He was the first martyr as far as the Old Testament is concerned. And the last man who was slain for a righteous cause was Zachariah, son of Berachiah. You read about him in 2 Chronicles 24. As he was dying, he said, “*Jehovah look upon it, and require it.*” Jesus told the Jews of His day that God would “*require it of this generation.*” The book of 2 Chronicles is the last book of the Hebrew Bible. Jesus begins with reference to the first blood shed under the shadows of Eden and proceeds to the last blood shed under the shadows of John the Baptist’s advent. Then, He says that all the blood shed between Abel and Zachariah is going to come upon “this generation.”

Jesus further told them, “*your house is left to you desolate*” (Matthew 23:38). The reference to “their house” implies that God had abandoned the temple in Jerusalem. It is an empty place now. That whole system of priests, sacrifices, the tabernacle, and the Law itself had then been dismantled to favor the inauguration of the new system of Christ. That generation definitely lived in a transitional period of time.

THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION

A. Encouraged by the Fidelity of God

“Even though we speak like this” is not an apology for such warnings, rather an encouragement to consider the following facts.

1. You have not yet gone beyond the point of no return. *We are confident of better things in your case.*
2. God is righteous in His dealings with you. *God is not unjust . . .*
 - a. He will not ignore your Christian service. *Your work . . .*
 - b. He records your past history of helping others. “. . . you have helped his people . . .”
 - c. He is aware of your present ministry of love. “. . . and continue to do so.”

B. Encouraged by the Victorious Faith of Others Before You (vs. 11-12)

1. “Show the same diligence to the very end” relates to their past diligence or the imitation of the life of those who inherit salvation in verse 12.
2. Make your hope sure. Hope issues into the eternal rest of God.
3. Do not become lazy in faith (not in business). Do not become lethargic, disinterested, uninvolved, no longer devoted, no longer praying, and no longer attending assemblies of common worship unto the Lord, no longer expressing gifts of charity through their contributions unto the needs of the brethren. That would be “**lazy**” in “*things that belong to salvation.*”
4. Be patient in the face of all trials. To inherit the promises, there are two qualities that are needed: **“faith and patience.”**

C. Encouraged by the Fulfilled Promises of God.

The Christian’s inheritance is the unalterable promise of God.

1. Abraham is the writer’s case-history for confidence (v. 13).
 - a. God’s oath to Abraham was confirmed by His very own existence.
 - b. God’s promises to Abraham were blessings and descendants.
 - c. Abraham received everything God promised by waiting patiently for them. See Genesis 12, 15, and 22 for the promises of God to Abraham.
2. God’s promise backed up by His oath is credible.
 - a. The promise is sure.
 - b. The oath puts an end to all arguments.

D. Encouraged by the Unchanging Nature of God’s Purpose

1. Heirs of those promises have confident assurance. The writer used the case of Abraham to prove to Abraham’s heirs that God is still making and keeping promises to His people.
2. Every Jew is living testimony that God kept His promise to Abraham.
3. The two unchangeable things about God instill hope.
 - a. God’s promise and His oath are unchangeable.
 - b. They are backed up by the impossibility of God to perjure Himself – He cannot lie!
4. Great encouragement is built on God’s past record of fidelity.

E. Confident Hope Grows out of God's Fidelity to His Promise (v. 19)

1. Hope stands as an anchor of the soul. Anchors give stability to a ship in the midst of a storm.
2. It is a firm hope. It is rooted in God's own fidelity, and not in the believer's performance.
3. It is a secure hope. It is as certain as God's throne.
4. It is a penetrating hope. In Christ our hope has entered the sanctuary behind the curtain. Christ has led the way into the throne room of God, as our "trail-blazer," (our "forerunner" as the Greek says).
 - a. The curtain/veil symbolized the separation between God and His worshipers under the old Hebrew system.
 - b. It symbolized the sin problem that caused the separation.
5. Our hope actually is Jesus Himself – Not simply a conviction and not simply individual faith.
 - a. Jesus is our hope, and our hope has gone into Heaven.
 - b. Man stands in the presence of God without veils of separation today.
6. His "forever priesthood" stands as much the foundation of Christian hope, as does the immutability of God's own promises and oaths.

NOTE: Jesus has penetrated the veil between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, the veil that kept God separate from His worshipers. The veil was ripped apart from the top to the bottom, indicating that this was an action done by God Himself as He eliminated that veil of division. Until the sin problem was solved, man remained separated from God. That is the reason that any individual who has any sin to his credit on the day of judgement will have to be eternally separated from God. God cannot countenance the presence of sin in His Holy of Holies, in His Heaven. Our sins are now forgiven by Jesus' atoning blood, and therefore, we have the privilege of entering into the very presence of God. It is a spiritual presence, not physical. And so the writer defines that relationship as the basis of our hope. Our hope is our "Man in heaven."

Christ has gone there as a High Priest and a forerunner. The Greek in this verse has a word included that was not placed in this translation. The word is PRODROMOS, and it means a trail-blazer or a forerunner. If one man, Jesus Christ, has made it to heaven and has blazed a trail for us, then that tells us that other men can follow that same trail into the very presence of God. This is what the Hebrew writer will call "a way." We now have a new, fresh, and life-giving way into the very presence of God (Hebrews 10:22). Jesus has inaugurated a way for us into Heaven. This concludes chapter 6 as the writer wants to convince us and convict us that God is worthy of all trust.

Let us use our hope and our confidence in the fact that when God makes His promise about future redemption, God will Keep that promise.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE:

1. In reviewing lesson eight, what does the writer say about the plight of those who have fallen away?

2. Explain why the teaching the writer gives about the impossibility of restoration would not necessarily be true of our generation of time.

3. What are five things that accompany salvation in this context?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

LESSON TEN

THE ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST

INTRODUCTION:

Lesson 10 covers Hebrews 7:1-17, and it discusses the priesthood of Christ. His priesthood is not modeled after the Levitical order. This is a new kind of priesthood. It is ordered after the type of Melchizedek. The author will explain what he means when he talks about Melchizedek and about the “**order of Melchizedek.**” This is not the first time he has mentioned the fact that Jesus is a priest.

1. In chapter 1:3, he told us that Jesus has made purification for sin, which demanded His priestly involvement.
2. In chapter 2, the writer tells us in verse 17 that He was made like His brethren in all things, so that He could become a faithful and merciful high priest in things pertaining to God and make purification for the sins of the people.
3. In chapter 4:14, the writer tells us that our great High Priest has ascended to the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the Heavens.
4. And in chapter 5:10 he tells us Jesus has been named high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. In verse 11, he tells us there are many things to tell about Jesus (not Melchizedek), but his readers were a little bit hard of hearing. In other words, they are no longer listening to what God is saying through His Son.

The writer has finally arrived at the point that he would like to discuss the priesthood of Christ. He closed out chapter 6, telling us that our great forerunner, our trail blazer, the one that has begun and who will terminate our exodus from earth to heaven, our great High Priest who is at the right hand of God, is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 7:1-19

LESSON AIM: To gain an understanding of the eternal nature of Christ’s priesthood by comparing it with the priesthood of Melchizedek.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn about the person and priesthood of Melchizedek and compare his priesthood with the priesthood of Christ and Levi.
 2. See the comparison of the greatness of Abraham and Melchizedek.
 3. Discover that a change in priesthood is necessary to gain perfection and demands a change in law.
-

REVIEW AND PREVIEW:

In our study of HEBREWS, we are now getting into the heart of the “**PRIESTHOOD**” presentation. Notice the progression of that presentation thus far:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1:3 | – Jesus made “purification for sins” (that suggests a priestly function). |
| 2:17 | – Jesus became a merciful and faithful “High Priest.” |
| 3:1 | – Jesus presented as the “high priest” of our confession. |

- 4:14 – Jesus is a “great High Priest.”
 5:10 – Jesus is a High Priest “after the order of Melchizedek.”
 6:20 – Jesus is a High Priest “forever” after the order of Melchizedek.

THE PERSON AND PRIESTHOOD OF MELCHIZEDEK

(Hebrews 7:1-10).

A. The Person and Parentage Of Melchizedek.

1. His name by interpretation is “O Righteous King” (v. 2).
2. He was king of Salem (peace) (v. 2).
3. He was without father or mother (v. 3).
 - a. No recorded history of his father and mother.
 - b. He did not get his priesthood from father or mother (without dependency).
4. He was made like unto the Son of God in that His (Christ’s) priesthood abides continually (v. 3).
5. He is the first person in the Old Testament to be called priest (Genesis 14:17-20). Only historical information about Melchizedek (See also Psalm 110:4).
6. He was a man (v. 4).

B. The Priesthood of Melchizedek. His priesthood stands as a type (figure) of the priesthood of Christ.

C. The Preeminence Of Melchizedek

1. The greatness of Abraham (vs. 4-6).
 - a. He was the patriarch (v. 4).
 - b. He had the promises (v. 6).
2. Melchizedek was greater than Abraham (vs. 4-7).
 - a. Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek (v. 4). Tithes flow from the lesser to the greater (Note also v. 5).
 - b. Melchizedek blessed Abraham (vs. 6-7). The lesser was blessed by the greater (esp. v. 7).
 - c. Melchizedek’s superiority is seen further in that Levi, by federal representation (Abraham), paid tithes to Melchizedek (vs. 9-10).

D. The Permanency Of Melchizedek. The Levitical priests die while Melchizedek’s priesthood stays with him (v. 8).

A CHANGE IN THE PRIESTHOOD

(Hebrews 7:11-17) *“If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come – one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron”* (v. 11)?

A. Perfection Needed (v.11)

1. Perfection to the Hebrew writer means to walk into the presence of God (into the Holy of Holies) without any veil.
2. Aaron’s (Levitical) priesthood could not produce that unveiled relationship with God (v. 11).

B. A Change of Law (vs. 12-16). *“For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law”* (v. 12). Two reasons why the law must be changed when the priesthood is changed:

1. Jesus belonged to the tribe of Judah – not to the tribe of Levi (vs. 13-14).

2. Christ has a non-genealogical priesthood.
- C. **The “Another” Priesthood.** The word “another” (Greek HETEROS) means “of another kind, different” – not another in a series but a different one (vs. 11, 15).
1. The decision to change the priesthood was God’s (Psalm 110:4).
 2. The “*law of a carnal commandment*” (v. 16) refers not to the ten commandments but to a law of fleshly dependency – the law by which the descendants of Levi were made priests.
 3. Three things that are said about Jesus in verse 17:
 - a. He is a PRIEST.
 - b. He is a FOREVER priest.
 - c. He is an AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK forever priest.

NOTE: Such qualities found in the priesthood of Christ elevates Him and His ministry far above the imperfections of the Aaronic and Levitical systems of priests.

NOTE: The phrase “foregoing commandment” (v. 18) relates to the law of carnal commandment of verse 16. The word “disannulling” (v. 18) means “to strip of authority, to declare void, to set aside.” The “new hope” (v. 19) is the new priesthood.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Describe Melchizedek and his priesthood. Why do you think the Hebrew writer uses him to enlighten the Hebrew Christians to whom he is writing?
2. Answer the question, “Why must the law be changed when the priesthood is changed?”
3. Discuss thoroughly the concept of Melchizedek being “without father and mother.”

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN:

1. From Hebrews 7:1-4, list the information given concerning Melchizedek in six points.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

2. What two statements in vs. 4-6 express the greatness of Abraham?

1) _____
2) _____

3. List two things from Hebrews 7:4-7 that demonstrate that Melchizedek is greater than Abraham.

1) _____
2) _____

4. When did Levi pay tithes to Melchizedek and what is the significance of that?

5. Define the word “perfection” as used by the Hebrew writer.

6. Give two reasons from Hebrews 7:12-16 why the law must be changed because of a changed priesthood.

1) _____
2) _____

7. What does the word “another” in verses 11 and 15 mean?

8. What three things are stated about Jesus in Hebrews 7:17?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

LESSON ELEVEN

THE SUPERIOR HIGH PRIEST

INTRODUCTION:

This lesson continues a study of the priesthood of Christ no longer by way of parallel of Melchizedek, rather by way of contrast with the Levites themselves. The writer wants to illustrate just how different the new priesthood is from the old.

There are several areas of immediate contrast by which we recognize that the priesthood of Christ is not only different, it is better. It is stronger, and it is perfect. As a matter of fact, he begins in chapter 7:18 talking about the system by which Levites were made priests. You remember in the previous lesson he had said that they were made priests by descendency, by genealogy, in other words from father to son. When the father died, the son automatically became the priest. That is the process of descendency. But Jesus did not become a priest by descendency. He became priest by direct, divine nomination and appointment.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 7:19-28

LESSON AIM: To grasp the great superiority of the priesthood of Jesus Christ over the Levitical priesthood under the Law of Moses.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn of the weakness of the Levitical priesthood: It was temporary and ineffective.
 2. Then see the greatness of the priesthood of Christ: It is a “forever” priesthood and effective in relation to salvation.
 3. Examine the nature and characteristics of our High Priest Jesus Christ, and His priesthood.
-

THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD

(Hebrews 7:18-20)

- A. Superior as to its Regulation (vs. 18-19).** The regulation by which the priests of the law became priests was based on descendency.
1. The old priesthood was set aside for two reasons:
 - a. It was weak. It was basically weak because it was genealogical, it was based on descendency.
 - b. It was useless. Its useless nature derived from the fact that the priests could not give the worshipers “perfection” in their relation to God.
 2. The law could not bring perfection (v.19).
 - a. The “better hope” relates to the unveiled relationship that Christians enjoy with God.
 - b. “Draw near” means that through the priesthood of Christ Christians have the privilege of “*approaching the throne of grace with confidence.*”

B. Superior as to its Oath (vs. 20-22)

“And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without an oath . . .”

1. The oath is in reference to the words of Psalm 110:4.
 - a. Levites were made priests without an oath.
 - b. They would be priests only until the priesthood of Jesus.
2. Jesus will never need a successor (v. 21). He will never vacate His office.
3. Jesus is the “guarantee” of the “better covenant” (v. 22).
 - a. He is the surety and pledge of the good covenant relationship Christians now have with God.
 - b. He stands good for the terms of the covenant.
 - c. He is our assurance that this covenant will not be abrogated.
4. Six statements regarding Christ and His priesthood (vs. 17-24).
 - a. He is a priest (v. 17)
 - b. He is a forever priest (v. 17).
 - c. He is an “after the order of Melchizedek” forever priest (v. 17).
 - d. His priesthood is backed up by the oath of God (v. 21).
 - e. His priesthood is singular as opposed to the many of the Levitical order (v. 23).
 - f. His priesthood is unchangeable (v. 24).

C. Superior as to its Permanency (vs. 23-24)

1. Levitical priesthood was temporary (v. 23).
2. Jesus’ priesthood is permanent because He ever lives (v. 25). In order for another to take His place, He would have to die.

NOTE: This statement alone is sufficient to place in total discredit any present day human priesthoods that claim to be an extension of the Melchizedek or even Aaronic priesthood. Such “priesthoods” have absolutely no Biblical basis for their claim. They are more “priest-craft” than priesthood! And priest-craft in Christianity is as much out of place as is “witchcraft!” His priesthood belongs only to Him, and there will never be another priest of any origin anywhere that will serve in the place that God has **“appointed”** for Jesus to occupy forever.

D. Superior as to its Effectiveness (vs. 25-28)

“Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”

1. The word “completely” (uttermost, KJV) means that in every situation for every individual under Christ’s priesthood, JESUS IS ABLE TO COMPLETELY, TOTALLY AND SUFFICIENTLY SAVE.
2. Jesus’ present life is a life of intercession in our behalf (v. 25).
3. Jesus’ intercession is seen in a redemptive context. That means that He saves His people, and He keeps them saved.
4. Note the contrast between Christ and the Levites.
 - a. They were many; He was one.
 - b. They died; He lives.
 - c. They could not bring perfection; He can.
 - d. They were weak; He is strong.
 - e. They were unprofitable. He is able to save.
5. The nature and qualifications of Jesus as High Priest (vs. 26-28).
 - a. One that is HOLY. The word **“holy”** generally means “one that is set

apart for God.” The normal New Testament word for holy is HAGIOS. But the word in this context is HOSIOS and it has more of a moral connotation than the word HAGIOS. This statement implies Jesus Christ was morally perfect.

- b. One that is GUILTYLESS. The Greek word is AKAKOS and it means to be harmless, without guile or fraud. There would be no deceit in His dealings with other people. He would be perfectly honest and never offensive in all situations.
- c. One that is UNDEFILED. The Greek word AMIANTOS implies no defilement. It suggests an unspoiled life that was free from contamination.
- d. One that is SEPARATED FROM SINNERS. Not “set apart” in the sense of being aloof, separate, distant, afar from the people that He was serving. The writer is discussing the ideal priest who was not involved in the sin problem; one that was on the side of the cure rather than on the side of the disease. We needed a priest that was innocent of the sin problem.
- e. One that is MADE HIGHER THAN THE HEAVENS. As long as a priest lived on earth, with earthly limitations, with the restrictions of finite man, then whatever he would be able to do would be limited by those limitations.
- f. One that NEEDS NOT DAILY TO OFFER SACRIFICES FOR HIMSELF. We needed a priest that could offer a sacrifice that could handle not only today’s sins and the sins of yesterday but the sins of tomorrow.
- g. One that OFFERS “ONCE FOR ALL” SACRIFICE THAT WILL SOLVE THE SIN PROBLEM.
- h. One that was NOT A MAN APPOINTED BY LAW. The law appoints men that are High Priests, but men who have infirmities. They have weaknesses. They have sin problems. They have death problems.
- i. One NOT A MAN HAVING INFIRMITY.
- j. One that is DIVINE.
- k. One PERFECTED (deals with functional perfection) FOR EVERMORE.

NOTE: Now, listen to the triumphant words of Hebrews 8:1. This will be the introduction to the next lesson. “*The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.*”

REVIEW AND PREVIEW:

You saw in lesson 9 the greatness of Christ’s priesthood compared to that of Melchizedek. Using Melchizedek as an illustration, the writer showed the uniqueness and superiority of Jesus’ priesthood.

Now in lesson 11, you have seen the strong contrast between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Christ. It is by an oath; it is permanent; it is effective.

In lesson 12, you will see the superior temple ministry of Christ.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN:

1. To what does the statement “the former regulation” refer? _____

2. The old priesthood was set aside for what two reasons?
1) _____

2) _____

3. What are the six statements regarding Christ and His priesthood given in 7:17-24?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
4. There are three statements made about the priesthood of Christ which make it unique and different from the priesthood of Aaron. List these below.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
5. List the five contrasts between Christ and the Levites.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____

LESSON TWELVE

THE BETTER PRIEST

INTRODUCTION:



esson 12 continues to build on the priesthood of Christ but now expands it to involve the covenant that he inaugurated through the shedding of His blood. The Hebrew writer now begins to discuss the better covenant

This section presents Christ as the new minister and as the new priest, serving under the better conditions of the new covenant that He has inaugurated. The writer closed chapter 7 by saying that the kind of priest the Jews formerly needed was not the kind they had. But now, the kind of priest they have is exactly what they needed.

The Levites simply could not handle their sin problem. Their sacrifices did not bring perfection. Their tabernacle did not grant immediate, unveiled relationship with God. They themselves had built-in imperfections in their priestly ministry: their own sinfulness and even their physical death. Therefore, they could not supply what was really needed by sinful man.

So the writer tells us that God has inaugurated a totally new system. It has a priesthood based on the divinity of Christ, the Son of God. He is a priest who has been functionally “perfected forevermore” (Hebrews 7:28). Not only is He perfected in the ability to carry on the ministrations of His position as a priest, but also He brings about perfection to His people. He is perfectly able to handle all of the sin problems that are created by human transgression, and is therefore able to inaugurate a new relationship with God.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 8:1-8

LESSON AIM: To present Christ as the new minister and as the new priest, serving under the better conditions of the new covenant that He has inaugurated.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See that Christ is the High Priest who fills the needs of a people needing forgiveness.
 2. Discover the ministry of all High Priests and see that Jesus Christ fulfills these functions in a heavenly tabernacle.
 3. Learn that Jesus’ ministry is a different and better ministry, under a new and better covenant, with new and perfect results.
-

In Hebrews chapter 9, the writer will spend considerable time talking about the ministry of the priests under the Law of Moses. He will discuss the two different tabernacles. Actually the old Hebrew tabernacle appears to be one complete structure, but in reality, it was composed of two different tabernacles. That will become clear as we study chapter 9. The ordinary priests entered daily into the first part of the tabernacle, called the Holy Place, to carry on the worship functions. Their purpose in the Holy Place was to conduct the services of divine worship. But into the second, the Holy of Holies, only the Great High Priest entered one time a year, but it was not

for the purpose of worship. His function was to accomplish symbolic sacrificial expiation for sin on the great Day of Atonement. Now the writer defines both the functions of the ordinary priests in the Holy Place and that of the High Priest in the Holy of Holies: “a ministry.” A priest is one thing and the ministry that he carries on is another thing. And so, the writer points out that not only did Jesus become the new priest, He also conducts the new ministry.

CHRIST, THE SUFFICIENT HIGH PRIEST

A. The New Priest Is What Is Needed (vs. 1-2). *“The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven . . .”*

1. The “chief point”: in Greek KEPHALAION, meaning top, head or major point.
2. The author is saying that Jesus fits all the qualities listed in chapter seven as meeting the needs of the people.
3. There is a clear contrast between what they formerly “had” and now “have”.

NOTE: Such a statement would certainly correct the course of anyone who was thinking of drifting back into the old Hebrew system where they were always standing in need of an effective priest. They would be encouraged not to depart from the only priest that could supply that need!

B. The New Priest Is Where He Is Needed. He is “. . . at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”

1. They needed a priest who was not earthbound with earthly limitations.
 - a. He was needed in heaven itself, right next to God.
 - b. That is where atonement is accomplished, forgiveness is tendered, grace is granted, and mercy is applied.
2. That is exactly where our Great High Priest is ministering.

C. The New Sanctuary Is Where He Serves

1. By calling the new sanctuary a “true” tabernacle, the writer does not intend to imply that the old Hebrew tabernacle was in any way false.
2. It is the “reality” sanctuary of which the former Hebrew tabernacle was a “shadow.”
3. The new tabernacle is in heaven.
 - a. The old tabernacle was earth-bound.
 - b. The new tabernacle, inaugurated by Christ is in heaven.
 - c. Moses “set up” the physical, earthly tabernacle.
 - d. “**The Lord set up the true tabernacle in heaven.**” This is the place where Christ conducts His ministry.

THE MINISTRY OF HIGH PRIESTS

(Hebrews 8:3-5). “*Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer.*”

A. A Priest Is Appointed to Offer Gifts

1. Gifts were worship offerings.
2. The priest also offered sacrifices.
 - a. Those were offered to atone for sin.
 - b. Jesus, to qualify as a priestly minister, must offer both gifts and sacrifices.
3. Under the Law of Moses, the priests offered animal sacrifices.

4. A part of Christ's priestly ministry involves the purification of the worshiper himself, the cleansing his worship of any imperfections. The gifts that Jesus offers are two-fold:
 - a. The gift of Christian praise and adoration of God.
 - b. The sacrifice for sin that He offered was Himself.
5. What would a "**heavenly**" priest do in an "**earthly**" sanctuary? "*If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law.*"

B. The Tabernacle: a Shadow-copy of the Heavenly Tabernacle

"They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: 'See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.'"

1. The Aaronic priesthood had been annulled (chapter 7).
2. Those Levitical priests are serving in a sanctuary that has been removed.
3. The old Hebrew tabernacle was a very, very dim outline of a "**pattern**" that was shown Moses on Mount Sinai.
4. The Law of Moses was a shadow covenant of the coming realities of Christ's covenant.
5. The writer of this book considered the total Hebrew system nothing more than a shadow of the "**good things to come.**"
6. Even its sacrifices were shadows (10:1).
7. The "**good things to come**" had already come!

NOTE: "**According to the pattern**" was given to Moses as a solemn warning not to introduce changes. For changes in the designs or blueprints would impose changes on the reality they predicted. So when God told Moses to follow the pattern, He was protecting the characteristics of the "**reality tabernacle**" of Christ. The substance must not be changed.

THE MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST

"But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which He is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises."

A. A Different and Better Ministry

1. The law had been changed. The law was the foundation of the whole Levitical system
2. That means that every article, every ordinance, every rule, every regulation, and every commandment of the Law of Moses has now been taken out of the way.
3. And it means that the completely new system has been inaugurated.
4. The covenant He inaugurated is better than the covenant under which they served.
 - a. The new covenant priest is better.
 - b. His sanctuary is better.
 - c. The covenant itself is better.
 - d. The "**promises**" under the new covenant are better.

B. A Different and Better Covenant

"For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another."

1. There was something "*wrong with the first covenant.*"
 - a. It had a limited tenure.
 - b. It simply could not remove the sin of those under its authority.
 - c. It was not designed to remove sin.

- d. It fulfilled its purpose.
- 2. It could not make the worshipers of God perfect in their relationship with him.
 - a. If it had been able to bring about human redemption, then “**Christ died for nothing**” (Galatians 2:21).
 - b. If a man could be saved by his law-keeping, then there would have been no purpose for Calvary.
 - c. But it was impossible for man to be saved by his law-keeping.

NOTE: The Law of Moses was a good law, let this be impressed on our thinking. It functioned like the law of electricity. Electricity is a good law. It serves us well. It heats our building, lights our rooms, cooks our food, warms us in the wintertime, and cools us in the summertime. It is a good law, and it serves us well as long as we respect it. But if we violate it one time, that very good law will kill us. And then, it is impossible for the law of electricity to restore life. That is the nature of the Law of Moses. Another example is the law of gravity, a very good law, until it is violated, then it kills.

C. A New Improved Covenant

- 1. The major fault of the first covenant was that it made nothing perfect.
- 2. The people were at fault also because they violated the law, and once violated, the law could not handle the problem.
- 3. The word “new” is the Greek word KAINOS, which means “new in kind and in time.”
 - a. The imperfection is present in the human family.
 - b. God now has a law without imperfection, a new covenant that is able to handle the transgressions of the people.

CONCLUSION: “*But God found fault with the people and said: ‘The time is coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.’*” The writer will now begin the explanation of the “**new**” aspects of Jesus’ covenant. Those aspects will be explained fully in the next lesson.

THINGS OF INTEREST:

- 1. The High Priest we needed is just where we need Him – *in the heavens* (v. 1)
- 2. The word *true* in verse 2 means *real* as contrasted with the shadowy copy.
- 3. The ministry that Jesus performs in the true tabernacle is *atonement*.
- 4. Three reasons why Jesus would not be a priest if He were on earth.
 - a. He belonged to the wrong tribe.
 - b. He belonged to the wrong order of priesthood.
 - c. He is a heavenly priest and therefore must serve in a heavenly tabernacle.
- 5. Moses saw in the mountain the blue print of the old Hebrew tabernacle.
- 6. The excellency of Christ’s ministry.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE:

1. What does the Hebrew writer say about the sufficiency of the priesthood of Jesus Christ in verse 1?

2. Where does Jesus perform His priestly ministry?

3. What is the basic function of His priestly ministry?

4. List some contrasts between the old tabernacle and the new tabernacle (sanctuary).

5. A priest is appointed to offer gifts in what two areas?

6. How does Christ perform His ministry in these two areas? _____

7. In what four ways is the new covenant, inaugurated by Christ, better than the covenant under which earthly priests served?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

8. What was the major fault of the first covenant? _____

9. What was it that the law could not do once people had violated it? _____

LESSON THIRTEEN

A BETTER COVENANT

INTRODUCTION:

As we begin lesson 13, we will be continuing with a study of the new covenant the writer introduced in Hebrews 8:1. The “**new**” covenant has a number of qualities built into it that distinguish it from the Mosaic covenant. Not only is the “**new**” based on the “**better promises**” (8:6) relative to life under the new covenant, it also concern the privileges to be enjoyed in the life to come. New covenant people are highly privileged above conditions they formerly had under the old.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 8:9-13

LESSON AIM: To see the announcement of a new covenant and the characteristics of that new covenant.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See six ingredients contained in the new covenant that were not present in the old covenant.
 2. Learn that upon Jeremiah’s announcement of a “new” covenant the “first” covenant immediately became old.
-

A BETTER COVENANT

- A. Unlike the First Covenant.** *“It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt”* (v. 9). The New Covenant would:
 1. Provide a **better priesthood**.
 2. Provide a **more perfect relationship** between God and His people.
 3. Provide and involve a **perfect sacrifice in Christ**.
- B. The First Covenant Broken.** *“. . . because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, says the Lord.”*
 1. Israel did not live as though they had a covenant with God.
 2. It is impossible for a covenant to exist when only one party in the two-party agreement keeps the conditions of the covenant.
 - a. Israel first turned away from God.
 - b. God could not maintain the covenant relation with Israel.
- C. The New Covenant Will Be Effective.** The new covenant will have built-in elements which will eliminate the possibility of a repeat of the failures of the first.
 1. It will be made with the **“house of Israel.”** No longer a divided kingdom (Israel & Judah).
 2. The law will be **written on their minds.** This means that under the new covenant, people will know God’s law BEFORE He will have a covenant agreement with them.

3. The law will be **written on their hearts**. This means that they agree with it, understand it, and accept it. They believe in that law, and confirm their conviction through the practice of the law.

NOTE: Even in the Old Covenant system when God gave the Law of Moses, He not only wanted them to know the law in their minds, He also wanted them to have that law written upon their hearts. That being true, then what is new about the New Covenant?

The explanation is simply this: the people of Israel became subjects of the Mosaic covenant by birth, and as infants they were born into covenant relationship with God. The circumcision that took place on the eighth day after birth for all male children just simply confirmed the covenant relationship with God. But what does an eight day old baby know about the law of God? What does an eight day old baby know about having the law of God within his heart? He does not know the law; he does not love the law, and yet God had covenant relationship with him in spite of his lack of knowledge about God's law.

So God said the new covenant is not going to be that way at all. Before there can be any covenant relationship, not only are they going to know me, but they are also going to know My law, and they are going to love My law. And that makes a great distinction between the old covenant and the new because Jeremiah said this new covenant is not going to be like the old one. God will have covenant relationship only with people that already know Him, know His law, and love His law.

4. There will be a **God-people relationship**. God says He and His people will have a new relationship, and that means that they dwell together. There will be perfect harmony between them. He and they have a common address. And the address of God is the temple of God, the dwelling place of God with His people.
5. They will **all “know God”** under the New Covenant.
 - a. Under the old, they were made covenant partners with God and were then educated about God and His laws.
 - b. Under the new, the education precedes the induction into covenant.
6. There will be **forgiveness of sins** (v. 12). The new covenant will have the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ that will make it possible for God to completely and totally cover the sins of the people.
 - a. Forgiveness is an ever present reality.
 - b. Under the old system, forgiveness was a future promise.
 - c. Forgiveness was based on the future sacrifice of Christ.
 - d. God committed Himself to pay the debt at Calvary.

NOTE: **Those are the six new ingredients that go with the new covenant.** They are beautiful and form a strong argument against anyone leaving new covenant privilege to return to the inadequacies of the old system. We will understand the last one a little bit better when we get into Hebrews 10. The writer discusses that new sacrifice that Christ will offer because He will come back and explain what God means when He says "*their sins will I remember no more.*"

D. The New Covenant Announced Makes the First Covenant Old

1. God made the old covenant "old" in the days of Jeremiah. (Jeremiah lived 525 years before the time of Christ.)

2. The Hebrew writer makes two statements about the old covenant.
 - a. It became old because it was subject to the aging process, and that which is old is destined to get older.
 - b. Then, being “**obsolete**,” and becoming “**aged**”, it will not be long until it “**disappears**.” That Old Covenant “**disappeared**” on the cross of Calvary.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

AN IMPROVED COVENANT

- A. Reasons for the new regulations (8:6-12).
 1. Improved ministry: “. . . he obtained a *MINISTRY* the *MORE EXCELLENT*.”
 2. Improved message: “. . . the *MEDIATOR* of a *BETTER* covenant” (8:6).
 3. Improved promises: “. . . enacted upon better *PROMISES*” (8:6).
 4. Improved people (as foreseen in prophecy – 8::8-12; Jeremiah 31:31-34).
 - a. The first people seen in review (8:8f).
 - 1) “. . . finding fault with them” – the possessors of the first covenant (cf. Psalms 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Romans 3:10-18).
 - 2) “. . . they *CONTINUED* not in my covenant” (8:9).
 - 3) “. . . and I *REGARDED* then *NOT*, saith the Lord” (8:9; cf. Exodus 19:5-8; Deuteronomy 5:1-5; 7:9-14; 8:19f).
 - b. The next people (those now in Christ and under His covenant) seen in preview through Jeremiah’s prophecy (8:10-12).
 - 1) “*I will put my laws into their MIND*” (8:10).
 2. “. . . and on their heart also will I write them” (8:10).
 - 3) “*I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people*” (8:10; cf. Deuteronomy 7:6-9).
 - 4) “. . . for all shall know me” (8:11). This in contrast to the old system where they entered Israel by birth. In this new system they will be taught first so as to come to God (cf. John 6:44f; Hebrews 11:6; Romans 10:17; Mark 16:15f; Matthew 28:18-20; Galatians 3:24-27).
 - 5) “And their sins will I REMEMBER no more” (8:12).
 - B. Results of the new regulations (8:13).
 1. Since He said a “new” covenant, He made the first old. Let each one note that GOD made the first “old.” (cf. Galatians 3:23-25; 5:4).
 2. “. . . that which is becoming old and *WAXED AGED* is nigh unto *VANISHING* away” (8:13).
 3. Since Christ gave what had already, by prophecy, been called the “new covenant” (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:8), the law had thereby become “old,” and even its influence, as one grown old, was disappearing. The awaited redemptive age through a Messiah is here! (Hebrews 8:13; cf. John 4:25f).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THIRTEEN:

1. The New Covenant would be unlike the Old Covenant. List three ways it would differ.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

2. List six new ingredients contained in the new covenant that were not resident in the old covenant.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

3. Explain below how the people of Israel became subjects of the Mosaic covenant.

4. What does it mean: "*the law will be written on their hearts?*" _____

5. Explain the concept expressed in this statement, "*I will be their God and they shall be my people.*" _____

6. When did the "Old Covenant" become "old?" _____

LESSON FOURTEEN

THE BETTER TABERNACLE

INTRODUCTION:

This lesson will introduce the new sanctuary that the new priest has inaugurated under the new covenant. Having studied the priesthood of Christ in chapter 7 and His covenant in chapter 8, the writer begins the first part of the new sanctuary that Christ introduces. All the changes in the overall system have created a new relationship between God and His people. That is the basic purpose of the tabernacles in both covenants. They define the relationships that were characteristic of each covenant. Actually, the old Hebrew tabernacle was nothing more than a definition. It was a description of broken fellowship. The Hebrew worshipper stood outside and worshipped at a distance. The first veil of separation indicated that which separated the Hebrew people from worship in the Holy Place. Only the Levitical priests could function there. They functioned mediatoriallly, on behalf of the people who were not allowed in the Holy Place. In other words, the people worshipped through the mediation and the intervention of the Levitical priests.

But there was another veil of separation which symbolized the sin problem that was not solved under the old Hebrew system. Before Adam and Eve sinned, they and God had perfect, unveiled relationships. Therefore, Eden stands as a definition of the ideal fellowship between the Creator and His creation. That was the intent of God when He created man in the beginning. Man was created for fellowship with God. It was a noble purpose, but sin destroyed that fellowship, broke the relationship, and alienated man from God. Since then, man's separation from God and from that original purpose has been symbolized by the veil of separation. When God drove Adam and Eve from Eden, He placed the cherubim at the east of Eden to "**guard the way of the tree.**" In Genesis 3:22, God said: "*The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.*" God did not want man to live forever in that state of rebellion. So God placed the cherubim with flaming swords at the east of Eden to guard the way. Those cherubim with their flaming swords, stood there as interdiction, to prohibit man's return to the relationship that he had before his sin was committed.

Now the interesting thing about the old Hebrew tabernacle is that two cherubim were interwoven into the cloth of both veils of separation. They bore their flaming swords for they were the avengers of God, and they protected the all-holy God from any intrusion into His presence by sinful man. So, the veils were visible, external signs of broken fellowship between God and man. Sinful man cannot get back to the relationship that Adam and Eve had with God in Eden until the sin problem has been solved. Only then will man be accepted and his worship acceptable to God. Hebrews 9 will discuss the changes that Jesus introduced into that old Hebrew tabernacle with its two veils of separation.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 9:1-10

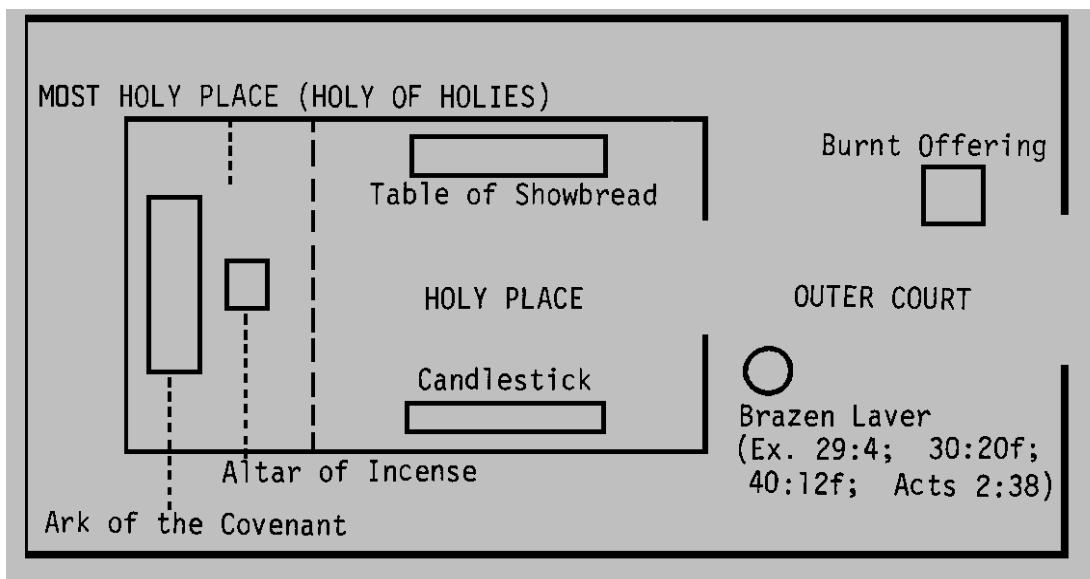
LESSON AIM: To get an understanding of the new sanctuary that the new priest has inaugurated under the new covenant and the new standing of the worshiper in this new sanctuary.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See the ministry and worship conducted in the first sanctuary and its ineffectiveness.
 2. Gain a concept of what the first tabernacle arrangement was on the Day of Atonement.
 3. See in verses 6-10 the tabernacle ritual and how it reflected the real tabernacle.
-

THE TABERNACLE ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT:

The diagram below serves as both a “review” and a “preview” for this lesson. An understanding of the Old Testament tabernacle leads to a more complete understanding of “the greater and more perfect tabernacle.”



THE TABERNACLE DESCRIPTION

A. The First Covenant Regulations (v. 1)

1. The writer speaks in the past tense about the first covenant and tabernacle (v. 1). (See Colossians 2:24).
 - a. The first covenant no longer has acceptable worship or even an **“earthly sanctuary.”**
 - b. The first covenant no longer has God recognized regulation.

- c. The “**regulations**” mentioned were those that regulated worship under the Mosaic covenant.
- 2. We are under a new covenant with new ingredients, new privileges, and new relationships. Obviously a new covenant would have new ordinances to govern their worship to God.

B. The Description of the Tabernacle (vs. 2-5)

- 1. The Hebrew tabernacle really had two tabernacles (v. 2-3).
 - a. The Holy Place (v. 2). (Greek – HAGIA).
 - 1) The lampstand – the symbol of God’s guidance through the light of His word.
 - 2) The table of shewbread – symbolized God’s providential care for His people.
 - b. The Most Holy Place (v. 3-5). (Greek – HAGIA HAGION). Behind the second of two curtains.
 - 1) The golden altar of incense – a golden censer used by Aaron on the Day of Atonement.

NOTE: This seems to indicate that the tabernacle was set up for the services that would be conducted on the great Day of Atonement as it is defined in Leviticus chapter 16. Normally the altar of incense was placed in the Holy Place. That altar was used 364 days a year in the Holy Place by the ordinary priests for the purpose of worship. But on the Day of Atonement, it seems to have been moved into the Most Holy Place.

- 2) The Ark of the Covenant. In it were:
 - a) The golden pot holding the manna.
 - b) Aaron’s rod that budded.
 - c) The two tables of stone, the Ten Commandments.
- 3) The Cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercyseat. To protect the dignity of God, the holiness of His law, and the righteousness of His judgments.
- 2. The location of the altar of incense (v. 4).
 - a. That altar (golden censer used by Aaron on the Day of Atonement) was normally used in the Holy Place before the second veil (Exodus 30:1-10).
 - b. On the Day of Atonement, the altar was moved inside to the Holy of Holies (Leviticus 16:12).
 - c. The Hebrew writer is describing the tabernacle on the Day of Atonement (v. 7).

C. The Tabernacle Ritual (vs. 6-10)

- 1. The ministry of the Holy Place (v. 6). Involved:
 - a. The renewal of the oil for the candlestick.
 - b. The renewal of the shewbread.
 - c. The burning of incense as expressions of praise and gratitude.
 - d. The offering of the daily burnt offerings and grain offerings for the

nation.

2. The ministry of the Most Holy Place (v. 7). Not for worship – for atonement of sin. Involved:
 - a. Sprinkling blood on the Ark and other places.
 - b. Only the High Priest and only once a year.
3. The Holy Spirit was the designer of the whole Hebrew system. Showed at least three things:
 - a. The coming functions of Christ.
 - b. The inability of the Mosaic system to perfect the people.
 - c. The limited access of the people to God.
4. The way into the Most Holy Place was not made manifest while the first tabernacle stood (v. 8).
 - a. The “**first tabernacle**” relates to “hagia” where the ordinary priests carried on worship functions on a daily basis.
 - b. When the “hagia” does not exist any more, the entire tabernacle becomes the “hagia hagion.”
 - c. When Jesus removed the veil, the “**first tabernacle**” no longer had any standing before God.

D. The Weakness of the Tabernacle Worship (vs. 9-10)

1. Could not clear the conscience of the worshipper.
 - a. Only a shadow and illustration of their weakness.
 - b. It illustrates the glory of the new order in Christ.
2. “The time of the new order” refers to Christianity when fellowship with God is restored.

CONCLUSION: A very tragic thing happened in Jerusalem after Jesus died and thereby ripped apart the veil of separation in the Hebrew temple. The tragic thing was that the next day or sometime soon thereafter, some Hebrew, we do not know who nor do we understand his thinking, but , he went back into the old Hebrew Temple and stitched that veil of separation back together. Such action ignored the fact that Jesus had solved the sin problem and eliminated the separation between God and man. And that’s tragic.

But there was another tragedy attached to this event. It allowed the Levitical priests to continue their daily and annual ministrations as though they still had validity before God. But that entire system no longer exists. The “**reformation of all things**” has now been accomplished by Christ. He has come and has reformed all things. So, He has returned us to the privilege of the God-Adam relationship. How did He do that? By removing the sin that was the cause of the separation. When God can say: “**their sins I will remember no more**” (Hebrews 8:12), the condition of Eden has been restored. And the old Hebrew system which stood as a constant reminder of that broken fellowship, has been eliminated forever!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOURTEEN:

1. What pieces of furniture were located in the Holy Place?

1) _____

2) _____

2. What pieces of furniture were located in the Most Holy Place?

1) _____

2) _____

3. What was contained in the Ark of the Covenant?

1) _____

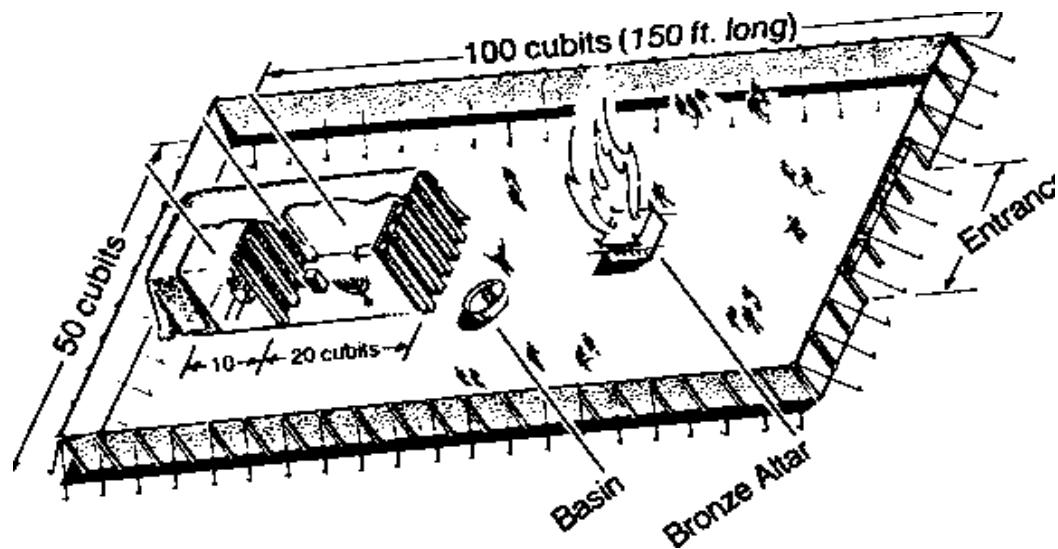
2) _____

3) _____

4. Where was the “altar of incense” located on the Day of Atonement?

On the other days of the year? _____

5. What happens to the tabernacle when the veil between the two no longer exists?



LESSON FIFTEEN

THE BETTER MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION:

In this lesson, the writer continues to discuss elements of the new sanctuary. But he would like to add the fact that Jesus has a new ministry that grows out of the sacrifice He has offered. He will draw a parallel between the atonement sacrifices of the law and the sacrifice of Christ under the new covenant. It is clear from verses 10 and 11 that the “**new order**” of Christ has arrived. That means that those “**good things to come**” have already come.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 9:11-22

LESSON AIM: To see from the contrast between the atonement sacrifices of the law and the sacrifice of Christ under the New covenant.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See the contrast of the blood of animals and the activity of earthly priests with the blood and activity of Christ.
 2. Learn the meaning of “heavenly things” and with what they were dedicated.
 3. See what is necessary in making effective a “testamentary covenant.”
-

THE SACRIFICE AND ETERNAL REDEMPTION (9:11-15)

- A. The Better Tabernacle (v. 11).** Christ serves in a greater tabernacle. Reasons why that tabernacle is greater:
1. It is a heavenly tabernacle (9:24).
 2. It is a true tabernacle (8:2).
 3. It was pitched by God (8:2). Not man made.
 4. It is a perfect tabernacle because it does not have a veil inside.

NOTE: There is no earthly temple made by human hands. God does dwell in His temple. But His people themselves are the temple and He is the creator of His people. The new spiritual temple is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ: “*Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them*” (Revelation 21:3).

B. The Better Entrance – Christ’s Entrance into the Tabernacle (v. 12)

1. The redemption obtained is eternal. His one sacrifice has the power to redeem and to cover sin eternally.
2. The purchase price was the blood of Christ. “**By His own blood,**” stands in contrast with the blood of goats and calves.
3. The never-to-be-repeated sacrifice. The Greek word: EPHAPAX means that His sacrifice will never be repeated. “One-time-for-all-time” is the literal meaning of the word.

C. The Better Blood – Jesus’ Blood Contrasted with Animal Blood (vs. 13-14)

1. Animal blood could only cleanse the flesh of ceremonial defilement (v. 13; 10:4). It could do absolutely nothing for sin.
2. Jesus’ blood cleanses the conscience (removes sins) from works that lead to death (v. 14).
 - a. Christ offered that blood according to the directives of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Jesus “**offered**” as a priest the sacrifice of “**Himself.**”
 - c. He offered Himself unto God “**unblemished**” by sin.

NOTE: Jesus’ blood can cleanse our conscience from works of death, so that we can then serve and worship the living God. With a cleansed conscience Christians can now offer acceptable worship to God. The blood of Christ can cleanse the conscience of a man. His blood removes sin and gives us a clear conviction of personal innocence in Christ Jesus. This is a gift of divine grace. Under the Law worshippers were not admitted into the immediate presence of God. They always stood at a distance worshiping mediatoriallly through the intervention of the priests. They were not admitted into the presence of God. And every time they came to offer a sacrifice, they knew they were not back where Adam was in the beginning. The veils of separation kept them from the immediate presence of God. But now the Hebrew writer insists that the blood of Christ has removed the veils, lifting Christians to the position and privilege of priests whose worship is now acceptable to God. The grand purpose of forgiveness of our sins through the blood of Christ is not to be seen as an end within itself but rather a means to a greater end.

Innocence for the guilty is a beautiful gift from Christ. It is the most glorious condition that a man can enjoy. It is a by-product of the sacrifice of Calvary. But that is not an end within itself. The end purpose in the removal of sin, the writer tells us in verse 14, is so that we can then be qualified, acceptable worshipers of God.

D. The Better Ministry – the Extent of Christ’s Ministry (v. 15)

Christ died not only to redeem us this side of the cross, but also to redeem the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant (cf. Romans 3:24-26).

1. The New Covenant is effective for those called out of the first covenant.
2. Old Testament saints have been “made perfect” through the blood of the New Covenant (cf. 11:40; 12:23). The Greek text says that Christ’s blood obtained “**redemption of the transgressions committed under the first covenant.**”

3. God forgave the sins of people under the Law of Moses in view of Calvary.
4. When Christ died He covered the sins that were committed under the first covenant (Romans 3:21-27).
5. He also died to cover sins that would be committed afterwards. It has always been on the basis of the Cross that God has forgiven sins.

THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST AND THE NEW COVENANT (vs. 16-17)

The writer had discussed some of the new elements of the new covenant in chapter 8. Here he introduces some new thoughts about the covenant that were not clearly explained in Hebrews 8.

A. This Covenant Required Death

1. The Greek word for a covenant is: “DIATHEKES.” And that is the same word that is translated in verse 16 as “**a will**.”
2. This covenant has the nature of a “testamentary covenant.”
3. Christ has made His testament with the world. (cf. 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9.)
4. He has a covenant with those who personally ratify that testament by accepting its conditions.

B. A Testament Is of Force after Men Are Dead. A will has no strength while the testator lives.

C. Covenants Are Ratified With Blood (vs. 18-21)

1. The first covenant ratified with blood of animals.
 - a. Blood of calves, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop.
 - b. Sprinkled the scroll and people.
2. That blood did not relate to their forgiveness of sin.
3. The first tabernacle was sprinkled with blood.
4. Law demanded that blood be used in almost all cleansing ceremonies.
5. The shedding of blood was always prerequisite to the forgiveness of sin.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIFTEEN:

1. The Tabernacle is said to be better in 9:11-15 for what four reasons?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

2. What two things make Christ's entrance into the tabernacle better than that of the Levitical priests' entrance?

1) _____
2) _____

3. What two statements show the contrast of "animal blood" and the blood of Christ in the effectiveness of each?

1) _____
2) _____

4. What statement in v. 15 shows the extent of Christ's ministry?

5. What two things or actions are necessary to make the "testamentary covenant" of Christ effective?

1) _____
2) _____

6. What has always been prerequisite to the forgiveness of sins? _____

LESSON SIXTEEN

THE TRUE MINISTRY OF JESUS

INTRODUCTION:

As we begin lesson number 16, we will want to remember that it is the continuation of a very important discussion that began in Hebrews 9:1. As a matter of fact, this discussion has covered the last two lessons, lessons 14 and 15. In order to be sure that the connection is clearly made, let us go back and review some of the closing remarks that were made in lesson 15. The writer tells us that “*even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood*” (Hebrews 9:18). That was the Mosaic covenant. Now, that covenant was dedicated or inaugurated through a series of ceremonials discussed in chapter 9. There were sacrifices offered, and the blood was sprinkled. And so, the writer draws a parallel between what God did with Israel 1500 years before the time of Christ, and what He did through the sacrificial blood of Jesus. You will remember that Moses read the Law to the people, then he sprinkled blood on “**the scroll, the people, the tabernacle, and everything used in the ceremonials**” (Hebrews 9:19, 21). So the entire system of Hebrew worship, sacrifice, sanctuary, covenant and all the people was dedicated blood. And remember that entire system was only a “**shadow**” of “**good things that are now here**.”

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 9:23-28

LESSON AIM: To see the necessity of blood in the purification process and the “one-time” sacrifice of Christ in purifying all sins.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See that both the old and new systems were blood-dedicated systems.
 2. Understand that eternal redemption is through Christ’s sacrifice and the benefits of His sacrifice cover all human history.
-

THE NECESSITY OF PURIFICATION BY BLOOD (9:23-24)

A. Both the Old and New Systems Dedicated by Blood

1. The Old Covenant related to people who worshipped through sacrifices offered at an earthly tabernacle.
 - a. The Old Covenant was called “the copies of the heavenly things.”
 - b. They were a shadow of “the heavenly things themselves.”
 - c. “These sacrifices” relate to the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and hyssop with which Moses dedicated the old.
2. The New Covenant relates to people who worship through the sacrifice of Christ.
 - a. “Purified with better **sacrifices**” indicates the fact that Jesus fulfilled all the sacrificial typology and symbolism found in the Old Testament.
 - b. Each Old Testament sacrifice symbolized some aspect of the sacrifice of Jesus.
 - c. He was the reality that cast the shadows of the burnt offering, the Grain Offering, the Peace Offering, the Sin and Trespass offerings, the Day of Atonement Offerings, the Passover Offering and the Red Heifer

- d. Offering.
- d. Different sacrificial animals used under the Law of Moses.
 - 1) Some animals were taken from the herd.
 - 2) Some belonged to the flock.
 - 3) Some were taken from the fowl.

B. Christ Appears in God's Presence

- 1. Christ's one-time function in the dismantled Hebrew tabernacle.
 - a. To rip its veil apart, and
 - b. To restructure the relationship that God's worshipers now have with Him.
- 2. Christ's present ministry in Heaven.
 - a. Granting salvation to people who are entering into the kingdom on their conversion through baptism.
 - b. Maintaining their salvation and relationship to God.
 - c. Interceding for Christians.
 - d. He keeps the Christian well-pleasing in the presence of God.
 - e. He is our mediator. New Testament worship is sprinkled with the blood of Christ. (See Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 13:15; 1 Peter 2:5.)

THE ONE-TIME SACRIFICE OF CHRIST (vs. 25-28)

A. Eternal Redemption Through Christ's One-Time Sacrifice

- 1. Jesus differed from the Levitical priest.
 - a. As to the sanctuary in which He serves. He entered the "heavenly" sanctuary.
 - b. As to the number of times He entered into the sanctuary.
 - c. As to the "blood" with which He entered the sanctuary.
 - 1) High Priest with blood not his own could not take away sins.
 - 2) Jesus, with His own blood obtained eternal redemption.

B. The Benefits Of Christ's Sacrifice Cover All Human History

- 1. Its nature excludes repetition.
- 2. Its purpose was to put away sin.
- 3. "Appear" is a present perfect verb.
 - a. He has "appeared" in the past to sacrificially do away with sin.
 - b. He now "appears" before God on our behalf.
 - c. He will "appear" at the end of time to finish the redemptive process.
- 4. "At the end of the ages" relates to the end of the Mosaic dispensation. (See Hebrews 1:2; 1 Corinthians 10:11 and 1 Peter 1:20.)
- 5. The illustration of man's one time dying followed by judgment (v. 29).

C. The Purpose of His Second Coming (v. 28)

- 1. Not to bear sins. This was the purpose of His first coming (v. 26).
- 2. To save our bodies from the tomb and to take us home.
- 3. "Those who are waiting for Him" are those who believe in Him and are assured by His resurrection that they too shall be raised.

CONCLUSION: There are many other scriptures in the New Testament that give confirmation to the concepts presented in this context. One of the first is John 14:1. See also Acts 17:31; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, and many others.

Perhaps Romans 8:24 gives the best explanation of the Christian hope: **"For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what**

he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIXTEEN:

1. What part or function did blood play in the old system service?

2. "Purified with better sacrifices" indicates the fact that Jesus fulfilled: _____

3. Christ's present ministry in heaven consist of performing what five tasks?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

4. What are three areas in which Jesus differed from the Levitical priest?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

5. The word "appear" in verses 25-28 is a present perfect verb indicating three appearings of Christ. Fill in the blanks below as to these appearings.

- 1) He has "appeared" in the past to _____
- 2) He now "appears" before God _____
- 3) He will "appear" at the end of time to _____

6. The purpose of his second coming is to _____

LESSON SEVENTEEN

CHRIST'S SUPERIOR SACRIFICE

INTRODUCTION:

This chapter presents the final section of the writer's mosaic on the priestly ministry of the Christ. This section will deal with the sacrifice of Christ as it contrasts with those of the Law of Moses. There will be presented a strong contrast between the two systems of sacrifice in the old and the new covenants. There is nothing more characteristic of the Old Testament than its system of worship and atonement sacrifices. Its sacrifices not only dealt with their worship toward God as it centered around the tabernacle, the altar, and the sprinkling of the blood, but also its atonement for the forgiveness of sin. Atonement brought about the reconciliation of both the individual Hebrew and that of the nation. Even though the Law of Moses has already been taken away, its tabernacle has been vacated by God (He is no longer symbolically resident in the temple of Jerusalem), and its sacrifices are no longer valid, the Hebrew priests were still functioning as before, and though their service was acceptable to God. That fact will be clearly demonstrated in this chapter.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 10:1-18

LESSON AIM: To see, by contrast, the ineffectiveness of the old system to restore fellowship and the effectiveness of the new system to bring about that desired fellowship.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that the Old Covenant does not reproduce the New Covenant privilege.
 2. See that the perfect sacrifice of Christ fulfilled the desired will of the Father in perfecting believers and their worship.
 3. Understand by the statement of Jeremiah that forgiveness effected by the sacrifice of Christ meant no more remembrance of those sins covered under the New Covenant.
-

THE YEAR BY YEAR REMEMBRANCE OF SIN (10:1-4)

A. The Old Covenant Does Not Reproduce the New Covenant Privilege (vs. 1-2)

1. The sacrifices of the Law were a shadow, not realities.
 - a. Old Law sacrifices could not make perfect.
 - b. Could not remove the sin problem.
 - c. Could not make the worshipper acceptable.
 - d. Unveiled relationship could not exist until the sin problem was solved.

NOTE: The “year after year” and “day after day” (verse 11) sacrifices maintained the veil of separation between God and His worshipper.

2. The continuity of sacrifices declared a consciousness not cleaned (v. 2).

B. Sacrifices Were an Annual Reminder of Sin (vs. 3-4)

1. Old Law sacrifices were a reminder of sin (v. 3). Who was reminded?
 - a. The people were reminded – the veils remained.
 - b. God was reminded – their sins were not yet covered.
 - c. The priests were reminded – they had to repeat the sacrifices.
2. Animal sacrifices present an impossible situation relative to sin (v. 4).

“...it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.”

THE PERFECT SACRIFICE OF CHRIST (10:5-18)

A. A Body Prepared for Christ (vs. 5-13)

1. Conforming to God's will. *“Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me”* (vs. 5-8).
 - a. Previewed in prophecy (vs. 5-7; Psalm 40:6-8).
 - 1) The need seen (vs. 5-6). Sacrifices and whole burnt offerings were insufficient.
 - 2) The nature necessary (v. 7). *“Here I am . . . to do your will, O God.”*
 - b. Fulfilled in fact (vs. 8-9). Restored fellowship between God and man.
 - c. Sacrifices – atonement sin offerings.
 - d. Offerings – burnt offerings of worship. Both of these were required by law.
2. *The first sacrificial system* (which did not do God's will) was taken away so that the *second sacrificial system* (which did God's will) could be established (v. 9).
3. This completes the removal of all the elements of the Hebrew system:
 - a. Chapter 7 – removal of the **Levitical priests**, inauguration of the new **priesthood of Christ**.
 - b. Chapter 8 – removal of **Mosaic Covenant**, inauguration of new **Covenant of Christ**.
 - c. Chapter 9 – removal of old **Hebrew tabernacle**, inauguration of new **heavenly sanctuary of Christ**.
 - d. Chapter 10 – removal of **sacrificial system of old Law, sacrifice of Christ** established.

B. Complete Coverage for Those Once Corrupted by Sin (vs. 10-18)

1. The proof of the plan: *“And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”* The will that sanctifies us (v. 10) is God's will that was fully fulfilled and done by Jesus. (See Psalm 40:6, quoted in Hebrews 10:5).
 - a. Chapter 2:11 affirms that the “holy Jesus” was able to make His people “holy.”
 - b. Chapter 3:1 the writer addresses his readers as: “holy brethren.”
2. The problem calling for the plan (v. 11) – The former system would never have taken away sins.
3. The priest exalted in His sufficiency (vs. 12-18).
 - a. Seen by the sacrifice – “one sacrifice” in contrast to “continually.”
 - b. Seen by where He “sat down” – on the right hand of God (v. 12; Revelation 3:21).
 - c. Seen by His anticipated victory over His enemies – *“He waits . . . His enemies to be made His footstool”* (v. 13).
 - d. Seen by the ones “He hath perfected forever” (v. 14).
 - e. Seen by the witness of the Holy Spirit (vs. 15-17) as already reviewed (8:8-13).
 - f. Seen by the fact He offers Himself no more (v. 18; 7:26).

4. Contrast between the Levitical priest and Christ (vs. 11-12).
 - a. The Levitical priests – *standing* offering oftentimes the *same sacrifices* which can never take away sins (v. 11).
 - b. Jesus – when He had offered *one sacrifice* for sins forever, *sat down* on the right hand of God (v. 12).

NOTE: A seated priest indicates that his work is finished. And a priest that is seated “**at the right hand of God**” indicates that the Father is satisfied with the accomplished work of Calvary. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!!

Verse twelve triumphantly proclaims: MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, and that to the satisfaction of God who sent “**this priest.**” It was God who invited Jesus to “**sit at my right hand**” (Psalms 110:1). This passage is cited in Hebrews 1:13: “*The Lord says to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’*” Of course that “**one sacrifice for all time**” wraps up the sacrificial requirements for the restoration of sinful men to full fellowship with God.

C. The Benefits of Jesus’ Sacrifice (vs. 14-18)

1. It made men holy (v. 10). “*Because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*”
2. It gives SACRIFICIAL PERFECTION. Never need another sacrifice.
 - a. The blood of Christ has eternally redeeming power (9:13).
 - b. The Hebrew was never perfected as to his need for another sacrifice for his next sin.
3. The testimony of the Holy Spirit in Jeremiah 31:31-34.
 - a. The sacrifice of Christ completely covers sins.
 - b. Hence, no more need for further sacrifice.

SUMMARY: “*Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.*” This is the most astonishing element of the new covenant – a sacrifice that would allow God to “**remember no more**” the sins of the people. There is more than appears on the surface in this statement. Since God has the FOREVER STANDING sacrifice of Christ to cover sin, He no longer even RECORDS the sins of His people. Their sins are covered and do not go to the record books of God.

That is the full implication of what the prophet Jeremiah foretold. He “**remembered**” the sins of Israel, even though they were forgiven back then. But they were not covered back then! God remembered them until Calvary, and there they were “taken away,” so God no longer “**remembers**” them. And it is now clear that sins are already covered at Calvary, so they are neither recorded or remembered against His people today.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVENTEEN:

1. List three things that the sacrifices of the Old Law could not do.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
2. The continuity of sacrifices declared a _____
3. Old Law sacrifices were a reminder of sin (vs. 3-4). Who was reminded?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4. What four elements of the old Hebrew system were removed? Give the chapter in Hebrews for each one.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5. What is the contrast given in verses 11 & 12 between the Levitical priest and Christ?
1) _____
2) _____
6. In verses 12-18 there are six statements which reveal the sufficiency of the priesthood of Christ. List these six statements. They all start with “Seen by . . .”
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

LESSON EIGHTEEN

THE CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE

INTRODUCTION:

Lesson number 18 finds the Hebrew writer combining all of the ingredients of the new system in a song of praise, an explanation of the privilege that now belongs to Christian people. This section will cover only a few verses because they are packed with information vital to the reader's understanding. The new priest, the new covenant, the new sacrifice, and the new sanctuary combine to bring Christians into the full exercise of the benefits that derive from them. The writer has been switching back and forth between these ingredients in his discussion. Sometimes he mixes them together in his explanations. They do interrelate significantly. But now he puts them all together.

He has just come out of chapter 10:17-18 with his comment on the termination of the Mosaic covenant and its sacrifices. God's promise to "**remember their sins no more**" belongs only to the new Christian system. Hebrews 9:10 spoke of the "**restoration of all things**," and that has been accomplished by Christ. It results in the return of man to the relationship of Eden.

The return is experienced only on the spiritual level. It will not be accomplished on the physical or metaphysical level until Christ returns to redeem His people from the grave. But even now, the spirit of man (in his immortal soul) enjoys full fellowship with God through the combined elements of the new system.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 10:19-25

LESSON AIM: To grasp the beauty of the Christian privilege of entering the Holy of Holies with boldness as a result of the death of Jesus and the exhortation not to give up meeting together.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn of the great privilege every Christian has of entering in to the Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus.
 2. See four things which express the criteria for boldly drawing near by Jesus.
 3. Examine several reasons why the "day approaching" in v. 25 refers to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army.
-

A CALL TO PERSEVERE

A. Confidence and Its Basis (vs. 19-21)

1. It is to enter the Most Holy Place. It is:
 - a. **A way of death** – "by the blood of Jesus."
 - b. **A way of dedication** (KJV) – "which He hath consecrated for us . . ."
 - c. **A way of development** – "...a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."
 - 1) The "new way" is one that is "fresh," or "recently" inaugurated.
 - 2) The "**living way**" is the "life-giving" way.

- 3) “Through His body” means that our sins were “. . . borne in His body on the cross” (1 Peter 2:24).
- d. **A way of dependence and dependability** – “. . . and having a great priest over the house of God.”

B. The Christian Privilege of Drawing Near (v. 22)

- 1. The way to draw near – conversion (v. 22).
 - a. **With a true heart** – deals with the sincerity of purpose. The purpose for drawing near is to worship.
 - b. **In fullness** (full assurance) of faith – would involve overcoming all timidity to walk into the Holy of Holies. This would involve the unquestioned conviction that the blood of Jesus has made us acceptable in the presence of God.
 - c. **Having our hearts sprinkled** to cleanse us from a guilty conscience – the sin is gone; the conscience is clear!
 - d. **Having our bodies washed** with pure water – the washing of the body relates to Christian baptism.
- 2. Continuity is the plea (vs. 23-25).
 - a. Hold to the hope professed (v. 23; 9:28, 17-19).
 - 1) Unswervingly.
 - 2) Sure – “for he who promised is faithful.”
 - b. Hold up the brethren (vs. 24-25).
 - 1) Spur on toward love for God.
 - 2) Spur on toward good deeds toward one another.

NOTE: The best way to spur a weak Christian is to remind him of all the privileges we now enjoy in Christ.

- 3) Meet together with the saints (v. 25).

The prohibition: DO NOT GIVE UP MEETING TOGETHER!
 The practice: SOME WERE GIVING UP MEETING TOGETHER!
- 4) Exhort others to meet together. The encouragement should be “**all the more**” intense as “**you see the day approaching.**”

C. The Approaching Day (v. 25)

“**The day**” is not the Lord’s Day. They were to use the Lord’s Day assemblies to encourage each other in view of “**the day approaching.**” Therefore, what was the day? It was a specific “**the day.**” Various suggestions have been made by students and teachers on what day is intended. There seem to be at least four suggested possibilities from which to select.

- 1. The day would be **the Lord’s Day**. But that seems to be discounted because it was to be used in stimulation of each other in view of the day under consideration. And the “**all the more**” would hardly fit into their weekly assemblies. It rather seems evident that it was a day on the near horizon for those readers.
- 2. The **day of judgment** has been suggested as an optional view for defining the day. But in view of the fact that judgment day will “*come as a thief in the night,*” according to all New Testament information on that subject, it does not seem likely that such a view could be given much credit.
- 3. The day has been suggested as the **day of each person’s death.** But that seems so remote to the context of this book that it hardly deserves further consideration. Few people can “see” the day of their death “**approaching.**”
- 4. The day most suited to the content of this book seems to be referring to **the destruction of Jerusalem** by the Romans in the year A.D. 70. There are a number of facts that confirm this view. Jesus had clearly told his disciples

of the total destruction of Jerusalem, its temple and most of its people in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 17 and 21. He had even given them visible signs to identify the arrival of that day. He said in those Gospel records cited that he personally did not know the exact day Jerusalem would fall prey to the Romans (Matthew 24:36). But he did say that it would happen in that generation (Matthew 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32). He had foretold the vengeance of God that would “**come upon this generation**” (Matthew 23:36). Therefore all those early Christians knew that such a day was coming. When it did come, they were to flee the city of Jerusalem, otherwise they would be taken with the unbelievers among the Jews. The Romans would spare none! Jesus had pointed to things His people could “see” to indicate the arrival of that day: Matthew 24:28, 33, 42; Mark 13:29; Luke 17:37; 21:20. This latter verse is particularly graphic: “*When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near.*”

In view of those visible evidences, the disciples could easily “**see the day approaching.**”

SUMMARY: Little wonder he encouraged his readers to hold tenaciously to their faith in Christ and not revert to Judaism. For when the Romans have finished with Jerusalem, there will not be “*stone left upon stone*” in the entire city. The temple will be torn down completely. The priests will be exported to Rome or killed in the siege. There will be no more sacrifices offered in Jerusalem or elsewhere by Jews. So, those being tempted to return to the Hebrew religion will have nothing to return to after A.D. 70. Even if the Romans had not devastated the city, none of those services would have had any validity before God anyway! In verse 37, the author states that Habakkuk’s prophecy was to be fulfilled “*in just a very little while.*” It is therefore evident that his readers were living under the very shadow of the total destruction of Jerusalem and the religious system that was centered there in Judaism.

From these obvious applications of the Hebrew writer, it is clear that “**the day approaching**” related to the destruction of Jerusalem. He simply warns his readers to stay with the Christ for His new world order is the only one that will survive the Roman desolation. Stay with the Christ, and stay faithful to your Christian privilege of drawing near to God through the collective assemblies of the church on the Lord’s Day. This is the exhortation he wished to impart in Hebrews 10:25.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHTEEN:

1. What does the word “confidence” mean, and what is its significance to the Christian?

2. What is the Christian privilege being stressed in verses 19-20? How is that privilege different from the Jewish situation?

3. What do the adjectives *new* and *living* suggest in describing the way which Christ dedicated?

- 1) New: _____
- 2) Living: _____

4. List four statements from verse 22 which describe the way for the Christian to draw near to God.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

5. What marvelous thing is said about God in verse 23? _____

6. Explain the words “giving up meeting together” (forsaking, KJV) in verse 25.

7. Give four views concerning *the day approaching* in verse 25. Which view do you think is correct?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Your view: _____

LESSON NINETEEN

PENALTY OF FORSAKING

INTRODUCTION:

Lesson 18 had presented a declaration of the Christian privilege. We are now ready to go into lesson 19, and it discusses the peril, the danger, and really the great mistake that would be made if an individual gives up that privilege. In this section the writer will point out how completely unique Jesus is and what danger, or peril would be brought upon an individual if he were to leave Christ. Hebrews 10:25 mentions that some had already gotten into the custom of forsaking, abandoning and completely separating themselves from the continual assembling of Christians on the Lord's Day. And it becomes evident that the writer is afraid that if abandoning of the Christian privilege continues, the individual is going to fall into a condition that is irreparable.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 10:26-39

LESSON AIM: To understand the tragedy and danger of turning away from Christ and an encouragement to continue in the path they had started on to the end.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See the fearful picture of the destiny of anyone who begins with Christ and then deserts the way.
 2. Learn of the encouragement of a good beginning and the value of an enduring faith.
-

REVIEW AND PREVIEW:

Because we have a great High Priest over the house of God . . .

- A. WE SHOULD ENTER BOLDLY . . . (10:19-25).
 1. “. . . Let us draw near . . .” (v. 22).
 2. “. . . Let us hold fast the confession of our hope . . .” (v. 23).
 3. “. . . Let us consider one another . . .” (vs. 24-25).
- B. WE SHOULD NOT SIN WILLFULLY (10:26-31).
 1. Because there remains no more a sacrifice for sin . . . (v. 26).
 2. There remains only “a certain fearful expectation of judgment” (vs. 27-31).
- C. WE SHOULD ENDURE PATIENTLY (10:32-39).
 1. Because of their past.
 2. Because of their future.

THE PENALTY FOR THE WILLFUL SINNER (10:26-31)

“Sinning” is a present participle, and it relates to the sin of giving up meeting together “as some are in the habit of doing.” So, the sin in this context is the sin of forsaking Christ.

A. The Character and Condition (v. 26)

1. Willful sin that manifests itself in abandoning the worship assembly.

2. Abandoning the standing sacrifice of Christ (10:18).
3. Going back to a sacrificial system that has no value.
4. Leaving the only sacrifice that atones for sin.

NOTE: The “**deliberate sin**” then does not relate to just any sin that a person may voluntarily commit. If that were true, then any sin a Christian commits, knowing beforehand that it is a sin, would place him in a condition without possible pardon. That would demand that the Christian live sinlessly from the time of his baptism. So, the writer is not speaking of just any sin. This one is the sin of apostasy from Christ, as the next few verses will confirm.

1. If we “drift away” from the things which have been heard (ch. 2).
2. If our hearts are hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (ch. 3).
3. If the word of hearing is not united with faith (ch. 4).
4. If we become “dull of hearing” (ch. 5).
5. If we “*crucify the Son of God afresh*,” we will have rejected the one gospel . . . the one Savior (ch. 6).
6. If we reject the only possibility for forgiveness, there is then no forgiveness possible. (cf. 10:29).

B. The Expectation of the Willful Sinner (vs. 27-29)

1. A fearful expectation of judgment (v. 27).
 - a. A fierceness of “raging fire.”
 - b. Hostility between God and the one turning from Christianity.
 - c. It is fearful and expected. It is sure and certain!

NOTE: Once again it might be well to clarify some confusion that surrounds “**deliberate**” sins. All the sins that we commit that we are aware of are deliberate. Sin is a choice for man. And since he chooses sin, that creates his moral accountability. It would be impossible for a person to consciously but unwillingly sin. It is the union of the will with the unholy desire that makes sin to be sin anyway. Yet, even if a person knows his action would be sinful before he engages in it, but proceeds in it, if his faith in Christ is still intact, he has a standing sacrifice that will cover that sin. He knew it was wrong, but he did it anyway. He is ashamed of it, but he still believes in Christ. He still trusts in Christ’s sacrificial atonement, and he has standing forgiveness. His relationship with God is not destroyed because of sin. The Christian does not live under the menace of his transgressions because he has a standing sacrifice. Redemption is, remission is, and therefore, he stands with an enjoyment of that continued relationship with God because Jesus not only gave him life, He maintains his life. By analogy, Christians are plugged into Jesus as a life support system, and if we unplug from Him, then there is no other life support system. They would then be abandoned to the direct consequences of their sin.

2. A certainty of facing God’s wrath (vs. 28-29).
 - a. The severity of the lesser law confirms the more dire consequences for rejection of the higher law of Christ (cf. 2:1-3; 12:25).
 - b. The man who rejects the law of Christ has done three things:
 - 1) Trampled the Son of God under foot. Reflects a man’s disgust toward Jesus.
 - 2) Treated the blood of Jesus as an unholy thing. This says that Jesus’ blood has no more redeeming power than ordinary human blood.

3. Insulted the Holy Spirit. A rejection of the seal of God. (See Acts 2:38; 5:32; Romans 8:25-26; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30)
3. God's promise to such an individual – "*The Lord will judge his people.*"

THE REASON AND REWARD OF PATIENT ENDURANCE (10:32-39)

- A. Endure Because of the Past (vs. 32-34).** Remember your past actions and attitudes.
1. They had done the will of God enthusiastically. (See Acts 2:42-47)
 2. They had endured a great conflict. The Jewish opposition to the early church was severe and cruel.
 3. They had cared for those in bonds.
 4. They had rejoiced at the loss of temporal possessions. Jews converted to Christianity were considered as traitors to the Hebrew cause and therefore treated as if they had died.
- B. Endure Because of the Future (vs. 35-39).** Remember the promised rewards of God.
1. Great recompense of reward (if they "cast not away their boldness").
 - a. Christianity is not a worthless thing to be thrown away.
 - b. The reward will be present privileges in Christ and eternal inheritance when Christ returns.
 2. Receive the promise (if they have "patience").
 3. To the saving of their souls (if they do not "*shrink back and are destroyed*").
 - a. "Shrinking back" would be a return to the now defunct Hebrew religion.
 - b. Confident assurance that the believers are the saved.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

1. The willful sin (v. 26 of which the writer speaks in this context is abandoning Christianity and going back to Judaism).
2. For those who sin willfully (apostatize) there remains no more a sacrifice for sins, (v. 26) but two things do remain:
 - a. A certain fearful expectation of judgment (v. 27).
 - b. A fierceness of fire that will devour the adversaries (v. 27).
3. The word unholy in verse 29 is from the Greek KOINOS, and means *common*.
4. The call to remember the former days (vs. 32-34; cf. Revelation 2:4-5). The *former days* in verse 32 are the *early days of Christianity*.
5. The righteous shall live by faith (vs. 37-39; Habakkuk 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 4:18; 5:7).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINETEEN:

1. What do you think is the “willful” sin in verse 26?

2. What are four things which manifest the character and condition of the person in verse 26?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

3. What statements in verses 27-29 express the expectation of the willful sinner?

4. The person who rejects the law of Christ has done what three things according to verses 28-29?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

5. The exhortation to endure is based on remembering what two areas of their lives?

1) _____

2) _____

LESSON TWENTY

THE TESTIMONY OF FAITH

INTRODUCTION:

Throughout the book of Hebrews, the author has been encouraging his readers to remain faithful to their initial beginning in Christ. Particularly, in 10:38-39 he had insisted on the urgency of clinging to the Lord. He quoted Habakkuk 2:4, which says: “*But my righteous one will live by faith.*” And then, he closed the chapter with the encouraging words: “*But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.*” Faith is the only way God has ever dealt with men. It is the principle by which God grants life to a man. There is an obvious need to define faith both by what it is and by what it does for a man. Soul-saving faith is a special kind of faith. Not everyone that believes has soul-saving belief because the faith which he is discussing in Habakkuk is faith that waits for God to speak. Read again Habakkuk 2:1: “*I will wait for the word of Jehovah*” and then act upon it. When God says to run, the man of faith runs, Habakkuk insists. That tells us something of the nature of the faith that Habakkuk discusses. And the man that has that kind of faith is made “**righteous**” by his faith, and he “**lives**” spiritually. The man who lives by faith is declared righteous, not by his performance, but as a gift that grows out of the fruits of Calvary.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 11:1-40

LESSON AIM: To see that faith is the only way God has ever dealt with men. It is the principle by which God grants life to a man.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn the definition and description of faith.
 2. See through several examples, the demonstration of faith.
 3. Learn two elements of faith: the visible manifestation of faith and the unseen element related to faith.
-

SOUL SAVING FAITH DEFINED (11:1)

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”

A. The Essence of Faith. It is the bedrock on which man’s relationship to God stands. The author used the verb of being: “*faith is.*” Being verbs define the nature or essence of what is being discussed.

1. The foundation of faith. First “*faith is the foundation* (the Greek word is: “**HUPOSTASIS**,” meaning foundation) *of what we hope for.*”
 - a. All hope is based upon our faith.
 - b. Faith gives foundation to our longings of the age to come.
2. The certainty of faith. Faith is being “*certain of what we do not see.*”
 - a. The word for “**certain**” in the Greek is “**ELEGXOS**” and is most often translated: “evidence.”
 - b. The word relates to the “evidence” given in a court room by which a conviction is obtained.
 - c. It is the same word used by Jesus in John 8:46, when he asked: “*Can you prove me guilty of sin?*”

- d. Again, in John 16:8, Jesus said the Holy Spirit would “*prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment.*” This “**proof**” is really the “evidence” of which the Hebrew writer speaks.
 - 3. The demonstration of faith. Faith gives its demonstration. There is visible evidence that the person believes. The word “evidence” in a court room is information by which an individual may be convicted or acquitted of the charges against him.
- B. The Expression of Faith – It is Visible.** But how does one give “*evidence of what we do not see?*” There are two things to look for in this context.
1. The first regards the evidence of unseen things where faith gives its demonstration.
 2. The second relates to the fact that the hope that is being presented is in the ingredient of faith. As the writer goes through a long list of men and women of faith in ages past, look for the “**unseen**” thing to which they give faithful evidence. Then look at what they “**hoped**” to obtain because of their faith.

THE DEMONSTRATION OF FAITH (vs.2-40)

“This is what the ancients were commended for.”

God’s commendation of people of faith in olden times was because their trust was in God who inspired their “**hope**.” And their faith in things not yet seen led them to give practical demonstrations in their lives that they believed. Since the “*righteous shall live by faith,*” it is clearly implied that those mentioned in this chapter were justified people.

A. Abel – Faith Worshiping (v. 4)

1. The visible evidence of Abel’s faith was the altar and its sacrifice.
2. The unseen element in Abel’s faith was God.

B. Enoch – Faith Walking (vs. 5-6)

1. The visible evidence of Enoch’s faith: he walked with God.
 - a. Enoch had to know how God walked.
 - b. Enoch demonstrated his knowledge of how God walked. (See 1 John 2:6)
2. The invisible element is God Himself.

C. Noah – Faith Working (v.7)

1. The visible evidence of Noah’s faith: he built an ark.
 - a. The ark stands as a demonstration of Noah’s faith.
 - b. A long-standing faith – about 120 years.
2. The invisible element: he was warned about things not yet seen.
 - a. The “unseen” was the coming flood.
 - b. The motivation was “holy fear.”
3. The outcome: he became “*an heir of righteousness that comes by faith.*”

NOTE: What does faith do to a man? It will lead him to offer sacrifices unto God, (Abel) knowing that He is and that He deserves to be worshipped. It will lead a man (Enoch) to walk in the moral standards of God. Faith will lead a man (Noah) to change his profession. Faith will lead a man to rearrange his priorities. Faith will lead a man to build a monstrous ark even in the face of ridicule of his contemporaries. Since they had no faith, the work of Noah on the ark must have appeared the height of stupidity. They would ridicule Noah, but he kept right on building his ark because he knew that what God had promised God would accomplish.

D. Abraham – Faith Waiting and Obeying (vs. 8-22)

1. The visible evidence of Abraham's faith: moving, waiting, seeking and obeying.
 - a. By faith – he went to a place he did not know.
 - b. By faith – he lived in tents rather than settling in.
 - c. By faith – he waited for a son when physically it was impossible.
 - d. By faith – he offered his son, knowing he could be raised.
2. The unseen element – Three-fold:
 - a. **The promised land and heaven** (v. 10). *"For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God."*
 - b. **A child by the name of Isaac.**
 - 1) Both Abraham and Sarah were beyond the age of childbearing.
 - 2) Sarah was sterile, thus her body was "twice dead."
 - 3) By faith they received power to conceive seed.
 - 4) The results of faith: descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sands of the sea.
 - c. **A son raised from the dead.**

E. Moses – Faith Warring (vs.23-28)

1. The visible manifestation: "*he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.*"
 - a. He gave up the position of king of Egypt.
 - b. He gave up the pleasure of sin for a season.
 - c. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ of greater value than all of the treasures of Egypt.
2. The unseen element: the coming Messiah (Christ).

F. Joshua and Israel – Faith Winning (vs. 29-40)

1. By faith – Israel crossed the Red Sea (v. 29).
2. By faith – Jericho was defeated (v. 30).
3. By faith – Rahab was delivered (v. 31).
4. By faith – kingdoms were conquered, etc. (vs. 32-38).

CONCLUSION: Faith is victorious even in the face of apparent defeat. The writer confidently affirms: "*this world was not worthy of them.*" But to God, "*they are worthy!*" So, He has "*prepared for them a city.*" And this city's "*builder and maker is God,*" and it is a "*city that has foundations*" that will last throughout eternity. Faith is the dynamic of successful living here, and the key to eternal life in the hereafter.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL:

Faith can be – and must be – demonstrated for true faith acts; and when faith acts, God's will is accomplished.

A. ACTIONS OF FAITH:

1. Accepted the unseen (vs. 2-3).
2. Offered the sacrifice (v. 4).
3. Sought after God (v. 5).
4. Prepared an ark (v. 7).
5. Obeyed (went out, became sojourner, dwelt in tents, and looked for the city) (vs. 8-10).
6. Counted God faithful (vs. 11-12).
7. Offered up son (accounted God able) (vs. 17-19).
8. Chose to suffer, refused the pleasures of sin, forsook Egypt (vs. 24-27).
9. Kept the Passover (v. 28).
10. Passed through the sea (v. 29).
11. Compassed about the city seven days (v. 30).
12. Received the spies with peace (v. 31).
13. COMPLETE THE LIST (vs. 32-40).

B. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FAITH.

1. We understand.
2. Witness borne to him that he was righteous.
3. Well-pleasing to God.
4. Saved his house and became heir of righteousness.
5. To receive inheritance – God was not ashamed – God prepared a city for them (vs. 15-16).
6. Received power to conceive.
7. Received son back.
8. Recompense of reward.
9. Destroyer did not touch them.
10. Egyptians swallowed up.
11. Walls of Jericho fell.
12. Did not perish.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY:

1. What are the two characteristics of faith mentioned in Hebrews 11:1?

1) _____
2) _____

2. What two elements do we see in faith expressed by the examples in Hebrews 11?

1) _____
2) _____

3. List these two elements for each of the examples below.

Abel: 1) _____
2) _____

Enoch: 1) _____
2) _____

Noah: 1) _____
2) _____

4. What four visible evidences can be seen from Abraham's life as to his faith?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

5. What three things express the invisible element of Abraham's faith?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

6. What was the visible manifestation of the faith of Moses?

7. What was the unseen element of Moses' faith?

LESSON TWENTY-ONE

CHRISTIAN ENDURANCE

INTRODUCTION:

In the previous lesson the writer spent considerable time building confidence in faith. Now, he wants to make application of the dynamics of faith through which men of ages past accomplished great things for God. Those men also endured great things because of their faith. The contemporary generation of Christians seems to be so urgently in need of faith, so he gives considerable attention to it. Granted, the times are stressful, but that is when faith shines more beautifully. There is without doubt the greatest example of faith that needs to be presented – that of Christ. He stands apart in His expression of faith in God and in man. And He is unique as the “**Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith.**” (12:2). Remember that His generation is under the very shadows of the destruction of Jerusalem. As Jesus had foretold in Matthew 24, this would be a “time of travail.” So, the writer is concerned about the survival of his readers – both physically and particularly spiritually. Thus the attention given to faith. He will show them how faith acts under stress and persecution. Faith always leans on God. This is the message he wants to present and impress on the mind of his readers: You need to learn how to depend on God. Though external circumstances may give an impression that God has abandoned us or that we are left prey in the hands of the enemy, it is always true that even when others hurt us, there can be divine purposes that can be accomplished for the man who has faith.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 12:1-13

LESSON AIM: To see that faith’s response to stress and persecution is to lean on God.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that the Hebrew writer refers to the people in chapter 11 as verification that God is faithful.
 2. Discover the encouragement and motivation to run and endure is that others before are examples of having gained the victory through perseverance.
 3. Examine the Christian’s position in relation to sin and discipline.
-

He closes out Hebrews chapter 11 by giving a long list of great men of faith. He shows how they stood firm, how they did not bend or yield in the face of persecution, opposition or even death. And he closes out in verse 39 by saying that these all were commended by God for their faith, and yet they did not receive the promises.

Some of the promises, of which he is speaking, relate to the coming of the new Messianic age. And they died before that age arrived, but they died in faith. He tells us then that God had promised Christians better things. Then, he explains that “only together with us would they be made perfect.” The “**us**” are Christians, and “**they**” are Old Testament men and women of faith. They could not be perfected in their relationship with God without us being made perfect also. That does not mean that

their salvation depends upon “us.” For Christ is the source of salvation for them and for us. But without Him, neither we nor they could be made perfect before God. But with His sacrifice and priestly ministrations available, both we and they can be perfected. He who gives us perfection can and does also bring perfection to those great people of faith from ages past. Our common salvation has its roots in a common source, Jesus Christ.

REVIEW AND PREVIEW:

We have seen two sections of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and now we are in the final section.

- A. The first section (Hebrews 1:1 – 7:28) was “*...that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest...*” Jesus’ priesthood characteristics and qualifications were presented in that He was, and is divine, redeemer, faithful, heavenly, perfect, promised, and eternal.
- B. The second section (Hebrews 8:1 – 10:18) The phrase, “*...we do have such a high priest...*” emphasized the superiority of Christ’s priesthood:
 - 1. A superior priest and covenant.
 - 2. A superior tabernacle and sacrifice.
- C. We are now in the third section (Hebrews 10:19 – 13:25). “*Therefore . . . since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us . . .*”
 - 1. Draw near (10:19-39).
 - 2. Believe (11:1-40).
 - 3. Endure (12:1-29).
 - 4. Remember (13:1-25).

THE CHARGE TO RUN PATIENTLY (12:1-3)

A. The Encouragement to Run (v. 1)

- 1. The great cloud of witnesses.
 - a. They are not “**witnesses**” or spectators of the way we run our race.
 - b. They stand as “**witnesses to the fidelity of God.**”
 - c. The record of their successes is written down on sacred pages of the Old Testament for us to observe.
 - d. Their witness confirms the validity of trusting in God regardless of the price one has to pay in this life.
- 2. The exhortation concerning hindering attachments.
 - a. Throw off everything that hinders.
 - b. Throw off sin – it easily entangles. Probably the sin of unbelief.
- 3. The Christian runs the race as one who is saved. He does not run in order to be saved. (See Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 10:23; 6:10).

B. The Motivation to Run (vs. 2-3)

- 1. The endurance of Jesus motivates us.
 - a. The Christian runs, looking to Jesus.
 - b. Jesus is the **Pioneer and Perfecter** of our faith.
 - c. Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame.
 - The phrase “**for the joy set before Him**” clearly relates to the sacrifice He made when He left heaven for His earthly mission. “**For**” in the Greek is “anti,” and it means “over against” or “instead of.” It relates to the “**joy**” of co-existence with the Father in heaven with all the glories of His divine nature. But “instead of” those joys, He gave them up and came to the earth to endure the

- “shame” of the cross.
2. d. Jesus then sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
 2. Opposition from sinful men requires endurance.
 - a. Prolonged opposition from sinners creates weariness and faintness of heart.
 - b. Jesus ran His race and He never allowed the encumbrances, the concerns of physical existence, to stand in His way.
 - c. The writer is holding forth Jesus as an example of one that has faithfully fulfilled His course and has maintained His fidelity toward God.

THE VALUE OF GOD'S DISCIPLINE (4-13)

A. The Relation of Christians to Sin (vs. 4-5)

1. A position antagonistic to sin.
 - a. We wrestle against principalities and powers (Ephesians 6:10-11).
 - b. Suffering is endured with the help of God.
 - c. Read Zechariah's prediction of what will happen in Palestine when the Romans come to destroy Jerusalem (Zechariah 13; See also Acts 8:1-4).
2. A position of purity and holiness (v. 5).
 - a. “Chasten” means to make pure and holy by the removal of dross.
 - b. Through persecution by satanic forces God accomplishes His good purposes.
 - c. God does not cause the opposition, He uses the opposition to purify and to confirm sonship.

B. The Relation of Christians to Discipline (vs. 6-13)

1. Discipline is an expression of a father's concern.
 - a. The earthly father is concerned about maturity, integrity, and discipline of his son and so will correct his son.
 - b. A child without discipline indicates no father that really cares.
2. Discipline is an expression of a father's true love (v. 8).
 - a. Discipline indicates true sonship.
 - b. No discipline indicates a child is illegitimate.
3. Discipline causes us to revere both our human fathers and our heavenly Father (v. 9).
4. Discipline produces eternal rewards (v. 10).
 - a. We “share in His holiness.”
 - b. It produces for us the peaceful fruits of righteousness.”
 - c. All men need training in the ways of righteousness and peace.
5. Encouragement to cooperate – to persevere and endure (v. 12-13). (Quote from Isaiah 35:3-4 and Proverbs 4:25).
 - a. Strengthen the weak – “. . .strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees.”
 - b. Smooth the way – “*Make level paths for your feet.*”
 - c. Save the wandering and weak – “. . .so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.”

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-ONE:

1. Who are the “great cloud of witnesses” in v. 1 and what is their witness?

2. What is the “hindering sin” spoken of in verse 1? _____

3. Explain the meaning of the phrase “*for the joy set before him*” in verse 2.

4. Having pointed to various men and women of faith in chapter 11 as examples to Christians, who does the writer give as the supreme example for motivation?

5. What two positions does the Christian hold toward sin in verses 4-5?

1) _____
2) _____

6. What are the four statements in verses 6-13 which express the Christian’s relation to discipline?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

LESSON TWENTY-TWO

THE DIGNITY OF THE CHRISTIAN POSITION

INTRODUCTION:

Iesson 22 will continue the discussion on faith. The writer has been giving a lot of attention to faith, because he understands it as that ingredient that is able to ignore the external pressures and to maintain commitment toward the invisible realities of God's dealings with His people. It is difficult for us to ignore the external because we are so conditioned by things that happen to us, by things we see. We tend to be afraid of things we see, and yet the writer assures us that there are unseen realities. God is ever present though you cannot see Him. His hand is with His people.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 12:14-29

LESSON AIM: To understand the necessity of staying away from the manipulative forces of the external. Be molded by them to build character, vigor, and strength which develops the spirit side of man.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See, through the example of Esau, the possibility of missing the grace of God.
 2. Find out that certain actions bear certain, inevitable results.
 3. Discover that the nature of the first covenant was separation from God and terror of God.
 4. Learn that the nature of the new covenant invites fellowship with God through the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
 5. Find that the Kingdom of Christ is already present at the writing of Hebrews.
-

The apostle Paul stressed the importance of building upon this conviction. In 2 Corinthians 4:14, he tells us that our outward, physical man is decaying. But simultaneously, the inward, spiritual man is "**is being renewed day by day.**" He is gaining in vigor because his faith is gaining momentum for him. And though externally, he is enduring pressure, the apostle tells us that such temporary affliction is really producing for a disciplined man an "**eternal weight of glory.**" Growing faith produces benefits that far outweigh any of the suffering that could be laid upon us.

While, he says, "*we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are temporal. The things that are unseen are eternal.*"

Now, the writer draws some contrasts and builds into his readers important concepts about the externals. Externals have to do with the appetites of the physical body but also the eternal manifestations of their faith. It is the internal soul of a man that really

counts. So minister first of all to the internal. It is easy for man to be manipulated by felt needs. Felt needs are those that respond to the physical senses, the animal appetites. And yet, there are other needs of a spiritual nature that are not felt through the senses. They are understood through the mind. God appeals to the reasoning of the mind through His revelation. So, we know that the spiritual being is there. And the spiritual being has needs. So, the writer tells us to be sure that we stay away from the manipulative forces of the external. But be molded by them to build character, vigor, and strength which develop the spirit side of man.

EXHORTATION TO HOLY LIVING

A. Put Forth the Supreme Effort (vs. 14-15)

"Make every effort . . ."

1. The purpose: ". . . to see the Lord" (v. 14).
 - a. Live in peace with all men.
 - b. Be holy.
2. The possibility: ". . . misses the grace of God" (v. 15). (cf. Deuteronomy 29:18)
 - a. The result would be bitterness.
 - b. Defilement again. This means to lose your holiness.

B. The Sobering Example of Esau's (vs. 16-17)

1. He traded the sacred for the profane: a bowl of soup for his birth right.
 - a. He gave up the lasting for the temporary.
 - b. The Christian can sell his birth right like Esau did.
2. Certain actions bear certain, inevitable results. The terrible consequences of profane sensuality cannot be avoided (Galatians 6:7).

CONTRAST BETWEEN SINAI AND ZION (vs. 18-29)

Now, the writer turns his attention to a contrast between the physical, visible, and earthly manifestations accompanying the giving of the law of Moses and the silent, invisible, heavenly manifestations that characterized the giving of the new covenant of Messiah.

A. Former Dispensation Prevented Fellowship (vs. 18-21)

1. Sinai, a physical burning mountain.
 - a. Israel, like Esau, was manipulated by the physical.
 - b. Wanted God to manifest Himself visibly – walk by sight.
 - c. People could not endure God's voice.
 - d. The all-holy God was not to be approached by the unholy.
2. Even Moses, who received the law, was literally shaken by the experience (v. 21).

B. New Dispensation Invites Fellowship (vs. 22-24)

1. God's spiritual presence with His people.
 - a. *"Mount Zion"* is symbolic for God's residence.
 - b. *"The heavenly Jerusalem"* – the city of peace. Not a city of fear as Israel had in the presence of God.
2. Company of angels – a festive assembly (v. 22).
3. The church of the firstborn (ones) with names enrolled in heaven (v. 23).
 - a. All Christians are God's **"firstborn"** children, His doubly honored heirs.
 - b. The phrase "*whose names are written in heaven*" confirms that they are the firstborn ones who are the subjects under consideration.
4. To God the judge of all (v. 23) – with great boldness and confidence (10:19).

5. The “*spirits of righteous men made perfect*” relate to all of the righteous who lived before the time of Christ (cf. 11:39-40).
6. Jesus the mediator of the new covenant (v. 24).
7. The “*sprinkled blood*” of Christ that grants all these relationships and privileges. This is the blood that:
 - a. Inaugurated the new covenant.
 - b. Cleansed our conscience.
 - c. Dedicated all the heavenly counterparts to the old Hebrew system.

NOTE: The blood of Messiah speaks better than that of Abel. Of what does it speak? What ever it is, it is “**better**.” It speaks of redemption, both present for the soul and future for the body. Abel’s blood does speak, the writer told us in chapter 11, but so does his faith. His blood and faith speak of the validity of trusting God and of serving Him throughout life. Abel’s blood tells us that it is worth whatever price we have to pay to maintain our faith, even if our faith leads us to be destroyed by an envious brother. Abel was a martyr to a righteous cause.

But that is not all that can be said of Jesus’ blood. Though the cause for which He died was righteous, His blood was not “**common**,” as some were treating it. (10:29). Jesus’ blood speaks a better message about a new covenant, with a new sanctuary, with a new relationship with God and with a forever priest to minister to the needs of His people. Christians have come to glorious relationships in his kingdom that make the old system fade into almost total insignificance.

C. Christ, the New Speaker, Do Not Refuse (vs. 25-29)

1. The response pleaded for: “...do not refuse him who speaks.”
2. The reason presented: There is sure judgment.
3. God’s voice then shook the earth; now earth and heaven (v. 26; Haggai 2:6).
 - a. At Sinai the earth was shaken.
 - b. Through Christ, *earth and heaven* were shaken (v. 27).
4. The “Kingdom of Christ” (vs. 28-29).
 - a. Was present as the writer wrote – “having received.”
 - b. Cannot be shaken.
 - c. Response: Exercise your privilege – “...let us have grace whereby we may offer service (worship) well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe.”
 - d. WARNING: DON’T NEGLECT YOUR PRIVILEGE, FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE!

SOME THINGS TO TAKE NOTE OF:

- A. The contrast between *Sinai* and *Zion* (vs. 18-24).
 1. The picture of Mt. Sinai (vs. 18-21; cf. Exodus 19).
 - a) Physical (vs. 18-19).
 - b) Not to be touched – not even by an animal (v. 20).
 - c) Moses approached fearfully even though he had been invited to draw near (v. 21).
 2. The picture of Mt. Zion (vs. 22-24).
 - a) For the Jew, Mt. Zion was the most holy place on the earth.
 - b) The residents of Mt. Zion:
 - 1) Innumerable hosts of angels.
 - 2) General assembly and Church of the firstborn. Who are enrolled in heaven.

- 3) God, the judge of all.
- 4) Spirits of just men made perfect.
- 5) Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.
- B. “*The spirits of just men . . .*” (v. 23) refer to all of the righteous who lived before the time of Christ (cf. 11:39-40).
- C. “*The blood of sprinkling*” (v. 24) is the blood of Christ (cf. 9:14).
- D. The blood of Christ speaks better than the blood of Abel (24) because Christ’s blood is redemptive.
- E. The speaker in verse 25 is the Son though whom God speaks (1:1-2).
- F. The “*things that are shaken*” (vs. 26-27) of Haggai’s prophecy, (Haggai 2:4-6) refer to the removing of the Jewish commonwealth, which occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

NOTE: The heavenly temple, or sanctuary of Christ can never be shaken. It does not belong to the nature of “*things that are made*” as was the old Hebrew temple. It will not be shaken because His sanctuary is heavenly, and there will never be a Nebuchadnezzar that will assault Mount Zion, the city of God, the New Jerusalem. It cannot be touched by the armies of men.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-TWO:

1. What exhortation is given in vs. 14-15? _____
2. What is the primary lesson taught from the example of Esau? _____
3. What was the nature of the first covenant in relation to man approaching God? _____
4. What is the nature of the new covenant in relation to man approaching God? _____
5. List six things/people which are said to be resident in Mt. Zion as given in 12:22-24.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
6. Who are the *just men made perfect* mentioned in verse 23? _____
7. What do you learn about the “Kingdom of Christ” in verses 28-29? _____
8. Write Hebrews 12:22-24 below.

LESSON TWENTY-THREE

REMEMBER . . .

INTRODUCTION:

In this lesson, the writer assures his readers that faith is crucial. It is critical to the survival of a believer in Christ. From this point forward, the writer will be insisting upon certain Christian privileges and duties. He will remind them of certain Christian men of faith, stalwarts who have already won the victories in Christ and assure them that they even have present day leaders on whom they can depend. One thing is evident: God is always there. He is always dependable and regardless of how the external circumstances may appear, we are nevertheless “**more than conquerors**,” to borrow a phrase from Romans 8:37. Christians can be confident in the continual exercise of their faith and their commitment in their devotions to Christ. They must be in submission to the arrangements that God has made for the government and organization of his kingdom. Christ is still on the throne. Regardless of what Caesar does to the people, Christ is still on His throne.

There are some doctrinal confusions that are beginning to be introduced as optional ways of believing. But doctrinal clarity and consistency of practice go hand in hand. They create the best atmosphere for doctrinal stability.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 13:1-16

LESSON AIM: To be assured that Christians can be confident in the continual exercise of their faith and their commitment in their devotions to Christ.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Study several injunctions to the Hebrew Christians to exercise their faith toward others and toward God.
 2. See in vs. 8-16 that Christ is the center of the Christian’s strength, sanctification, and hope/destiny.
-

REMEMBER TO LOVE THE BROTHERS (vs. 1-7)

A. Remember Your Fellow-man (vs. 1-3)

1. **Affection for brethren** – “*Keep on loving each other as brothers*” (v. 1; John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:10-11, 16-19).
2. **Affection for strangers** – “*Do not forget to entertain strangers . . .*” (v. 2). The possibility of a relationship with inhabitants of heaven (angels).
3. **Regard for the captive** – “*Remember those in prison as if your were their fellow prisoner*” (v. 3).
4. **Association with the ill-treated** – “*Remember . . . those who are mistreated as if you were suffering*” (v. 3).

B. Remember the Warning (vs. 4-7)

1. **Adorn the marriage relationship** – Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure (v. 4).
 - a. It is God honored and God ordained (Genesis 1:27-28, 31; 2:18-25;

Matthew 19:4-7).

- b. All extra-matrimonial encounters are condemned by God.
- 2. **Abstain from adultery** – “*...for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral*” (v. 4b).
- 3. **Avoid covetousness and materialism** – “*Keep your lives free from the love of money ...*” (v. 5).
- 4. **Assurance from the Almighty** (v. 6). “*So we say with confidence ...*” (cf. Psalm 8:26; Romans 8:31; Matthew 10:28).
 - a. Our Helper is the Lord.
 - b. Man cannot eternally harm us.
- 5. **Imitate approved men** (v. 7). Probably speaking of the apostles.
 - a. This probably indicates that most of the apostles were dead. (“**Remember them**”)
 - b. The “**outcome**” of their lives refers to the way they died.
 - c. They deserve “**imitation**.”

REMEMBER AND FOLLOW THE REDEEMER (vs. 8-16)

The central person in this section is our Savior, being mentioned eight times.

A. Strengthened to Stand (vs. 8-9)

- 1. The unchanging Christ. Christ is the foundation stone on which redeemed souls rest (1 Corinthians 3:10-11).
- 2. The all sustaining grace of God (v. 9). Those who return to the Hebrew system now are not at all profited by their ceremonial foods.

B. Sanctified to Serve (vs. 10-12)

- 1. The cross of Christ is the Christian’s altar. (See Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 14:15-24). The parallel of the Peace Offering.
- 2. The parallel of the Sin Offering (v. 12). As the body of the Sin Offering was burned outside the camp, so Christ suffered for sins outside the city.
 - a. Jesus crucified outside the city was symbolic of His rejection by the people of the city.
 - b. Rejection by God was generally implied.
- 3. People are made holy (sanctified) through the blood of Jesus. The key word is “grace” for the heart in contrast to a fleshly visible sacrifice pattern of yesterday. Our hearts are to be established by grace, not by ceremonial foods. Ceremonial foods do not profit (v. 9).

C. Sharing and Seeking For Security (vs. 13-14)

- 1. The way – “*Let us ... go forth unto Him*” (cf. John 11:9-6; Matthew 11:28-29; Acts 4:12). The city rejected Him, now the invitation for His people is for them to **REJECT THE CITY**.
- 2. The condition – “*...outside the camp, bearing the disgrace He bore.*” The law of Moses said: “*Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree*” (Galatians 3:13; Deuteronomy 21:23).
- 3. The cause – “*For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come*” (v. 14; 11:9-10, 16; Galatians 4:21-31).

D. Sacrifices of the Christian (vs. 15-17)

- 1. Sacrifices offered through **speech** (v. 15). The “**fruit of lips**” involves worship in songs, prayers, preaching, teaching and exalting the virtues and glories of our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

NOTE: The book of Hebrews is built around the topic of worship of God. For the early part of the discussions, the writer consistently affirms that under the

old Hebrew system, the worshipers were not perfected in their relationship with God. But by contrast, there was the clear affirmation that Christians are perfected.

After all, they have immediate, unveiled access to the Most Holy Place. (10:19). The ceaseless gratitude of a redeemed people ought to continually flow up before the Father and the Son.

2. Sacrifices offered through **serving** (v. 16). These sacrifices of service to the brethren are also presented as “**God pleasing**” offerings of praise.
3. Sacrifices offered through souls (v.17).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-THREE:

1. Remembering your fellow-man is expressed in relation to what four groups of people in verses 1-3?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
2. List four exhortations given by the Hebrew writer in verses 4-7.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
3. Two reasons are given in verse 6 for the Christian’s confidence. Give these two reasons.
1) _____
2) _____
4. The Hebrews, under the old system, were sanctified by animal sacrifices. How are believers sanctified?

5. The Christian sacrifices in verses 15-16 are in what two categories?
1) _____
2) _____

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

FINAL EXHORTATIONS

INTRODUCTION:

He have come to the last lesson in our study of the book of Hebrews. It is in this section the writer will give some personal references that are of significance to him and of quite evident interest to his readers. And he will give some final exhortations which in a way bring the book of Hebrews to a proper conclusion. He closes out in verse 14 with a statement, “*For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.*” God has prepared for His people an eternal dwelling place. Jesus told His disciples even before He had established the kingdom, in view of the eternal destinies of His people that were faithful to Him: “*Trust in God; trust also in me. There are many rooms in my Father’s house; otherwise, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.*” (John 14:1-2). So the destiny of Christians is not an earthbound place. It is heaven itself.

All other people who do not belong to this family of God, which he describes in Hebrews 12:22-23, will be destined to eternal ruin. God has no place on earth where He plans to have some of His people after this Christian age comes to an end, because the world itself will be terminated. (1:11-12).

Verse 15 begins building on the assignments Christian people have. They have ministries of service one toward another. And they collectively have ministries of worship toward God. Of course, even their mutual care for the brotherhood is an important part of their spiritual service to God. Both in their helping and sharing their resources in the church, and in their constant expression of praise to God, they are manifesting their faith and their gratitude for salvation.

In all they do, they are constantly aware of the intercession and spiritual care the enthroned Christ expresses toward them in the fulfillment of His priestly ministrations. The whole thrust of the book of Hebrews has been intended to remove the barriers to Christians in their relationships to God as acceptable worshipers. “**Through Christ,**” we offer to God worship and service that is pleasing. It is the Christ who removes from our devotions the human limitations that make our praise less than what it ought to be. All imperfections have been removed from the worshipers themselves and from their less than proper worship. The worship and service of Christians are verbal in their constant outpourings of gratitude. It is practical in the flow of good deeds to the needy among them. It is serving through doing good. Remember that “**doing good**” was one of the qualities of the life of Christ that made Him winsome (Acts 10:38). Thus, the Christian becomes the living embodiment of the virtuous life seen in Jesus. One final “**sacrifice**” Christians offer is in the sharing of their financial resources with one another. The Greek word for this act of charity is: “*koinonia,*” and it was always used by New Testament historians as the practical life-style of the early church.

LESSON TEXT: Hebrews 13:17-25

LESSON AIM: To acquaint the student with some final exhortations given by the Hebrew writer.

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

Just read, listen, and meditate upon the material discussed in this lesson and previous lessons.

ADDED ENCOURAGEMENT IN PERSEVERANCE

A. Mutual Responsibilities (v. 17)

1. Of brethren to bishops (v. 17)
 - a. Obedience – This obedience is unto Christ as well as to leaders.
 - b. Submission – indicates a willful obedience to their authority.
 - c. See 1 Timothy 3:5-6; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Acts 14:23; Philippians 1:1-2; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5-6.
2. Of the bishops to the brethren.
 - a. Responsibility of **ruling**.
 - b. Responsibility of **watching**.
 - c. Responsibility of **giving account**.
3. Results of fulfilled responsibility.
 - a. Positively – The fruit of joyful oversight.
 - b. Negatively – The fruit of grief or burden.

B. Mutual Prayer (vs. 18-20)

1. The writer's request – "Pray for us."
 - a. The blessing of a clear conscience.
 - b. The desire for an honorable life.
2. The writer's prayer.
 - a. To the God of peace.
 - b. That God would equip them.
 - c. That God would work in all what is pleasing.
 - d. The purpose: that God would be glorified.

C. Final Exhortations (vs. 22-25)

This book is normally considered to be an explanation of the priesthood of Christ. It is held to be a treatise on the redemptive activity of Messiah. But here the author defines the purpose of the book as an "**exhortation**." And he calls the entire message "**a word**." He then mentions that he has "**only written a short letter**."

1. Receive the message – "*I urge you to bear with my word of exhortation.*"
2. Receive Timothy and the writer – "*I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released. If he arrives soon, I will come with him to see you.*"
3. Receive the brethren – "*Greet all your leaders and all God's people. Those from Italy send you their greetings.*"
4. Receive God's grace – "*Grace be with you all.*"

CONCLUSION:

It would be worth mentioning two or three final observations on the book of Hebrews. Out of all the discussion in the book of Hebrews about the Aaronic high priests and ordinary Levitical priests, and extensive attention to the priesthood of Christ, he never once referred to Christians as priests. There are other New Testament writings that refer to Christians as priests. 1 Peter 2:5, 9, Revelation 1:5; 5:10; 20:6 mention the universal priesthood of believers in Christ.

There is a possible explanation that is suggested. The whole book is dedicated to the priesthood of Christ. His priestly position is central to the Hebrew letter. And though he does not mention our priesthood, he does assume it, and he does tell us to offer up sacrifices of praise to God continually. And we have learned in Hebrews 5:3 that every priest is appointed to offer gifts. And so if we are called on to offer gifts, then he is assigning to us the function of priests, whether he calls us priests or not. We do have an altar where we have a right to eat (Hebrews 13:10), and he is talking about the rights of priests under the Law of Moses. And every Christian is a priest. And we have a right to eat at the altar of Calvary because we have been elevated to the dignity of priests. We are not Melchizedek priests. There is only one that is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and that is Jesus Christ. But we are priests, and so the writer assumes that we do have the privilege of functioning as priests, and he doesn't have to call us priests for us to be elevated to the dignity of priests. Then, in the final analysis, he does not have to present every Biblical doctrine concerning Christian worship and all of the adequate terminology that would be fitted with that function. Other writers of the New Testament will present that terminology and definitions of Christians as priests. So, the writer does not wish to detract the thinking of his readers from the central figure of his book; the great High Priest, Jesus Christ. He will leave it to other inspired writers to develop the theme of Christian priesthood.

There is one final question that needs to be asked. Why did the author never mention the Gentiles? Because they are not a part of his emphasis. His emphasis is the new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah (Hebrews 8). So, where does the Gentile fit into the picture. The Gentile is included in the Abrahamic covenant recorded in Genesis 12:3; 15:6; 22:18. It was there that God promised Abraham: "**In you and your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed.**" The Gentile is brought into the picture in the Abrahamic covenant, not the Jewish, not the Mosaic covenant. We never were a part of it. And it was never a part of our lives. We are not obligated to observe any of the commandments of the Law of Moses. So, that law has nothing to do with us. If you are interested in finding where the Gentile enters into the picture, do not look for it in the book of Hebrews. That is not the stress of the Hebrew writer. He is writing to people that came out of the Jewish religion. The places to find the Gentile in the redemptive work of Christ are the books of Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians. It is clear that the writer takes the blood of Christ all the way back to the Garden of Eden in its redemptive work (9:26).

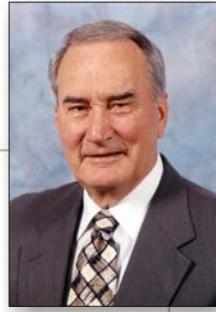
So, this is a marvelous book. May we close our study with the final five words of the Hebrew writer himself. I give you thanks for participating in the study. I pray that God will bless you as you review the material again and again and see the beauty of Jesus himself. "**GRACE BE WITH YOU ALL.**"

THERE ARE NO SELF EXAM QUESTION FOR THIS LAST LESSON.

It is our prayer that you have benefitted greatly from this study of Hebrews. May God richly bless you in your knowledge of “*Christ and the power of his resurrection*” (Philippians 3:10).

~~Study Guide~~

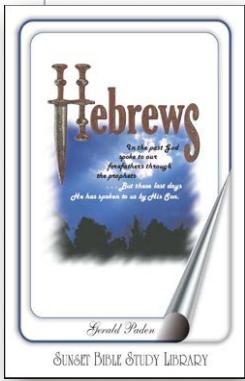
Gerald Paden



Gerald Paden was educated at Abilene Christian University (B.S.) and subsequently served as a missionary in Italy for 18 years and still has a great interest in the evangelization of that country. Gerald specializes in *Church Growth Studies*. His courses in Sunset International Bible Institute include *The Levitical Sacrificial System*, *The Book of Hebrews* and *The Epistles of John*. He teaches in the Sunset School of Missions and is instrumental in motivating families to go to the Mission field. Gerald is married and the father of three children.

Gerald has rich contributions to add to your study of inspired Scripture. His years of study and ministry qualify him to author this kind of commentary. His extensive missionary experience on foreign fields shines through and enhances his understanding of the Scriptures. His love for, and faith in, Jesus Christ permeate his writings.

Gerald has held numerous meetings and campaigns and taught in several preacher training schools in mission fields.



☞ The Commentary on Hebrews by Gerald Paden is a companion book to this study.

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