

# **HEBREWS**

## FROM SHADOW TO SUBSTANCE

BY A. S. COPLEY

“As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone  
and rock of offence, and whosoever believeth on Him  
shall not be ashamed”

**[Rom.9:33 with Isa.28:16]**

## PREFACE

These lessons on the Book of Hebrews appeared in *Grace and Glory* magazine in 1935. We have had so many loud calls for them that we decided to put them in book form. The lessons have been revised slightly and enlarged. The need of understanding this book correctly is very great. We never could grasp the meaning of the types, shadows, and symbols of Moses' tabernacle without a knowledge of it. By the enabling of the Holy Spirit, we have sought to give the correct interpretation of the book. Our prayer is that the readers will be profited greatly by studying them and that God will be glorified worthily of His holy name.

The Publishers (1941)

### REFERENCES USED IN THIS PUBLICATION

- **American Standard Version** (ASV or AV) is a version of the Bible that was released in 1901. It soon came to have other names, such as the American Revised Version, the American Standard Revision, the American Standard Revised Bible, and the American Standard Edition. By the time its copyright was renewed in 1929, it had come to be known by its present name, the American Standard Version.
- **Diaglott** is a two-language polyglot translation, of the New Testament by Benjamin Wilson, first published in 1864. It is an interlinear translation with the original Greek text and a word-for-word English translation in the left column, and a full English translation in the right column.
- **King James Version** (KJV) references are used throughout this publication unless otherwise noted.
- **Revised Version** (RV) (or English Revised Version) of the Bible is a late 19th-century British revision of the King James Version of 1611. It was the first and remains the only officially authorized and recognized revision of the King James Bible.
- **Wuest**: Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1893–1962) was a noted New Testament Greek (Κοινή) scholar of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century...produced his own English translation of the New Testament (the Wuest Expanded Translation – abbreviated WET) based on Nestle's critical text.

**Note:** *Definitions of references pulled from WikipediA, The Free Encyclopedia, January 2013.*

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## THE INTRODUCTION

*“God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in diverse manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us through His Son. [Heb.1:1-2 RV]*

These words are the gist of this epistle. It was written about 63 A.D., to Christian Jews or Hebrews, as the words “*fathers*” and “*us*” indicate. There is no room for doubt that the Apostle Paul wrote it. The statement of his imprisonment in Caesarea (Heb.10:34 with Act.24:23) and in Rome (Heb.13:22-24) evidence this fact. The emphatic style and superlative truth set forth confirm this view. Clement of Alexandria names Paul as its author, saying that as Jesus is called “*The Apostle*” to the Hebrews [Heb.3:1], so Paul does not so style himself, because he was the apostle to the Gentiles [Gal.2:8]. Also, he may have omitted his name from the Epistle because the Jews were prejudiced against him. What prompted him to write this letter? See Romans 9:1-4. It is the more interesting to us, because he wrote it. The phrase, “*the end of these days, or these last days,*” expresses the Hebrew view of that period; for to them, this Church Age was hidden...It is a parenthesis in God’s great plan.

*“Whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds (or framed the ages).” [Heb.1:2]*

The first 4 verses of this chapter, being 1 sentence, are the introduction to the book. They declare 2 very fundamental facts:

- The Deity of Jesus Christ and His ascension, and
- They imply His atoning death and resurrection—a quartette of mighty power.

God’s Son is to the front as the Chief Actor on the stage. The pre-existence of the Son, not simply as a thought (or concept), but as a living, active intelligence [Joh.1:18], is proven by the facts that “*the ages were framed by*” Him as the Word; that He was “the effulgence (reflected brightness) of God’s glory, and the express image (impress or exact expression) of His substance (Person); and that He upholds all things by the Word (Greek: **HRAMATI**,) of His power.” The Greek word rendered *person* (or *substance* here) means “*the foundation or ground of hope and confidence;*” that is, “*subsistence, reality.*” “*He that cometh to God must believe that He is*” a living, substantial reality and the basis and support of all His operations; and, that His Son is the exact expression of Him as such [Heb.11:6].

*“When He had by Himself purged our sins, (He) sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” [Heb.1:3]*

On the very doorstep, Israel met the positive proof of Christ’s deity and sonship, even His victorious death and triumphant resurrection [Rom.1:4]. The death of the old creation, as the only way to life and victory, was the basic teaching of the types and shadows; and Jesus had to go that way to bring in the new creation. Hence, His death is alluded to 24 times in this book.

*"Being made so much BETTER than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." [Heb.1:4]*

The word **BETTER** is the key word to this Epistle. It occurs 13 times, and it expresses important facts. The book begins with the **BETTER PERSON**, and ends with **BETTER THINGS** [Heb.11:40 and Heb.12:24]. The uses of this word in this epistle afford a comprehensive view of its contents. Therefore, we tabulate them as follows:

1. **A BETTER PERSONALITY**, The Son compared with angels [Heb.1:4 and Heb.2].
2. **BETTER THINGS**, Attitude of saints contrasted with the attitude of sinners [Heb.6:9].
3. **A BETTER PRIESTHOOD**, Melchisedec contrasted with Aaron [Heb.7:7].
4. **A BETTER HOPE**, the Gospel contrasted with The Law [Heb.7:19].
5. **A BETTER TESTAMENT (OR COVENANT)**, that of Grace set over against the covenant of Law [Heb.7:22].
6. **BETTER PROMISES**, is the basis of the...
7. **BETTER COVENANT** [Heb.8:6].
8. **BETTER SACRIFICES**, the offering up of Christ contrasted with the typical sacrifices which pointed to Him [Heb.9:23].
9. **A BETTER POSSESSION**, spiritual things contrasted with material things [Heb.10:34 RV].
10. **A BETTER COUNTRY**, the heavenly contrasted with the earthly [Heb.11:16].
11. **A BETTER RESURRECTION**, a select company raised before the time of the general resurrection [Heb.11:35 with Mat.27:52-53].
12. **A BETTER INHERITANCE**, for The Church [Heb.11:40].
13. **BETTER THINGS SPOKEN**, by better blood [Heb.12:24].

## DIVISIONS IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

The entire Epistle is one of comparisons and contrasts, as the title to our notes suggests. We submit the following main outline for guidance in our study of the book.

Div.1, God's Son on the Stage vs. Prophets and Angels	Hebrews 1-2
Div.2, The Son as Apostle and High Priest instead of Moses and Aaron	Hebrews 3-7
Div.3, The New Covenant Set Over Against the Old Covenant	Hebrews 8-9

Div.4, The Sacrifice of Christ vs. the Typical Sacrifices	Hebrews 10
Div.5, The Cloud of Old Testament Witnesses	Hebrews 11
Div.6, How to Run so as to Win	Hebrews 12
Div.7, Our Attitude to Ministers	Hebrews 13

## DIV. 1, GOD'S SON ON THE STAGE VS. PROPHETS AND ANGELS [HEB. 1-2]

We have already viewed the introductory words in Verses 1-4; let us observe the comparison of the Son with angels. Frequent reference is made to the Old Testament, with which the Jews were supposed to be familiar. Therein Christ was the chief subject of prophecy. In Psalm 2, He is addressed as God's Son and His resurrection is foretold (compare Act.13:33 as proof that this does not refer to His birth into the world). His resurrection from the dead is a proof of His Deity and Sonship [Rom.1:4]. God never called any angel His son. This was His more excellent name, or title. Angels were creatures only. The Fatherhood of God was thus revealed through Jesus Christ. It was not known under the old covenant. Isaiah 63:16 and Isaiah 64:8 mention the Fatherhood of God.

*"And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." [Heb.1:6]*

Worship shall be given to Him. This has direct reference to Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent, when He will reign as God for 1,000 years. He is more than a "wind" or "flame of fire"...He is God [Heb.1:8-10]. Although He is the Son in distinction from His Father, He is addressed as God. Let those who accuse us of teaching that there are 2 Gods, consider these words: "Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee," and view it with Verse 8:

*"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." [Heb 1:8]*

*"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."* Two Divine Personalities are here named, and each is called God, because Jesus Christ is Deity as well as humanity. No room here for New Issue folly, which claims that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are 3 manifestations of 1 Divine Person, instead of 3 distinct persons, each having a distinct office. Two of these persons are called God (compare Isa.48:16, where the 3 persons of Deity are mentioned). Also Psalm 110:1, *"The LORD (Hebrew: ADONAI) said unto my Lord (Hebrew: ADON) Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."* Christ was never a created angel (see Mat.22:42-46).

*"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands." [Heb.1:10]*

In this verse, Christ is addressed as Lord, and the work of creation is ascribed to Him. When He comes again, He will change the earth and heavens, as a man folds up a garment. He Himself will never change nor fail. These are

further evidences of His eternal Deity. None of the afore-mentioned acts were ever ascribed to angels; neither was any of them ever termed a son of God. And neither has God subjected the inhabited earth unto angels, but He set man over the works of His hands which is typical of Jesus' future dominion over the earth [Heb.2:5-7]. About 20 facts are recorded of Christ in Hebrews 1 that cannot be said of angels (compare also Pro.8:23-24 with 1Co.1:30).

The words of Christ must be heeded [Heb.2:1-4]. Angels were employed by God to communicate His will to men before Jesus came, and their words had to be obeyed (study Gen.28:12, 32:1; Psa.91:11; Act.7:38, 53; and Gal.3:10). If their ministry was so important, how much greater was the ministry of Jesus Christ, begun by His own works and continued by the apostles. The Jews could not neglect the "*great salvation*," which He introduced, and made possible by His death and resurrection, and was confirmed by "*signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost*" [Heb.2:4]; and then escape God's just judgments. The siege laid against Jerusalem by the Roman soldiers in 71 A.D. was an early proof thereof. Today, neither can the Gentiles neglect the great salvation, which we preach, and escape God's wrath. He witnesses to our ministries also by signs and wonders. The day of miracles is not yet past. Praise His name!

*"Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." [Heb.2:7]*

The humiliation and exaltation of humanity is expressed in this verse. Psalm 8:4 is quoted (see also Job 7:17); but that is partly prophetic, because Paul adds, "*But now we see not yet all things put under him*" [Heb.2:8]. The foretold exaltation of mankind above the angels is made possible only by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ; hence, "*by the grace of God, He should taste death for every man*" [Heb.2:9]. Thus, salvation has been provided for all men; for it is not the will of God that any should perish. It is not true that some were ordained to be saved, and others lost; but if men are lost, it is because they refuse to believe the Gospel [Mar.16:16]. Verse 3 asks, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Hebrews 10:26-29 answers that question...there is no escape.

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

The **perfection** mentioned here means "*the resurrection of Jesus*," as Luke 13:32 and Philippians 3:12 make plain. His resurrection is clearly implied in all the references to His death in this chapter; for redemption embraces both. He "*was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification*" [Rom.4:25].

*"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. " [Heb.2:11-12]*

Hebrews 2:11 expresses the close union of Christ with His people. How sweet and precious! God is the Father of our Lord and of all His true

followers, the many sons He is bringing to glory. *“For verily not of angels doth He take hold; but He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham”* [Heb.2:16 RV]. *“That through death He might bring to nought him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil”* [Heb.2:14 RV]. Hence, now we have victory over Satan by believing on Jesus unto salvation and unto deliverance from his power. Satan’s onslaughts are simply fiendish bluffs with which he seems to overwhelm us at times; but if we resist him, he will flee from us—resist him by drawing nigh to God [Jam.4:7-8]. Christ’s priesthood is first mentioned in the next verse, which is very interesting.

*“Wherefore in all things (except that He had no sin in Him and He committed no sins) it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; for in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.”* [Heb.2:17-18]

*“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same”* [Heb.2:14] (yet without sin [Heb.4:14]); He was tempted and tried severely (see Mat.4) criticized and persecuted by the self-righteous, in jeopardy every day, and finally nailed to the rugged cross. He was suspended between earth and heaven, expressing His rejection by men and forsaken by God, because He was counted sin for us and numbered with the transgressors. The Greek word translated **reconciliation** is rendered *“propitiation”* in Romans 3:25, 1 John 2:2, and 1 John 4:10.

With the crucifixion, His prophetic ministry ceased and His High Priestly ministry began, mercifully and faithfully. He showed infinite mercy to us miserable sinners in being faithful unto death. He made full reconciliation, propitiation, and atonement (expiation) for the sins of the people; that is, He covered our sins, satisfied the utmost demands of Divine Justice, and thus appeased the just wrath of God. Therefore, when a sinner believes on Jesus, God imputes His own perfect righteousness unto him; and because he could not live right by being forgiven simply, He also at the same moment imparts unto him His own holiness. He gives to him eternal life (compare Eph.1:7 and Joh.5:24).

Christ wrought 12 important things by His death on the cross; 3 of these are named in these 2 chapters.

1. He purged our sins [Heb.1:3].
2. He annulled Satan’s power over us [Heb.2:14].
3. He delivered us from the fear of death and the spirit of bondage [Heb.2:15 with Rom.8:15].
4. He offered up Himself for our sins forever [Heb.7:27 and 10:12].
5. He obtained eternal redemption for us [Heb.9:28].
6. He offered Himself to God [Heb.9:14].
7. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself [Heb.9:26].

8. He bore the sins of many [Heb.9:28].
9. He sanctified us [Heb.10:10].
10. He perfected us by one sacrifice [Heb.10:14].
11. He endured the cross, despising the shame [Heb.12:2-3].
12. He suffered without the gates [Heb.13:12].

### ATONEMENT IS MADE

A SINNER I WAS BY BIRTH.  
MY DOOM WAS DEEP IN THE EARTH.  
JEHOVAH WAS ANGRY WITH ME,  
AND SAID, YOU MUST HANG ON THE TREE.

THE JUSTICE OF GOD ENRAGED,  
DEMANDED THAT I BE CAGED  
FOREVER IN DARKNESS AND GLOOM  
IN DEPTHS FAR BENEATH THE COLD TOMB.

A MESSENGER CAME MY WAY,  
FOR I, UNABLE TO PAY,  
WAS LONGING FOR PEACE WITH MY GOD  
AND FREEDOM FROM SIN'S GALLING ROD.

ATONEMENT HE CRIED IS MADE.  
YOUR DEBT HAS FULLY BEEN PAID.  
JEHOVAH IS SATISFIED NOW,  
AND JUSTICE IN MERCY DOTH BOW.

TO YOU. OH, WILL YOU BELIEVE?  
AND PARDON AND PEACE RECEIVE?  
NO TOMB AND NO GLOOM AND NO DOOM,  
BUT IN HEAVEN A GLORIOUS ROOM.

I TRUSTED AND LEAPED FOR JOY.  
MY NEIGHBORS I DID ANNOY.  
A RANSOM I TRULY HAVE FOUND,  
AND SURELY FOR GLORY I'M BOUND.

## DIV.2, THE SON AS APOSTLE AND HIGH PRIEST INSTEAD OF MOSES AND AARON [HEB.3-7]

### HEBREWS 3

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*"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." [Heb.3:1]*

The High Priesthood of Jesus is the great theme of this epistle. He is termed here "The Apostle," in contrast with Moses, who may be called an apostle to



Israel in his day. Moses is called a prophet in Deuteronomy 18:15, where Jesus is foretold as the Prophet who should come. In Deuteronomy 33:5, Moses is termed a king. The Deity of Jesus Christ is seen here in contrasting Him with Moses, who was faithful as a servant of God in leading Israel. Jesus was more than a prophet and an apostle. He was God's Son; and He was God; for He builded God's house, of which Moses was a part. Therefore, He deserves far more glory than Moses. The national destiny of Israel will be on earth. But all who believe on Jesus throughout this age, whether Jews or Gentiles, are reckoned in The Church, whose calling is heavenly [1Co.12:12-13 and Eph.2:6]. Hence, Paul addressed them as "*partakers of a heavenly calling.*"

*"But Christ as Son over His own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." [Heb.3:6]*

Does this "*if*" determine man's eternal destiny? Many folk claim it does. Paul does not here refer to personal salvation, but to the relation of the Hebrews as a people to Christ. If they maintain the right attitude toward God, they are called the "*household of faith, the household of God*" [Gal.6:10 and Eph.2:19; see also Mat.24:45]. Gentile believers also become members of God's great household by the same attitude of faithfulness [Eph.2:20-22]. Colossians 1:22-23 conveys the same truth. A dozen children may keep a household intact by confidence and obedience toward their parents; but if they break it up by disobedience, they are still the children of those parents, though they may forfeit their future inheritance. Hence, the fitting warning and exhortation which follows,

*"Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)" [Heb.3:8-11]*

That is, they shall not enter into the land of Canaan, as the type, and into perfect rest of the soul [Heb.4:9]. Study the entreaties in Hebrews 3:7-13.

*"For we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." [Heb.3:14]*

Like Hebrews 3:6, this also has no reference to initial salvation, but to our growth in grace. As we continue to believe in Christ and yield to Him, we feed on Him and receive added strength, life, and light from Him. All the graces of the Spirit increase, and the fruit of the Spirit becomes more and more evident.

Who failed to enter the land of Canaan but those who failed to believe steadfastly the whole Word of God [Heb.3:15-19]? Who will receive no reward hereafter but those who fail to walk in the Spirit and judge their own old man? Nevertheless, they will be saved as by fire [1Co.3:15].

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## HEBREWS 4

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The 4<sup>th</sup> chapter is an unfolding of this precious truth. Its theme is "**HIS REST, MY REST**"; that is, God's rest.

*"For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works." [Heb.4:3-4]*

Hence, the 7<sup>th</sup> day cessation from labor is typical of the rest of soul, promised by the Gospel [Mat.11:28-30]. It typifies the millennium also, which the entering into Canaan suggested. Faith in the Gospel brings salvation to sinners [Heb.2:2-4]. Likewise, faith in the Gospel brings rest to believers, which is the gist of this chapter.

The power and profit of the Gospel, or Word of promise, are emphasized; *"for we which have believed do enter into rest."* Perfect faith in Christ eliminates all self-effort; *"for he that is entered into His (God's) rest, also hath ceased (rested) from his own works, as God did from His"* [Heb.4:10]. The possibility of falling from grace [Gal.5:4] is here indicated by Hebrews 4:11 RV, *"Let us give diligence therefore to enter into that rest, that no man fall into the same example of disobedience."*

The word **Jesus** in Verse 8 should be **Joshua**. They mean the same.

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

Just think of that. It cuts where a material knife cannot, *"piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."* Ah, yes, the Word shows up the soulish in religious services and worship, and calls forth the spiritual, which does not grate, or grind. The fruit of the Spirit is never soulish; neither can it be substituted, though an effort to imitate it may be made. A heart-knowledge of the full Gospel is the only way to spirituality, which culminates in this Sabbath rest in God. The Revised Version says, *"Piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."* The joints and marrow seem to answer to the soul and spirit, as if the spirit were to the soul what the marrow in the bones is to the joints. The soulish life is swallowed up in the life of the spirit; that is, our renewed human spirit is controlled by the Spirit of God. The Word also discerns whether the thoughts and intents of the heart are in full harmony with God's will. We may think what to say, or do, and intend to act accordingly; but fail to act. These attitudes of heart are discovered to us by the Word of God that we may be at our best in worship and service.

Profound comfort flows from Hebrews 4:14-16. Our *"Great High Priest"* again appears on the scene; for all our blessings and victories are dependent upon Him. He is *"The Word,"* of which the printed page is simply the channel of operation. In spite of fierce opposition, He *"passed into the heavens"* [Eph.1:19-21] into the presence of God in our behalf [Heb.7:25]. We have not a frail creature (who has sin in the flesh as we have) for our high priest—one *"who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* Therefore, He is able to succor us, or grant us front-rank protection, when we are tempted [Heb.2:18].

*"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace." [Heb.4:16]*

Why did God set bounds lest Israel might touch Mount Sinai when The Law was given [Exo.19:12]? "A fiery law" was given to Moses by hand of stern justice. Sinful man could not approach the throne of holy justice. God's holy Son, as High Priest, had not yet offered Himself as a sacrifice in man's stead and ascended to heaven with atoning wounds. But now, the throne of law has become the throne of grace. Wonderful beyond words to express! We have a representative in heaven—a Mediator, a Go-Between, even our Elder Brother [Heb.2:11], in whom we are accepted [Eph.1:6]. The God of justice sees us through the wounds of His Son.

The poet says,

"FIVE BLEEDING WOUNDS HE BEARS,  
RECEIVED ON CALVARY.  
THEY POUR EFFECTUAL PRAYERS.  
THEY STRONGLY PLEAD FOR ME—  
FORGIVE HIM, O FORGIVE, THEY CRY;  
NOR LET THAT RANSOMED SINNER DIE."

The throne of grace challenges our faith today. Mercy's hand is stretched out to every needy one. Much unnecessary pain of heart and body is endured because saints do not accept the challenge. The power that raised Jesus from the dead is to usward who believe. Will we let Satan hold us down? Will we let the flesh rob us of our rights in Christ with such a loud call sounding in our ears? Our High Priest waits to serve us. *"We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous"* [1Jo.2:1].

God's throne of stern justice is changed to a throne of grace through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

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## HEBREWS 5

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The first 11 verses of Chapter 5 contrast Christ, the real High Priest, with Aaron the typical high priest. Only those whom God ordained could fill that office; for example, Aaron and his descendants. So, God ordained His Son to be the anti-typical High Priest.

It was twice prophesied here that He should be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Aaron, being sinful by nature, hence, "*compassed by infirmity*" [Heb.5:2], had to offer sacrifices for himself as well as for the people. He had compassion on those who committed sins of ignorance and on those who knowingly were out of the way. But our Lord had no sin in Him and had no infirmity; therefore, He offered Himself only for other men. Because He recoiled from being reckoned sin for us [2Co.5:21] and from being counted a transgressor [Isa.53:8-12], in the garden "*He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears*" unto the Father (compare Heb.5:7 with Luk.22:42-44). The

Father heard His cry and strengthened Him by sending an angel to Him; but He could not deliver Him from death and save humanity.

*"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."*  
[Heb.5:8-11]

That is, His holy nature was loathe to be identified with unholy, wicked humanity; but being not unwilling to do His Father's behest, He "*humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*" [Phi.2:8], the most abhorrent of all deaths. The perfection of Verse 9 refers to His resurrection, the final stroke of redemption. (Study Luk.13:32 with Heb.2:10 and Heb.12:23.) All the righteous dead will be perfect when they receive their glorified bodies.

Note with me 7 fundamental **ETERNALS** in this letter. This is a rich and magnificent sermon outline.

1. It is very significant that this is the first one: By His resurrection, "*He became the author of **ETERNAL SALVATION** unto all them that obey Him*" [Heb.5:9] and the gracious product is of the same character and quality as its Author. Praise God!
2. "**ETERNAL JUDGMENT**" [Heb.6:2], which in fact occurs last.
3. Christ's **ETERNAL PRIESTHOOD** implied in Hebrews 7:16, made so "*after the power of an endless life,*" in harmony with Hebrews 5:6.
4. "**ETERNAL REDEMPTION,**" obtained by Christ [Heb.9:12].
5. "The **ETERNAL SPIRIT,**" the Holy Spirit, of course [Heb.9:14].
6. An "**ETERNAL INHERITANCE,**" promised to them that believe [Heb.9:15].
7. "The **ETERNAL COVENANT**" [Heb.13:20], the basis of the other 6.

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## HEBREWS 6

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Babes are often "*dull of hearing*" [Heb.5:11]. Hebrews 5:11-14 indicate the immature state of those Jewish believers generally to whom Paul wrote. The language of 1 Peter 2:1-3 confirms this fact. They were ignorant of "*the first principles of the oracles of God*" [Heb.5:12], or the elements of the beginning of the Words of God. Today, most Christian people are in the same rowboat of self-effort; hence, they find difficulty in understanding Chapter 6. The Jews were still addicted to the shadowy ceremonies of Moses. Many Christians are addicted to the erroneous traditions of their fathers. Let us now walk slowly through this 6<sup>th</sup> chapter with our hearts open and see how simple, but how powerful it is. Paul says,

*"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God."* [Heb.6:1]

That is, because you are babes, you have left the Word of the beginning of Christ; therefore, “*go on unto perfection*” or full growth.

The first principles of the teaching of Christ laid the foundation for 6 significant things, namely:

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Repentance from dead works. | 4. Imposition of hands. |
| 2. Faith.                      | 5. Resurrection.        |
| 3. Baptisms.                   | 6. Eternal judgment.    |

In Galatians 3:23-25, we read that The Law (the 10 Commandments and the Mosaic rituals) was our schoolmaster until Christ, that we might be justified by faith; but, after that faith has come (in the Person of Christ), we are no longer under a schoolmaster; “*for ye are all the children of God through faith in Jesus Christ*” [Gal.2:26 RV]. The old school under The Law is out since Christ came. It closed by the coming in of the new school under grace by faith. The old schoolmaster, directed by Moses, was dismissed by the introduction of the New Teacher, Jesus Christ. With that closing and dismissal, went also all the furniture of the old, namely the shadows and symbols, the entire Mosaic ceremony, called “*dead works*.”

Mark these facts. By the Scriptures, we learn that Jesus Christ is the only foundation for the afore-named 6 items; and the Apostle Paul laid that foundation by proclaiming Christ clearly and fully [1Co.3:10-11]. But when the Hebrew nation went on offering up material sacrifices, they were manifestly requiring a foundation again to be laid. Thus, they were saying that the Messiah had not come and had not been offered up for their sins. After Christ came, all those Old Testament ceremonies were considered “DEAD WORKS,” from which they had not yet fully repented or turned away. The death and resurrection of Christ was a sufficient basis for such repentance. This is the first of the 6 items.

“**FAITH TOWARD GOD**” was only infantile, and could not grow, as long as the disciples observed the Mosaic ritual; but when they fully grasped the meaning and power of Jesus' atoning death and resurrection, their faith grew and leaped into great victory. So it is with us today.

“**A DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS**,” doubtless includes the 1 comprehensive baptism in the Spirit [1Co.12:12-13] and the symbolic baptism in water...the only 2 New Testament baptisms. By continuing the Old Testament material ceremonies, the Jewish disciples were requiring the foundation to be laid again for these baptisms. If we consider how slow we are to give up and put away our former religious views and habits, we may understand how they could go on with those ceremonies.

“**LAYING ON OF HANDS**,” in praying for the sick and in setting apart people for the offices of deacon and elder, was practiced by the disciples. The redemption of Christ was the sufficient foundation for such a ministry; for they laid hands on in His name. But by continuing the Old Testament ritual, the Jews practically said, “That basis has not yet been provided.”

**“A RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD”** is taught in the Old Testament (see Dan.12:2). John 11:25 confirms that fact; but Jesus exclaimed, *“I am the resurrection and the life,”* by which he showed that His death and resurrection are the foundation and guarantee of the resurrection foretold in the Old Testament. A whole-hearted acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and King should have caused all the first disciples to swing out clean-cut from every semblance of a shadowy religion, as Paul did. It is easy to see why Peter, though anointed with the Spirit, compromised with the Jews and refused to eat with Gentile Christians [Gal.2:11-12]. In some measure, Peter was still under the power of shadows and symbols. Christ, the ordained Substance, had not fully filled his vision.

**“ETERNAL JUDGMENT”** is the last-named of these 6 items of doctrine, of which the redemption of Christ is the all-sufficient foundation. Christ was judged on the cross for the whole human family; that is, humanity and was judged and put to death in His death for them. All the judgments of God, 7 altogether, are based upon Christ’s judgment in our stead. Men, who reject the judgment that fell upon Him in our behalf, will suffer *“eternal judgment.”* He was delivered to the cross for our offences, and raised from the dead for our justification [Rom.4:25]. Therefore, all men are without excuse. Now, by going on with the sacrifices and treating them as living realities, offering up calves and goats, lighting the candles in the temple, washing at the laver, eating the showbread, etc., the disciples were indirectly calling for a foundation to be laid again for eternal judgment, as well as for repentance from dead works, for faith toward God, for baptisms, for laying on of hands, and for the resurrection of the dead. Therefore, the Apostle exclaims, *“Let us go on unto perfection (full-growth)”*; for the ordained foundation of all those teachings had been laid in the redemption of Christ. This is possible only by seeing, through Paul’s writings, that everything is in Jesus Christ for us.

*“But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” [Heb. 6:9-12]*

Remember several facts in studying these perplexing verses of Hebrews 6:9-12:

**1<sup>ST</sup>**, this Epistle was not written for Gentile backslidden believers. It was written to Hebrew Christians, that they might see Jesus Christ as the complete fulfillment of all the Old Testament types, shadows, and symbols.

**2<sup>ND</sup>**, it has no reference to backsliders today, or any day. If it did, then no backslider could ever be restored; for it reads plainly, *“it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance”* who were *“once enlightened”*

[Heb.6:6]. There is positively no proof here that people may be saved and afterward lost forever. Notice the grammar here:

- In Hebrews 6:4 and 6, the pronominal adjective “*those*” and the pronoun “*they*” refer to persons absent or at a distance. “*Them*,” “*they*,” and “*those*” always mean persons or things spoken of.
- However, the pronouns “*you*,” “*your*,” and “*ye*” [Heb.6:9-12] mean persons addressed or spoken to.

Do you see the difference? By these grammatical finger-posts, it is plain that the writer spoke **To** one company, and **ABOUT** another company. Keep these facts in mind and all difficulties will vanish. Paul addressed himself to believing Hebrews, to instruct them about themselves and also about unbelieving Hebrews, who had light enough to save them if they had accepted the light.

In your Bible, put a parenthesis after “*those*” [Heb.6:4] and after “*away*” [Heb.6:6], so that it will read thus,

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

“*For it is impossible for those ... to renew them again...*” The 6 statements of Hebrews 6:4-5 explain who “*those*” were and what they did. They were “*once enlightened*” concerning Jesus and the Gospel; for they had heard Him and the apostles Peter, James, and John. They were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and that the promised Holy Spirit had been poured out. They “*tasted of the heavenly gift*,” that is, Jesus, who had announced Himself “*the true bread from heaven*” [Joh.6.32]. A “*taste*” is very little, just enough to determine the genuineness (palatableness) of food though not enough to afford nourishment. For example, a child said, “Salt is what makes the porridge taste bad when it is left out.” The Jews heard sufficient truth to convince them, but did not eat enough to convert and save them (see Joh.7:23).

They “*were made partakers of the Holy Spirit*” does not mean they were baptized, or anointed with the Spirit. They simply tasted of the Holy Spirit, even as they tasted of Christ; for they could not receive the Spirit without first receiving the Savior [Joh.14:17]. The Spirit had been poured out upon all flesh, convicting sinners of their sins and Jewish worshipers of their opposition to Christ [Act.2:38]. They were “*confounded, amazed, and marveled*,” hearing them speak in their own tongues. Those who yielded to the Spirit’s presence and power became filled with the Spirit. They believed and received and became the “*you*” and “*ye*” to whom Paul wrote. Others, the “*them*” and “*those*,” mocked and scorned, receiving nothing but judgment 30 years later.

*“And have tasted the good Word of God.”* The same principle obtains (prevails) here as in the foregoing. They heard the Word preached and taught in the power of the Spirit. In Matthew 13:19, Jesus taught that the good seed *“was sown in the heart”* of wayside hearers; but the wicked one snatched it away. The stony ground hearers *“heard the Word and with joy received it”*; but being persecuted afterward, became *“offended.”* I have known people to rejoice over the Truth, and afterwards turn it down and fight it. They only tasted the good Word; but were not saved by believing it. Those Jews tasted also of the dynamics of the age to come. They witnessed miracles, signs, and wonders, which were earnest of the supernatural workings of the millennial age. Indeed, the first 7 years of Pentecostal power would have been the beginning of the millennium, if the Jews had received Jesus as their Savior and King; but they said, *“We will not have this Man to reign over us.”* The meaning of these 5 statements, boiled down in the first one—*“they were once enlightened”*—is simply this...they were arrested and sufficiently convicted by the Truth to have been saved and filled with the Spirit if they had received it with the heart. They were persuaded that the Old Testament types and symbols were being fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and that the New Way was the right way. Salvation was not in the shadows, but in Christ, the glorious Substance. The Truth they heard was confirmed by many miracles, signs, and wonders, wrought in His name. Therefore, the Apostle concludes,

*“If they shall fall away, [ ] to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”*

*“If they shall fall away”* (literally, *“having fallen away”*) from the clear light given to them, it is impossible *“to renew them again unto repentance.”* They could have repented of simply turning away by neglect, or postponement; but their falling away was hateful and revengeful—*“seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame”* or expose Him to contempt. They renounced God’s Son and His redemptive plan. Study Hebrews 10:26-27:

*“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”*

If we sin willfully (by deliberately rejecting Jesus Christ as God’s only ample and necessary sacrifice) after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no other sacrifice for sins but the inevitable consequence...a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. The sacrifice of Christ was enough, and God accepted no other. They had *“received the knowledge of the Truth,”* but not the salvation which the Truth offered. From that knowledge, they fell away (apostatized) by rejecting it. They did not backslide from the experience of salvation and the anointing with the Holy Spirit because of sin, or weakness in the flesh, or



because of being only babes in Christ. A sample of such falling away is recorded in Acts 7:54-59:

Stephen's audience was against Christ. They sinned willfully. When his message cut them to the heart, they "*gnashed on him with their teeth.*" When he said, "*I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God,*" they "*cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and ran upon him with one accord and cast him out of the city and stoned him.*"

In their wicked hearts, they crucified Christ again and put Him to open contempt. For such folk, there is no repentance, no salvation, no hope. They committed the unpardonable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost. Only 1 sin cannot be forgiven, the willful sin of rejecting Jesus Christ as the Redeemer and Savior.

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

In these verses, Paul's parable of the good earth and the bad earth proves the correctness of the interpretation given above. "*The earth which drinketh in the rain*" figures them that believed and bore fruit to God's glory. "*That which beareth thorns and briers*" figures the Christ-rejecters. "*By their fruits ye shall know them*" [Mat.7:20].

Someone questions about the terms:

"*Enlightened,*" "*tasted,*" and "*partakers.*" Was not Judas Iscariot enlightened? Did he not taste of the good Word of God from Jesus' mouth? Was he not a partaker of the power of God by being in the presence and under the ministry of Christ? He was a partaker of the ministry and apostleship of the disciples, from which he fell. He never received Christ as the Messiah from the heart. He is called "*a thief*" and "*a devil.*" After betraying the Lord he repented, but not toward Him.

The phrase "*renew again unto repentance*" bothers some, as if that proved that those Hebrews had once repented. Perhaps their minds were changed; but that is not sufficient evidence that they were saved. Repentance is not salvation. Men are not saved by repentance, but by faith. We meet people today, Jews and Gentiles, who acknowledge that Jesus Christ is God's Son; but they have not believed unto salvation. "*With the heart* (not with the head) *man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*" [Rom.10:10]. There is no other harmonic and scriptural explanation of Hebrews 6. Comfort for babes in Christ is found in Hebrews 6:9-10. Though the Jewish Christians, whom Paul addressed, had not been going on to perfection because they were still clinging to the old symbolic ritual, yet he expressed his appreciation of their "*work and labor of love,*" assuring them that God did not forget them. God knew their hearts; for they were born again. But, Paul yearned for them to put off the ceremonial robes, repent heartily from the "*dead works*" of the Mosaic

rituals, and worship and work as if they had only *“put on Christ.”* He longed for them to go on to full-growth in Christ, enjoying *“the full assurance of hope unto the end”* that *“by faith and patience”* they might *“inherit the promises”* to their fullest extent. He did not intimate that they might *“fall away”* (be lost); but if they continued in that babyhood state, satisfied with shadows, their usefulness here would be hindered and their future rewards would be far from full and complete.

*“The hope set before us”* is the theme of Hebrews 6:12-20. What is that hope? Because of God’s promise to him [Gen.12:1-3], the descendants of Abraham, looked forward to a land all their own. They looked also for a *“heavenly city”* and *“a country”* [Heb.11:13-16]. That is the *“eternal inheritance”* [Heb.6:15], which Peter describes as incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading and includes *“the glories that should follow”* the sufferings of Christ—glories for Israel and for The Church [1Pe.1:4-5, 11; see also 1Pe.4:13 and 1Pe.5:1-4, 10]. Take time to study these citations. By Hebrews 11:39-40, we learn that Israel will not receive their full inheritance until Christ’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent; hence, the frequent exhortation to *“hope to the end”* [Heb.3:6, 14; Heb.6:11; 1Pe.1:3]. Although God confirmed His promise to Abraham by an oath; yet the shadowy ceremonies gave no assurance of eternal life. The priests went daily into the Holy Place of the Tabernacle, but the high priest went into the Holiest of All alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people; but those offerings could not take away sins [Heb.9:7-8 and Heb.10:4-6]. Therefore, they were continually looking for eternal life [Mat.19:16 and Joh.6:38].

Now, the Jews as well as we, have a glorious hope set before them, sustained by 3 immense pillars of Truth: ❶ God’s immutable Counsel, or Word, ❷ His immutable Oath and ❸ the entrance into heaven of the Forerunner, Jesus. This is for all people, *“a strong consolation,”* affording *“the full assurance of hope unto the end”* [Heb.6:11]. This hope is an anchor of the soul. When a ship comes into port, it casts an anchor, a 2-pronged hook attached to a strong rope, upon the shore. That holds the ship at bay until all the passengers and freight are safely landed. Just so, the glorious hope of Jesus’ coming to finish all His ordained purposes in behalf of Israel and The Church is as sure as God’s unchangeable counsel and as steadfast as His unchangeable oath. It is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit through the Word. The entrance of the Forerunner into heaven is the guarantee of our entrance there; for where the Head is, there the body must be also.

The phrase *“eternal salvation”* (or eternal life) [Heb.5:9], is a very comprehensive one of a vast compass. Most saints fail to see this fact. It has a beginning, when we are saved (born again). It makes great progress...growing in grace, having fellowship with Christ, and increasing in the knowledge of God and of His will. And, it must have an unspeakable and glorious climax. We obtain an eternal standing with God by initial faith in Jesus Christ. But eternal salvation also anticipates a state, wrought by the daily sanctification of the Holy Spirit, corresponding to the standing, which will culminate with an *“eternal inheritance”* [Heb.9:15]. We are born babes in Christ; but in 1 John 2:12-14, we read of *“young men”* and *“fathers”* as well as *“little children.”* The Scriptures teach emphatically the first principles of eternal life, then its progress, and finally its perfection. It begins with security, goes on in purity, and culminates in maturity:

- As **BABES** in Christ, we are disciples (learners).
- As **YOUNG MEN**, we are workers and warriors.
- As **FATHERS** we give counsel and shall receive rewards.

This is the full-fledged view of scriptural and eternal salvation (eternal life). This turns legality topsy-turvy, whirling with incurable dizziness and irrecoverable defeat. Initial salvation saves us from sin and hell. Growth in grace saves us from fear, laziness, and uselessness. Overcoming, worship, work, and warfare will save us from blushing with empty hands when the Lord shall appear [1Joh.2:28].

All Old Testament people, like Abraham, David, etc., who saw and believed the Word of grace as revealed to them, were justified, born again, and became overcomers. By faith they lived beyond the shadows. They will receive their full inheritance (reward) when Christ will be revealed from heaven and the believing Old Testament dead shall be raised.

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## HEBREWS 7

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This chapter is the basis for our study—Jesus Christ as High Priest compared with Melchisedec. **THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST IS THE KEY THEME OF THE BOOK.** This is a very prolific portion. First, we will notice 6 facts concerning Melchisedec; then 7 facts concerning Christ Jesus.

### THE PRIESTHOOD OF MELCHISEDEC

1. **Melchisedec** was a king priest and his name means “*My king is righteous.*” We read of him in Genesis 14. Some think that he was indeed the Christ; but a close study shows that he was predecessor of Christ, who is called “the **BRANCH**” [Zec.6:12-13] and will also be a King Priest during the millennium. Melchisedec was a descendant of Shem. He was king of Salem...the oldest name of what is now Jerusalem. Abraham acknowledged him as God’s anointed king and priest.
2. His priesthood was universal; that is, it was not limited to 1 people only, as Aaron’s priesthood was limited to Israel. He was “*priest of the most high God.*” The Phoenicians also called their chief god by the same Hebrew title **ELYON**, or “*Most High.*”
3. His priesthood was not limited to 20 years, as was the Aaronic priesthood, “*having neither beginning of days, no end of life*”; that is, his genealogy is not recorded. This is also the meaning of the phrases, “*without father,*” “*without mother,*” and “*without descent.*”
4. Therefore, He had no predecessor, nor successors. Aaron’s priestly line was limited, and passed from father to son.
5. His priesthood was superior to Aaron’s; hence, he was above Abraham. Therefore, Paul reckoned that “*Levi paid tithes in Abraham,*” who “*gave a tenth of the spoils*” to Melchisedec, which was gathered from the battle of the 9 kings when he delivered his nephew Lot [Gen.14].

Permit a word about **TITHING**. Some saints insist that tithing was a Mosaic law and originated with him. Like circumcision and Sabbath-keeping, it was made a part of the Mosaic rituals; but it originated under grace and was observed by Abraham and Jacob [Gen.14:20 and Gen.28:22]. Doubtless, Abraham passed this practice on to his son Isaac, and Isaac on to Jacob. Sabbath-keeping, circumcision, and tithing were not marks of legality, but expressions of faith in God's wondrous grace.

- The 1<sup>st</sup> (Sabbath-keeping) pointed to the rest of soul, which the Gospel brings to believers, as well as to the 1,000 years rest from the oppression of the nations, which Israel will enjoy.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup>, (circumcision) figured the death of the old creation, wrought by Christ's death in our stead, the necessary basis for us to enjoy life, freedom and victory in Christ.
- And the 3<sup>rd</sup> (tithing) is a glorious privilege and a means of expressing our devotion, to God and our gratitude to Him for His unspeakable Gift and gifts to us.

The first 2 were shadows; the last is not in any sense a shadow. Saints should blush to speak of it as a hard, cold duty and law, considering that the Lord has freely given all things to us. What have we that we have not received from Him? By giving the 10<sup>th</sup>, we only return to God what belongs to Him.

Some folk object to the phrase "payed tithes," saying that we are not under The Law, but under grace. The Greek word in Hebrews 7:9, rendered "*payed*" is derived from **DEKATEUO** which means "*to exact the tenth, to tithe.*" The practice of tithing among God's people must have impressed the nations deeply; for the Greeks took a 10<sup>th</sup> of the booty as an offering to the gods for the victory won in battle. By giving a 10<sup>th</sup> of the spoil to Melchisedec, Abraham expressed his gratitude to God for the victory gained in recovering Lot and all that was taken. Not because Israel was under law, but because they rejected His grace, did God speak to them through Malachi 3:8-9, saying, "*Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a cursed: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*"

Now, if Abraham gave tithes, and the Holy Spirit reckons that Levi *payed* tithes in Abraham; if the heathen honor their gods by exacting the 10<sup>th</sup> for them; and if the Lord regarded withholding the 10<sup>th</sup> robbery in Israel, what shall God think of His people under marvelous grace if they withhold from Him what belongs to Him?

- If the 10<sup>th</sup> belonged to God in Abraham's day and in Moses' day, does it not still belong to Him?
- If refusing to give, or pay it was robbery then, is it less than robbery now?

- And why quibble about the word “*payed?*” Is that not rather childish? That is a scriptural term.
- And oh, think of God’s super-abounding grace in giving us richly all things to enjoy.

Some pastors oppose tithing, or belittle it to their own hurt. They also do their flocks an injustice by so doing. They rob them of a highly honored present privilege and of a great future reward. As truly as there was provision in God’s house in overflowing abundance in Israel’s day, so there is now, where the saints “*bring all the tithes into the storehouse,*” and do not spend them on their own backs or pay the running expenses of their missions therewith.

6. Melchisedec was “*made like unto the Son of God*” [Heb.7:3]. This alone proves that he is not the Christ, but a priest by Divine Sovereign Appointment for that time. His pedigree and genealogy are hidden for a wise Divine Purpose.

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### THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

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Let us look at the contrasts of the priesthood of Jesus Christ with that of Aaron, and compare it with that of Melchisedec.

1. The Aaronic priesthood was subject to change [Heb.9:12]. It passed from father to son [Heb.9:23]. But Christ’s priesthood is unchangeable, like that of Melchisedec.
2. Aaron’s priesthood was after the flesh, not in a bad sense; but Christ’s was spiritual, “*after the power of an endless life*” [Heb.9:16].
3. Aaron’s priesthood was limited to 20 years, from age 30 to 50. But Christ is “*a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec*” [Heb.9:17].
4. Aaron’s priesthood was imperfect, because of the “*weakness and unprofitableness thereof*”; the priest being cumbered with infirmity [Heb.7:18, 28].
5. Aaron’s office was without an oath; but Christ’s was oath confirmed and eternal [Heb.9:21].
6. Aaron was succeeded by others; but Jesus will never have any high priestly successors...He continueth ever [Heb.9:23-24].
7. Aaron was sinful in himself and had to make atonement for himself; but Jesus had no sin in Him, being “*holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*” [Heb.9:26-27]. Christ had sin on himself, when He offered Himself once for the sins of Aaron and all the people. “*God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” [Rom.5:8].

## THE UTTERMOST SALVATION

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*"Wherefore, He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." [Heb.9:35]*

This is the greatest verse of the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter. The expletive "*wherefore*," refers to the 7 afore-mentioned invincible facts as 7 strong pillars that hold it high for everyone's adequate comfort and assurance. They indicate the possibilities, the depth, the height, the length, the breadth, and the contents of God's salvation.

The phrase, "*to the uttermost*," is the attractive and supreme thought of the verse. The Greek phrase "EIS TO PANTELES" means "*all-completely, absolutely, all-entirely, into perpetuity, straight through to the end, forevermore*." In view of the Divine Provision as the background, this "*uttermost*" salvation can scarcely be exaggerated. Most people minify and belittle it. They attach to it unreasonable and unscriptural limitations which rob the death and resurrection of Christ of their accomplishments and of their purpose. They forget that He ever lives to make intercession for them. They darken counsel and dim men's vision of their blood-bought privileges in Christ. They excite doubt, unbelief, and infidelity instead of faith, confidence, and assurance. When once we have a Spirit-illuminated vision of the superlative salvation that Christ purchased and now offers to humanity, we struggle for words to express what we see. Our tongues cannot tell what our little hearts feel. We would paint the most brilliant picture, in the most dazzling colors, of the most charming character, graced with the most exquisite jewels of entrancing beauty and loveliness...patience and forbearance...changed from **GLORY** to **GLORY** while beholding the face of our adorable Savior. In this "*uttermost*" salvation, the Lord is able "*to do exceeding abundantly above ALL that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us*" [Eph.3:20]. The thoughts of most people about salvation are very narrow, poor, few and small; and they ask far less than they think. Many even who have the Holy Spirit are tied up, dried up, tongue-tied, speechless, motionless, useless, forlorn, and barely alive.

Oh for a dauntless, reckless stampede into the boundless ocean of the possibilities of this "*uttermost*" salvation. The utmost outreach and up-reach is now "*filled into all the fullness of God*" [Eph.3:19] and fashioned like unto the glorious Savior Himself in the ages to come. Let us drink deep draughts from this inexhaustible fountain. Let us learn to drink continually...

- Drink of Christ for strength when fainting in spirit.
- Drink His courage when daunted.
- Drink of His health when infirm in body.
- Drink patience from Him when everything is in a whirl.
- Drink of His ferocity when Satan withstands you in battle.
- Drink abundantly of the faith of God when unbelief in others would blanket you.

Let others sip with a teaspoon; we will drink with an old-fashioned gourd dipper. Jesus said with power, "*Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood,*

*hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”* Reader, do you believe that? More. *“He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him.”* And, do you believe that? We eat by believing God’s Word. We drink by believing. Still more, *“As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.”* Believe it and rejoice. Rejoice and grow fat. Then our Lord explains, *“It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you are spirit and life”* [Joh.6:56-57, 63]. If we believe His words; if we believe the record of God’s Son, we are eating and drinking of the power of His death and resurrection. Thus, by faith we eat and drink Him and live by Him as He lived by the Father.

Our whole being is vivified by Divine Power. *“And the very God of the peace sanctify you wholly; and your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Then, as a stimulant, Paul adds, *“Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it”* [1Th.5:23-24]. An Evangelical bishop said to me, Bro. Copley, you believe too much.” Forty-six years have rolled over my head since that day; but I have no regrets for believing as much as I did. Rather, I am ashamed of having believed so little in comparison with the boundless possibilities of faith. I am taking Christ to reign in me unto the utmost bounds of the possibilities of faith, love, and hope according to the power of the Spirit of God. I long to scale the uttermost heights of the power of the Holy Spirit in a fully surrendered life, as the Lord showed me 46 years ago. Will you join me in the stretch of enjoying this all-complete, superlatively entire, absolutely perfect, unceasingly perpetual salvation here and now? Shall we enter into God’s perfect will and *“Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks”* [1Th.5:16-18]? Jesus said, *“He that eateth me, even he shall live by me; he that eateth this Bread (Himself) shall live forever”* [Joh.6:57-58].

When a boy, I learned to make “a hop, step, and jump.” The hop prepared for the step; the accelerated step assured me of the longest possible leap. Just so, a vigorous hop of a sustained surrender to God’s will is a mighty booster for an invincible step of all-conquering faith in this life. This accelerated step of persistent faith in the faithful Jehovah assures us of a triumphant leap far into the everlasting habitations on high where we will explore and enjoy with unlimited delight the unfathomable riches of Divine Grace. This life is the preparation for the next. A slow, indifferent, easy-going career on earth will barely land one inside the pearly gates. But an abundant, untiring, faithful career on earth will be crowned with “an abundant entrance into glory.”

### DIV.3, THE NEW COVENANT SET OVER AGAINST THE OLD COVENANT [HEB.8-9]

#### HEBREWS 8

*“Now to sum up (literally, to sum up under one head) what we are saying, We have such a High Priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.”* [Heb.8:1-2 RV]

Brother Paul always emphasized the ordained place of Jesus Christ, especially in writing to the Jews. He begins this chapter by setting Him forth as the Head of all things under the new covenant. Ephesians 1:10 says, “*That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, He (God) might gather together in one (literally sum up under one head) all things in Christ.*” As High Priest, He is the Head. The importance of His priesthood is expressed here by naming 7 salient facts.

1. He is “*set on the right hand*” of God’s throne [Heb.8:1]. He does not operate from the earth, as did Aaron and his successors, but from heaven, in close fellowship and counsel with the Father, who is “*the Majesty in the heavens.*”
2. He is “*a minister of the (true) sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle*” [Heb.8:2]. The Greek order of the words of Verse 2 indicates that the word “*true*” modifies both “*sanctuary*” and “*tabernacle.*” The Mosaic structure was only a shadow, not the real one. The original word here rendered **minister** is not the usual one for deacon (servant); but it is a stronger word. It means “*to minister publicly at one’s own expense, to serve as priest.*” Jesus Christ has all the wisdom, might, and skill in Himself to minister as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary and tabernacle; hence, His ministry is absolutely sufficient and effective. In Hebrews 7:25, we read that “*He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*”
3. He ministers not according to Moses’ law, but according to unlimited grace [Heb.8:4].
4. His is “*a more excellent ministry.*” It is unlike any other. It is superior to all others. It carries through, goes beyond, knows no bounds, fails never.
5. He is the Mediator of a better covenant, an eternal one.
6. The covenant was established on better promises, even of grace.
7. A new covenant—written in the mind and on the heart [Heb.8:10-11]. The first covenant was typical, temporary, and faulty. It could not satisfy the conscience, or change the heart. The old covenant is described in Hebrews 9 as being material and earthly, and not spiritual and heavenly. Its sanctuary was on earth. The tabernacle was made by human hands. The candlestick, table, and shewbread were all natural, earthly, and perishable things; being only types (shadows) of supernatural, heavenly, eternal, and imperishable realities. They all represented Christ in certain particulars.

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## HEBREWS 9

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*“And above it (the ark of the covenant) cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat; of which things we cannot now speak severally (only in part).” [Heb.9:5 RV]*

The “*cherubim*” figure the highest grade (rank) of believers in The Church. Because the apostle was writing to Hebrew Christians, who were still babes



in Christ, being, more or less, occupied with the types and shadows, it was not time for him to speak to them in detail concerning the cherubim. They could not appreciate the truth about full overcomers. Ezekiel describes them in the first chapter of his prophecy. In Revelation 4 and 5 they are called “*the beasts*,” or more correctly, as in Ezekiel 1, “*the living ones* (creatures)”.

“*The holiest of all*,” the most holy place [Heb.9:3], is a figure of heaven where Christ now is. The high priest went into the holy place only once a year, which figured Christ’s ascension into heaven in our behalf. He alone could come into the presence of God; but now, since Jesus has gone into heaven with the efficacy of His sacrificial death, all who believe have unhindered access into God’s presence (see Heb.4:16). “*By His own blood* (that is, by the fact that He purchased our salvation by pouring out His blood), *He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us*” [Heb.9:12]. He did not literally take His blood to heaven with Him, as some foolishly suppose.

Let us tabulate the 7 results of redemption; 6 being named here in Chapter 9 and the 7<sup>th</sup> in Chapter 13.

1. Christ’s redemption is eternal [Heb.9:12]. He atoned once for our sins. The typical high priest had to make atonement once every year.
2. He opened heaven for man, and it will never be closed except to unbelief and rebellion [Heb.9:8-12].
3. Christ being a perfect man rendered a perfect service in offering Himself as a sacrifice to God [Heb.9:13].
4. His redemption purged the conscience from dead works [Heb.9:14]. Those typical sacrifices were indeed dead works; that is, they had no redeeming power. They could not take away sins. Hence, the consciousness of sin never left the offerers, except in certain cases, like David; instead, by the illumination of the Spirit, they looked beyond the type to the anti-type, Jesus Christ.
5. Christ became the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of His sacrificial death [Heb.9:15]. His intercession is perfect, sufficient, and without cessation (end). He said, “*Because I live, ye shall live also.*”
6. Now, believers have the promise of an eternal inheritance [Heb.9:15].
7. Everlasting (eternal) covenant [Heb.13:20].

These 7’s are not accidental, but wonderful. They speak of the Divine and Eternal Perfection of God’s plan of salvation.

This 9<sup>th</sup> chapter culminates with the 3 appearings and 3 appointments of Jesus.

### THE 3 APPEARINGS OF JESUS

**[1]**: Once in the consummation of the ages, He appeared (was manifested) to “*put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*” [Heb.9:26]. Reader, do you believe that

He put sin away? Why then should it have any more power over us? (See Romans 6:14.) He put it away “**ONCE**.” He was not all His earthly career putting it away. He did it once by His death on the cross (see also Heb.9:28 and Rom.5:6, 8, 10).

**[2]**: He is now appearing in the presence of God for us [Heb.9:24] (see also Heb.7:25 and 1Jo.2:1).

**[3]**: Unto them that look for Him, He shall appear the 2<sup>nd</sup> time [Heb.9:28]. He came once and redeemed us for Himself. He is coming again to bring us unto Himself. He is coming for those who look for Him. Reader, are you looking for Jesus to return? Are you expecting Him soon? The signs of His imminent coming are many and powerful. Therefore, we read also of 3 appointments.

### THE 3 APPOINTMENTS OF JESUS

**[1]**: “*It is appointed unto men once to die*” [Heb.9:27]. Those only escape death who accepts the meritorious death of Christ in their behalf.

**[2]**: All men are appointed for judgment. Happy and safe are all those who have accepted the judgment that fell upon Christ in our stead. They shall not come into judgment [Joh.5:24]. They have passed out of death into life.

**[3]**: It is appointed unto believers to meet the Lord when He comes. The Church will meet Him in the air [1Th.4:17]. The Jews will meet Him on earth. The Church will be gathered to the heavenly Jerusalem, and Israel to Jerusalem in Palestine [Isa.25].

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### AN UNREASONABLE VIEW

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Some say that Jesus Christ is not High Priest to Gentile Christians. Their argument is that Jesus is not called High Priest in any Epistle except the Hebrews. That is no proof. Opposers to Divine Healing use the same argument. They say that healing is not taught in any of them; therefore, they say it is not scriptural.

The birth of Christ is not mentioned in Mark’s and John’s Gospel. Does that prove that they did not teach His humanity? No chairs in the kitchen and pantry are not proof that there are none in the house. Each book of the Bible was written for a distinct purpose with a distinct message. It was not necessary for every book to teach everything. According to the critic’s argument, we might insist that The Acts of the Apostles deprive the Hebrews of the right to the high priesthood of Christ, because the first 12 chapters record God’s dealings with Israel but no mention is made of His priesthood. Therefore, it was necessary that the Book of Hebrews be written to explain to Israel the spiritual meaning of the sacrifices, the offerings, and the furniture of Moses’ tabernacle. The high priesthood of Jesus Christ is the very foundation of redemption. Consider the following:

1. Observe that Christ was “*called an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec*” and not after the order of Aaron. This fact is expressed 4 times. Had

it been Aaronic, it would have been no better than that of Aaron. Therefore, His priesthood was not instituted for Israel alone. It was in the purpose of God before Israel had an existence. Based upon this fact we read, “*And being made perfect, he (as High Priest) became the Author of eternal salvation unto ALL THEM (not Hebrews only) that obey Him*” [Heb.5:9-10 with Heb.7:11]. Melchisedec was “*the priest of the Most High God, even the God of Abraham,*” not the Most High God of Israel.

2. Observe the offices (activities) of a high priest. “*Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices, wherefore it is of necessity that THIS MAN have somewhat also to offer*” [Heb.8:3]. Aaron could not offer himself, he had to offer the flesh and blood of animals and birds; but, Christ offered Himself, which was the beginning of His priestly ministry. Through the suffering of death by the grace of God, He tasted “*death for every man (not for Jews alone)*” [Heb.2:9].
3. Note more about His high priestly ministry. He became “*a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation (propitiation) for the sins of the people*” [Heb.2:17]. The identical Greek word here rendered “*reconciliation*” is translated “*propitiation*” in Romans 3:25 (which signifies to be gracious by means of atonement). Was His reconciliation (propitiation) for the Hebrews only? Let John answer. “*And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours (the saints) only, but also for the WHOLE WORLD*” [1Jo.2:2]. That was the basic phase, or fact of His high priesthood. “*For if, when we (Gentiles as well as Jews) were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life*” [Rom.5:10]. This was written to Gentiles and it agrees with Jesus’ own words: “*Because I live, ye shall live also*” [Joh.14:19]. Are not all these statements expressive of various phases of Christ’s high priestly service? What part dare any one apply to Hebrew Christians only? What part is kept from the participation and enjoyment of Gentile believers? What part is not a high priestly activity?

Jesus Christ possesses 3 offices: Prophet, Priest, and King. He finished His prophetic ministry just before He ascended on high, having begun His priestly service on the cross. His kingly office has not yet begun. Under which of the 3 titles does He now carry on? Under His priestly title of course. “*But this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them*” [Heb.7:24-25]. Who dare rise up and limit “*them*” to the Hebrews? If He is the propitiatory (Mercy seat) for the sins of the whole world, is He not also the necessary Intercessor for all believers—Gentiles as well as Jews? “*And for this cause (because He offered Himself without spot to God), He is the Mediator of the new testament (covenant)*” [Heb.9:14-15]. One says, “Oh was that not for the Hebrews only?” Emphatically **No**, for God “*will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the Truth; for there is one God and one Mediator between God and men (not Jews only), the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for ALL, to be testified in due time, whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ. and lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity*” [1Ti.2:4-7].

It follows then absolutely, that as the Mediator, Christ offered Himself a ransom for all men. As High Priest, He is the Propitiation for the sins of all men. As High Priest, he died in our stead and tasted death for every man. Now, being made High Priest forever, and as such having divorced us from our sins and reconciled all of us to God by His death, He perpetuates His priesthood by interceding in behalf of **ALL** believers. The following was written to Gentile believers, but Hebrew believers are not excluded:

*“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us (Gentiles) **ALL things**,” even His high priestly service? “It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for **Us**” [Rom.8:32-34]. Not as the Prophet, not as the coming King, but absolutely as the High Priest of the Abrahamic covenant, He carries on during this Church Age in behalf of The Church. Remember that Jesus said, “*Because I live, ye shall live also*” [Joh.14:19]. And He must live as our High Priest, being made priest “*after the power of an endless life*” [Heb.7:16]. If Christ is not our High Priest, then we have not as much as Israel had in Aaron. If we have no high priest, we have no salvation; for there is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood, and only a priest could offer sacrifices and shed sacrificial blood. Therefore Jesus Christ, as High Priest, had to offer Himself a ransom for all, and now He has to keep, by His own intercession, all them that believe.*

Note the importance of **TITHING** in connection with Christ's relation to Melchisedec. “*And here (under law) men (like Aaron) that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth*” [Heb.7:8]. If it was proper and divine then for Abraham to give tithes to “*the king of Salem, priest of the Most High God*,” whose priesthood came to an end, how much more important it must be to give tithes today to our High Priest through His representatives?

#### **DIV.4, THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST VS. THE TYPICAL SACRIFICES [HEB. 10]**

*“For the Law having a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.” [Heb.10:1]*

This unique portion is full of meat. Herein we find the title of our book stated. The Law holds only a shadow. Grace has provided the substance [Heb.10:34].

It is interesting to note the “**NEVERS**”, “**NO MORES**” and “**NOTS**” in this chapter. They are striking.

Observe also an instructive word study on 3 **B's**: The **Book** [Heb.10:7]; the **Body** [Heb.10:5], and the **Blood** [Heb.10:19, 29].

The chapter falls nicely into 5 parts: The Shadow, The Substance, Earnest Exhortations, Solemn Warning, and Gracious Consolation.

**1, THE SHADOW, OR LAW** [Heb.10:1-6]. The shadow had no life, nor strength [Heb.7:18]. It made no one perfect. It could not remove the consciousness of sin. The Law condemned sinners; but it could not save them. The blood of animals did not redeem mankind; it was only a type (shadow) of the blood of the Holy One who was to come. Therefore, the Day of Atonement came every year (compare Heb.10:3 with Lev.16, especially Lev.16:29). God had no pleasure in typical sacrifices and offerings, because they were only shadows. Hence, it was a grief to Him that any of the first disciples should continue to offer them after Christ had fulfilled them in His death and resurrection (compare *Heb.5:12-14* and Heb.6:1).

The pictures on a blackboard, made by a kindergarten teacher, are not real apples, or peaches. They cannot be eaten. They only remind the children of, or point them to the actual. The pictures are not intended to be kept and adored. Neither were the pictures of the Old Covenant to be preserved and worshipped. Having fulfilled their shadowy purpose, they were to be discarded [Eph.2:14-15 and Col.2:14-17]. *"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the sun"* [Ecc.3:1].

**2, THE SUBSTANCE (GRACE)** [Heb.10:7-21]. Grace brought the all-sufficient One, foretold *"in the volume of the book."* He became the real offering, the effective sacrifice. God took away the shadow that He might establish the substance. It was His sovereign will that His immaculate Son should be offered up as the bearer of man's sins. Many people do not understand Matthew 16:21 that Jesus *"must be killed and be raised again the third day"* (see also Mar.8:31 and Luk.24:6-7). Yes, that was the sovereign *"must"* of Divine Wisdom. Mankind could not be redeemed and saved by any easier means than the perfect sacrifice of the sinless Son of God. Therefore the Apostle declares, *"By the which will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once"* [Heb.10:10]. The death of Christ set us apart, designedly and provisionally, from the world unto God. When believers see this fact, it strengthens their faith in eternal life. Read with this John 6:37-40 and rejoice.

Note that Christ was offered only once (see also Heb.9:28). All His life, He was not dying to redeem us, nor all the 3 years of His public life, which was His prophetic career. His priestly ministry began with His death on Calvary in sinful man's behalf and is continued by His effectual intercession on high for believers now. The typical sacrifices had to be offered again and again.

Furthermore, *"By one offering, He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified?"* [Heb.10:14]. Men have always been striving after perfection, but by their own efforts. What a joy to see what most Christians have not seen; that all who believe have been already made perfect provisionally in God's wise plan. This means that He purposes to bring us unto perfection (full growth) in experience. The original word **DIENEKES** translated *"forever"* in Hebrews 10:12, 14 is not the same phrase usually thus rendered. This word means *"stretching evenly along, the whole length, unbroken, uninterrupted, from beginning to end, clearly, distinctly."* Marvelous indeed! By the death of Christ, God has perfected us clearly, distinctly, from beginning to the end (compare Phi.3:12-15). To these facts, the Holy Spirit witnesses by citing Jeremiah 31:33-34 to the Apostle.

In the New Testament, the new birth (new creation) is expressed in the Old Testament by putting The Law (will of God) into the heart and mind...even inscribed into the mind. God makes believers to know and love Him and understand themselves. Because God continually remembers the sacrifice of His Son, the 1 thing God forgets is our sins and iniquities. He accepts us in His Beloved [Eph.1:6]. Mark the next verse

*"Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." [Heb.10:18]*

The shadows, or typical sacrifices, have no longer any value even as shadows; hence, they must be discarded. Neither will another man come and offer himself for the sins of the people; nor will Christ offer Himself again (see also Heb.10:26-29). God's redemptive plan is "*a new and living way* or a way newly made and living [Heb.10:20]. It is always new in distinction from the "*dead works*" of symbols and types.

The anti-typical holy place in heaven has been opened for man by the sinless blood of Jesus; therefore, we have boldness to enter where man could never come before Calvary's great day. Even Enoch and Elijah never reached the throne before Christ's death [Joh.1:18 and Joh.3:13]. But now we may believe Hebrews 4:16 most vigorously. Esther went into the presence of king Ahasuerus with trembling, though she was the Queen [Est.4:16]; but we have unbounded liberty to enter God's holy presence, because He sits on "*a throne of grace*." Consult 2 Corinthians 3:17. We enter by the blood-sprinkled way, the rent-veil way, where we meet "*the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort*" [2Co.1:3].

*"And having an High Priest over the house of God." [Heb.10:21]*

This truth was fully discussed in former chapters; but the Holy Spirit will never allow us to forget it. All the beautiful and glorious things in this book are recorded of Jesus Christ as High Priest. We see Him here constantly in this sublime capacity (office). He was introduced as such early [Heb.2:17], "*merciful and faithful*." My own heart never forgets Hebrews 7:25. Of the numerous encouragements for our bold approach into God's presence, this is the last one named. It is the final leverage for the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of this chapter.

**3, EARNEST EXHORTATIONS** [Heb.10:22-25]. Note the 3 juicy, stimulating stems of "*Let us*." They spring up frequently in this Epistle, because Paul, being himself a Jew, put himself into the activities and attitudes which he enjoined upon his friends. We ministers must learn a valuable lesson from him in this respect. Some brethren are often clumsy and rude in their addresses to others. Their exhortations are blunt and tend to cause a jolt in their discourse. If we study the Apostle's diction, we will discover with what adroitness and smoothness he spoke and wrote, by which he captured and won men's hearts. Our commands should not jar on the auditor's ears; they should entice them.

- "**LET US draw near with a true heart.**" That is the way I come to God, Paul says, "Come with me." Let us be honest in our praying, not wordy, not make-believe, nor hypocritical. Come "*in full assurance of faith*." Careful, prolonged meditation on this and other Scriptures will induce full assurance. Let the Word soak in deeply. Of course only a

blood-sprinkled conscience; a conscience purified by faith in the atoning death of Christ, can come boldly into God's presence. First of all, men must be born again and have their sins forgiven.

The phrase, "*our bodies washed* (Greek: *LAVED*) *with pure water*," is a figurative expression of the new birth. Compare "*the washing* (laver) *of regeneration*" [Tiu.3:5, Eph.5:26]. The Apostle referred His Jewish friends to Exodus 40:12 and Leviticus 8:6 as symbolic of the new birth. They would understand the spiritual substance by the literal or visible shadow. (See our pamphlet on "*The New Birth*.") Simple faith in the Redeemer always obtains a warm welcome into Jehovah's presence and heart.

- "**LET US** *hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering*" [Heb.10:23]. The Revised Version says, "*let us hold fast the confession of our hope* (Greek: *ELPIDOS*), *that it waver not*." Faith is expressed in the preceding verse; it is only hope, and hope crowns faith with triumph. Both faith and hope become fixed and established by confession. We thus put ourselves on record as laying hold of the Truth. God who promised is faithful; hence, we should declare our faith and hope in His Word. This leads naturally to the next "**LET**."
- "*And LET US consider one another to provoke unto love and good works*." Faith and hope, inwrought by the Spirit and Word of God, are not selfish but we may be thoughtless at times; hence, the exhortation. Some provocations are prohibited, being destructive; but there is no harm in provoking to love and good works. These are very constructive. They put down strife and make for peace. Love is the fulfilling of The Law. Love is the reigning power in the new creation. There is no law against it. Love is the only rule of action under the New Covenant. Love worketh no ill to its neighbor. Even the faith of God worketh by love; and love gives birth to good works. Love proves itself by good works. Is there a more beautiful "**LET US**" stem than this?

Associated herewith is the following timely entreaty: "*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some*." The severe persecution of those early days frightened and discouraged many of the Jews; hence, they stayed away from public worship. For that very reason, they should gather together and encourage one another. One peach tree cannot stand the storm like a whole orchard of them. Jesus has vouched (guaranteed) His presence where "*two or three are gathered together in my name*" [Mat.18:20]. But be sure that the meeting is really in His name and for His glory, and not from any selfish or sectarian motive. The Holy Spirit is the Gatherer in such instances; for it is in view of the near-coming of the day of the Lord. Note how every chapter of Thessalonians ends with Christ's Advent. Nothing purifies our Christian activities like the hope of Jesus' coming [1Jo.3:1-3].

**4, SOLEMN WARNING** [Heb.10:26-31]. This warning is not to saved people; but to enlightened folk who reject God's salvation, provided through the death and resurrection of Christ. Saved people, though they may fail God, never tread the Son of God under their feet, nor count the blood of Christ an unholy thing [Heb.10:29]. All men have been sanctified provisionally by Christ's death

(see Heb.10:10); but some reject that Divine Provision, as did the Jews, who thus insulted the Spirit of grace. They sinned willfully; that is, they turned away from clear light and powerful Holy Ghost conviction. They were made to know that Jesus Christ was God's Son, whom He sent to redeem and save them; but they deliberately, willfully walked away from "*the Light of the world*" [Joh.8:12]. They looked for another one to come and offer himself up as a sacrifice for sins; therefore, Paul said, "*There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins*" [Heb.10:26]. The scathing threats of judgment and fiery indignation and the sore punishment and vengeance mentioned here are for "*adversaries*" of Christ and His redemption. It is exceedingly unworthy of the love and mercy of the God of grace to ascribe them to saved folk, who lose out and backslide. The Apostle quoted Deuteronomy 32:35, in which we learn God's wrath expressed against His professed people the Jews. They had provoked Him by their unbelief and rebellion, just as they did in the time of Christ and of the early church. Similar doom awaits Christendom today, because she is apostatizing. But the judgment of God will not fall upon those who are actually born again; although some may be chastised for disobedience. If they do not judge themselves, they may be condemned with the world and, to that extent, be hurt of the 2<sup>nd</sup> death but never see the lake of fire. The Christ-rejecters, not backsliders, "*die without mercy.*" Indeed, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- When King David unwisely numbered Israel and learned his grave mistake, he exclaimed, "*I am in a great strait. Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for His mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man*" [2Sa.24:14].
- Jonah expresses the spirit of legality, which would consign to hell every one whom they imagine has failed the Lord. He was displeased exceedingly and very angry because God spared Nineveh when she repented in sackcloth and ashes. He justified his disobedience by claiming to know that God was gracious, merciful and slow to anger and of great kindness. But the Lord says, "*I will render vengeance to my enemies and will reward them that hate me*" [Deu.32:41].

**5, GRACIOUS CONSOLATION** [Heb.10:32-39]. These 8 verses comprise 3 striking facts: A ❶ looking backward, a ❷ looking forward, and ❸ the walk of the just. Paul reminds his Jewish brethren of the persecutions and hardships they suffered when the Holy Spirit was poured out at Jerusalem. He remembers their kindness to him during his 2 years' imprisonment in Caesarea [Act.24:23-27]. For taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, they should receive a better portion and an enduring substance in heaven. Spiritual possessions never fade away and never end. They abide forever. Our kind, heavenly Father also looks back, and as a remuneration for our sufferings and toil He is preparing a future. Therefore, Paul exclaims,

*"Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."*  
[Heb.10:35]

Although blindness has happened in part to Israel for the past 19 centuries, God will not forget His promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets. He says to those who really believe, "*Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise*" [Heb.10:36]; that is the return and revelation of the Son of God from heaven and their restoration to the land of



Canaan. Hebrews 10:37 is a quotation from Habakkuk 2, where a unique vision is recorded, which the Apostle interprets as referring directly to Christ. He is the essential feature of the vision. It will be fulfilled by His coming.

The phrase, *"for yet a little while"* is 2 dispensational days long (compare Hos.6:2 with 2Pe.3:8). Because Israel, as a nation, rejected Christ, the church period, as an unforeseen epoch, has come in. But now, that The Church is about complete and the Gentile Times are about fulfilled, very soon, *"He that shall come will come and will not tarry"* [Heb.10:37]. The prophet said, *"The vision is for an appointed time; but at the end, it shall speak (it hasteth and panteth toward the end), and not lie. Though it tarry (for 2,520 years), wait for it; because it will surely come; it will not tarry, or delay"* [Hab.2:3]. This is also for our comfort; for our Bridegroom must come for us before He can come as King to the Jews. This is sovereign grace. Let us believe it and receive it and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. *"Now the just shall live by faith"* [Heb.10:38]. There is scarcely a more comprehensive statement in the entire Bible than this. A minor prophet uttered it first in Habakkuk 2:4. Then Paul, who grasped its deep and full meaning, quoted it 3 times. It crowns the doorway of his illimitable treatise on the Exodus of the sons of God [Rom.1:17]. It slaps legality in the face in Galatians 3:11, and hushes its cold, stern voice forever. Finally, it graces Israel's exist from this age to the next, and our exit from earth to heaven. Hallelujah! Living by faith does not mean only that preachers should live without a stipulated salary; it means that all saved folk should live as they began to live, i.e., by faith in God and His Word.

*"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"* [Deu.8:3 and Mat.4:4]. Our entire career should be one of simple trust in the Lord, not only for spiritual things, but equally for material things. They who live by faith are not so likely to be cumbered with "excess baggage." Multiplied troubles and tangles will be missed. When gazing one day into an Oregon sky, the Holy Spirit flashed over my thirsty spirit the meaning and content of this verse, which I have since been experiencing with exquisite delight and unbounded profit. By grace through faith I was saved. By grace through faith I now live. By grace through faith I shall be translated. *"But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him"* [Heb.10:38].

In at least 2 other places, we read that God has a soul [Jdg.10:16 and Job 23:13]. It speaks of life. Paul does not here speak of drawing back from an actual experience of salvation, but from light (conviction), as Verses 26-31 clearly prove. He says. *"We are not of them who draw back unto perdition."* We who are saved are of another company altogether. *"We believe to the saving of the soul"* [Heb.10:39]. We do not stop with an intellectual assent that Christ died for sinners. We do not simply take a stand for Christ; but we believe with the heart that Christ died for us. Yes, more. I bring it right home to myself. I am the sinner who needs a Savior, and I believe that Jesus died for me and that He is the only one who can save me.

I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ died for my sins and was buried and that He was raised for my justification. This point needs to be emphasized; for the modern converting machine that induces men to take a stand for Christ, as one nation would persuade others by argument to take a stand for its own, is misleading and disappointing. God does not save sinners by military tactics, but by faith in the atoning blood of Christ. Observe

that under the old covenant how invariably forgiveness was presaged by sacrifices and offerings. The typical way to God was a blood-sprinkled way. And so it is today. Let us never get away from Romans 5:6-11, which safeguards against shallow conversions.

We conclude with Romans 10:8-13:

*"But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

#### WHEREVER HE SENDS

THE PEOPLE IN AMERICA,  
THEIR HEARTS ARE HARDENING.  
THEY LIVE AND DIE INDIFFERENT;  
TO CHRIST ARE HARD TO BRING.

THEN LET ME GO TO AFRICA,  
OR TO THE HINDUS PREACH.  
THY WAYS, O LORD, THEY LONG TO KNOW.  
THY WAYS TO THEM I'LL TEACH.

OR SEND ME TO SOME OTHER LAND  
WHERE HUNGRY HEATHEN LIVE.  
MY HEART IS YEARNING SOULS TO SAVE.  
FOR THIS, MY LIFE I GIVE.

O, HEAR ME, MASTER. HERE AM I!  
SEND ME TO ANY CLIME;  
BUT HELP ME DO THY GRACIOUS WILL  
AND LIVE A LIFE SUBLIME.

THEN WHEN THY SHEEP ARE GATHERED HOME  
FROM EAST AND SOUTH AND WEST,  
MY TOIL-WORN FRAME, BUT THEN RENEWED,  
SHALL HAVE UNENDING REST.

Written over 35 years ago, and now being answered through our literature.

### DIV.5, THE CLOUD OF OLD TESTAMENT WITNESSES [HEB. 11]

*"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."  
[Heb.11:1]*

The great place, power, and fruitage of faith are set forth in this chapter. The faith of God made the promised future things so real to the Old Testament saints that it was substance to them, as if they were enjoying those future blessings. Faith was the only evidence that they should possess them some

time; but it was sufficient. Faith was the root of their blessings, and their conduct was the fruit of their faith. This is therefore a marvelous portion on faith.

*"For by it, the elders ("men of old" RV) obtained a good report." [Heb.11:2]*

That was the chief thing they received, a good report of what they accomplished through faith. Sixteen elders are expressly named in this chapter. We call them the worthies of faith in the hall of fame. Sarah and Rahab are also included in the number. Each of these 16 personages stands for a certain pronounced fundamental truth, which makes the chapter exceedingly precious and valuable; indeed, indispensable. Abel and Enoch extend typically from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advents of Christ, from the cross to the crown. These 16 personages cover a period of 3,000 years:

- From Abel to Enoch is approximately 1,000 years.
- From Enoch to Abraham is another 1,000 years.
- From Abraham to Samuel is still another 1,000 years.

Abel is the first mentioned and Samuel is the last. Abel reminds us of Christ as the only real sacrifice. Samuel typifies Christ as the Prophet whose words never fell to the ground, never failed to be effective. He also typifies Christ as High Priest.

*"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." [Heb.11:3]*

That is no small saying. We can understand God's things, spiritual things, only by faith. If we try to grasp Divine Truth with our heads without faith in the Holy Spirit's illumination, we get nowhere. The Scriptures speak of 7 different mysteries, which cannot be solved by human logic (learning). The Great Teacher must open our minds and open unto us the Word [Luke 24:32, 45]. In Hebrews 1:2, we read that God *"made the worlds,"* or framed the ages, by His Son. Here we read, that by faith *"we understand that the worlds (ages) were framed by the Word of God."* My mother taught me that God made the world out of nothing and I believed her. The modernist claims that created things sprung from an embryo, and man from a monkey. Well, who made the embryo? Who made the monkey? Who created the infinitesimal something from which the world evolved? Thank God! He is the First, and He is the first cause. Men have no faith; and of course, they understand nothing. We believe God's Word, and we have a clear understanding, *"so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."* No, they were made out of nothing. God spoke them into existence by His own powerful Word.

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## THEIR DISTINCTIVE PLACE

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**ABEL, THE TRUE OFFERER** is to the front.

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

Redemption is the basis of God's plan of salvation. Abel stands for redemption at the portals of the Old Testament and of the human race. Two religious lines, represented by Abel and Cain, are set before us in sharp contrast. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord, the results of his own efforts. He headed the line of the religion **OF WORKS** (self-effort). There was no blood in his cabbage and turnips. He refused to admit that he was a sinner and deserved to die, as his parents had taught him. He tried to worship God without bringing a Sin Offering as a necessary basis of worship, and without the forgiveness of his sins. He murdered his brother Abel, which proved that he was a sinner and typically a Christ-rejecter. There is no salvation for anyone of the Cain line. *"Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof; and the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering"* [Gen.4:4]. God paid no regard to Cain and his offering. Abel's offering was a real sacrifice. It foreshadowed Jesus Christ, the only sacrifice that God could accept. By his offering, Abel acknowledged that he was a transgressor by practice and sinful by nature; and, that he deserved to die, which he admitted by slaying a lamb in his own stead. Christ bore his sins. He died in the death of Christ. **BY FAITH** Abel offered, *"by which he obtained witness that he was righteous."* Yes, Abel's faith speaks volumes. All who believe in the atoning death of Christ are in the Abel line and are counted righteous. Christian Science (falsely so-called), Unity, and all kindred cults are in the Cain line; for they deny and decry the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. We cannot be too emphatic in maintaining a clean-cut and pronounced distinction between these 2 lines. They are as different as God and Satan; for God is the Author of the blood atonement and Satan is the author of the bloodless and devilish theory.

#### **ENOCH, THE FULL OVERCOMER**

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

*"By faith Enoch was translated."* In His wondrous plan, God swept across the ages and saw a company of people taken to heaven without dying, of which His Son should be the glorified Head. Therefore, He sovereignly chose to translate Enoch, that he would not see death. He was not translated because he lived better than his righteous contemporaries did, but because he accepted God's offer to thus favor him. He pleased the Lord by his walk of faith and by his persistent hope of being caught up. Search out the 7 facts in Enoch's career here, in Genesis 5, and in Jude 1. Enoch was a full-fledged believer and a prophet. He seemed to see the Bridal Company coming with the Lord.

Verse 6 of this chapter teaches that faith in God's Word is the controlling feature of an overcoming life. No matter how religious and active a person may be, if he does not believe and conform to the Scriptures, God is not pleased with him; *"for whatsoever is not of faith is sin"* [Rom.14:23]. *"The just shall live by faith"* [Heb.10:38].

## **NOAH, A PREACHER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** [2Pet.2:5].

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

Noah agreed with Abel and preached Abel's doctrine of righteousness based upon and springing from sacrifice; because he *"found grace in the eyes of the Lord"* [Gen.6:8]. In Genesis 6:9, *"Noah walked with God"* and learned His perfect will for that day. God made him peer into the future, even as he does all His faithful prophets, and he *"prepared an ark to the saving of his house,"* by which others would have been saved from a watery grave if they had believed his prophetic Word. The animals and birds had more faith than the people, and went into the ark. By his faith, he condemned the world, because the world is filled with unbelief and controlled thereby. Men persecute those who believe God; because they are brought under conviction by the obedient and holy walk of the saints, which is the fruit and proof of faith. Jesus Christ is the Ark of safety from the storm of God's wrath to all who trust in Him. *"Noah was a just man"*; that is, justified, or righteous as to his standing. He was also *"perfect in his generations"* [Gen.6:9]; that is, his state measured up to his standing. Here, Paul says that by faith *"he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith"* which refers to his perfect walk. First, we receive initial righteousness by one act of faith when we turn to God from sin and idolatry; then, we are justified (reckoned righteous). But we also inherit a life of righteousness by walking with God by faith. In the New Testament, this is expressed as inheriting everlasting life (see Mat.19:29, Gal.6:8, and 1Ti.6:12). By faith, a sinner obtains justification and eternal life; and, by a walk of faith, a saved man (a saint) inherits eternal life as a finished product, and finally receives a *"crown of righteousness"* [2Ti.4:8].

## **ABRAHAM, "THE FATHER OF THE FAITHFUL"**

*"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." [Heb.11:8-10]*

Abraham came on the scene about 1,000 years after Enoch. He was a unique character. So many precious things, many phases of doctrine cluster around his career; which would fill a book. His faith as an adventurer, an explorer, is emphasized here. *"He went out, not knowing whither he went,"* but he believed God, and his faith was counted to him for righteousness [Rom.4:2-5]. By faith he obeyed. By faith he sojourned and taught his children the life of faith. He dwelt in a strange country by faith, which his earthly progeny shall yet possess and enjoy, and that doubtless very soon. And, *"he looked."* Four things recorded here bounded Abraham's entire career. But later, as if the Apostle had forgotten, we read that *"by faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac"* [Heb.11:17], which was the expression of perfect faith. He offered his own son, in whom were wrapped the fulfillment of all the promises made to him. If he should slay him, how would God make His Word good? God would have to raise him from the dead, which very thing he actually reckoned

to Abraham in a figure. Likewise, God had faith in His own mysterious and stupendous scheme of redemption. His Son, 2,000 years later, died on a cruel cross, was buried, and raised from the dead so that all the Divine Superstructure of the new creation should be on resurrection ground. Isaac's figurative death and resurrection foreshadowed that great truth; therefore, the Holy Spirit did not let Paul overlook it.

**SARAH, MOTHER OF THE FAITHFUL**, also appears in the hall of fame.

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

By faith in the supernatural, Sarah gave birth to a son. A careful study of these characters shows that the miraculous, the supernatural, the unusual enveloped every one. And, since we are the spiritual offspring of Abraham and Sarah, or of faith and grace, we should expect our God and Father to work wonders for us; for we live by faith and not by sight. Let us, like Sarah, continually judge Him faithful who has promised, then we shall never know depression nor defeat.

Sarah is a figure of the heavenly Jerusalem; for "*Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all*" [Gal.4:26]. God counts us as free as our father and mother, Abraham and Sarah, as free as heaven itself; and we should suffer no one to put us under bondage. Legality glories in its self-righteous uprightness; but let us glory only in the Lord of righteousness, by whom we were born eternally free (read Jer.9:23-24).

*"These all died in faith, not having received the promises." [Heb.11:13]*

This is written of Abraham and Sarah and of Isaac and Jacob. There are 7 significant facts of their faith stated here:

1. They received not the promises of God,
2. they saw them afar off,
3. they were persuaded of them,
4. they embraced them,
5. they confessed their pilgrim life,
6. they thus declared their hope of another heavenly city and country, and
7. they died believing God's promises.

Note the logical gradation of those facts. They not only saw the promises, but they were persuaded of their certainty and value. Nor did they stop there; but they embraced them. That is the only profitable way to read the Bible, or hear it expounded. Only what we embrace really becomes our own. If they declared themselves strangers and pilgrims on earth, because they looked for a better, heavenly land, though far away, how much more should we, who see the heavenly city so very near. According to Hebrews 11:39-40, they must wait for the fulfillment of those promises until they are fulfilled to us also. Oh, how devotedly to our coming Bridegroom we should live.

**ISAAC, "THE LAUGHING SON"**

*"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning the things to come."  
[Heb.11:20]*

**Isaac** means "*laughter*." We must refer to Genesis 27 for an understanding of this statement, which we will consider in studying Hebrews 12:16-17.

#### **JACOB, "THE SUPPLANTER"**

*"By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph."  
[Heb.11:21]*

Observe that Paul does not aim to emphasize the blessings which Isaac and Jacob bestowed; but he emphasized the fact of their faith. This is a faith chapter. The patriarchs were people renowned for their simple faith in God, which is recorded to stimulate us unto unswerving confidence in the Lord. As long as we steadfastly and absolutely trust Him, He overrules our shortcomings; but, He abominates self-righteousness and self-glorying. Men repeatedly shoot at Jacob, even preachers do, parading his crookedness before the public and poking fun at his promise to pay tithes; but the Holy Spirit has recorded him among the worthies of faith in this sublime hall of honor. Even his supplanting of Esau was by faith. Let us not speak lightly of God's men and women. God said, "*Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*" [Psa.105:15]. Men have no ground for saying that Jacob did not keep his promises to pay tithes.

#### **JOSEPH, THE DREAMER AND KING**

*"By faith Joseph when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel and gave commandment concerning his bones." [Heb.11:22]*

Joseph believed God's promise to his great grandfather Abraham and to his grandfather Isaac, and said boldly, "*God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land unto the land which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob*" [Gen.50:24-25]. As a proof of his faith, he requested that his bones be carried up with them from Egypt into Canaan. This suggests at least the resurrection of the bodies of believers. In the Old Testament, Joseph is the fullest and richest type of Jesus Christ. He was indeed an overcomer. No fault is recorded against him anywhere, because no fault could be found in Jesus, his anti-type.

#### **MOSES, THE MEEK**

*"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." [Heb.11:23]*

The parents of Moses believed God and instilled the faith of God into their son's heart. Hence, we read here of 7 things that he did: He ❶refused, ❷chose, ❸esteemed, ❹respected, ❺forsook, ❻endured, and ❼kept. He was indeed a unique character. He was 80 years in Jehovah's training school for 40 years of leadership. God does not do things as quickly as men do them; but He does things correctly and thoroughly. Although Moses had the prospect of being a great man in Egypt, he was so deeply indoctrinated into the Truth, that when he became of age, he refused to be called the son of

Pharaoh's daughter. How it pays to train up our children in the way they should go. The treasures of Egypt loomed high before him, over which he had to get a great victory. But he looked beyond, "*esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches*" [Heb.11:26] than the fading riches of this world; "*for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*" The hope of a future remuneration made it easy for him to suffer affliction with the people of God. This explains why people are unwilling to suffer affliction and reproach. They do not believe in, or have respect for, God's promise of a reward. Future things are not real to them. What a clear and powerful revelation Moses had of the future. He gladly forsook Egypt, not caring for its honors and wealth; "*for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible*" [Heb.11:27]. Yes, faith sees the unseeable. It penetrates the mist, fog, and darkness of unbelief and skepticism and rests upon the invisible God.

*"Through faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood." [Heb.11:28]*

Moses believed in the blood atonement. He saw beyond his time and beheld the meritorious death of Jesus Christ, and rested upon it as the only protection from the just Destroyer who was to pass over the land and slay the firstborn. Moses and all Israel were secure from God's wrath that memorable night; for God had said, "*When I see the blood, I will pass over you*" [Exo.12:13]. Oh, how sad that the multitudes reject the only redeeming and saving sacrifice. What fierce judgment is about to fall upon Christian Science and Unity (both falsely so called) for deceiving the masses by their bloodless and lifeless religious theories (see Heb.10:27-29). Praise God for The Sheltering Rock in which we hide, happy and safe whatever betide.

*"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned." [Heb.11:29]*

Israel's security from the angry tide had been purchased typically and assured to them by the blood of the lamb slain the previous night. In a figure, they passed through death and came up in resurrection on the other side. How marvelous are God's ways and works. How powerful is simple childlike faith. It heaped up the rolling waters and held them back as a gigantic mountain till 2,000,000 people passed safely over. No sooner than the last footman was out of danger, the same faith let the floods loose in angry torrents upon their foes and they were enveloped unto death. The faith of God is constructive of its friends, but destructive of its enemies (see Jer.17:5-8). The same faith also leveled the walls of Jericho after Israel was in the land [Heb.11:30]. "*All things are possible to him that believeth,*" because "*with God all things are possible*" [Mar.9:23 and Mar.10:27]. Hallelujah!

#### **RAHAB, THE HARLOT**

*"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace." [Heb.11:31]*

Self-righteousness and affected (artificial) sanctity would not mar the beauty of this record with the name of a harlot. But what does the holy and compassionate God care for make-believe piety? It is an abomination to Him. But He stoops and pays His respects to faith. Usually the moral man has no faith except in himself. Faith springs up in the heart of those who know that



they are sinners and admit it. Rahab felt her need, witnessed the power of Israel's God, and fled to Him for refuge. *"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost"* [Luk.19:10], whether they be one kind of sinner or another; for *"all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"* [Rom.3:23]. Again, the Holy Spirit is emphasizing the place and power of faith.

## **6 OTHER WORTHY ELDERS**

*"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets." [Heb.11:32]*

For want of time and space, the Apostle merely mentions 6 other worthy elders, for whose achievements we go the Old Testament.

He speaks of **GIDEON** (*"the hewer"* or *"cutter down"*) who judged Israel 40 years, during which period, he put down idolatry and delivered them from the Midianites and the Amalekites [Jdg.6].

**BARAK** (*"the lightning"*) flashed forth against Jabin, the high-minded king of the Canaanites. Deborah, a mother in Israel, inspired him and strengthened his hands. But the glory of conquest was ascribed to 2 brave women: **Deborah**, who judged Israel 40 years, and **Jael** [Jdg.4:21], who drove a tent pin into the head of Sisera, the enemy's general [Jdg.4:5].

**SAMSON** (*"a little sun"*) the distinguished, or strong one, relieved Israel from the thralldom of the Philistines, so that they had rest 20 years [Jdg.14-16].

**JEPHTHAH** (*"the opposer"*) was rejected by his brethren; but in a time of dire need, they called on him for help. He became a mighty man of valor, hasty and fearless. He judged Israel 6 years and saved them from the cruelty of the Ammonites [Jdg.11-12].

**DAVID** (*"the beloved"*), *"a man after His (God's) own heart"* [1Sa.13:14], became the 2<sup>nd</sup> king over Israel and reigned for 40 years. David was a mighty conqueror, a devoted worshipper of Jehovah and wrote many heart-touching and comforting psalms. His predecessor, Saul, is not named in this list of the faithful.

**SAMUEL** (*"asked of God"*) judged Israel all his days, overlapping part of Eli's priesthood and the rulership of Saul [1Sa.4:18 and 1Sa.7:15]. He was a very unique character. He was used of God to bridge a chasm between the difficult and self-willed period of the judges and the new order—the reign of kings. Samuel's word was unusually effective. *"The Lord was with him and did let none of His words fall to the ground"* [1Sa.3:19]. He typified Christ as High Priest. Those Old Testament personages speak volumes to us, if we have hearts to hear.

*"Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." [Heb.11:33-34]*

Paul cites 20 heroic things as the achievements of faith in the lives of those 6 noblemen and of the prophets. We shall not speak of them in detail. They are all plain. All of them *“out of weakness were made strong”*; for God is pleased to employ weak things to confound the mighty. Faith in God’s abounding grace, exercised by the helpless and dependent, accomplishes wonders. May we learn from them to believe Him simply and watch Him work.

*“Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.” [Heb.11:35]*

This probably refers to the extreme sufferers during the time of the Maccabees, when saints were beaten to death for their faith and godly lives. The *“better resurrection,”* which they experienced is doubtless the out-resurrection recorded in Matthew 27:52-53: *“And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose and came out of their graves after His (Christ’s) resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many.”* If there was a coming forth of saints from among the graves of Israel, is it far-fetched to expect that some saints will have an out-resurrection with Paul before The Church as a whole will be raised (see Phi.3:11)?

*“Of whom the world was not worthy.” [Heb.11:38]*

No, the Lord would not leave His loved ones in the world, except that they might witness of Him and His great salvation and open men’s blinded eyes, and that also He may train us for rulership with Him in the coming ages. Jesus prayed that the Father would keep His disciples from the evil, but not take them out of the world [Joh.17]. The more severe the suffering in the world, the greater the glory we shall enjoy after being taken out of the world. For every sigh and pain, He will give eternal gain.

*“And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” [Heb.11:39-40]*

Observe that the chapter begins and ends with this interesting statement, *“the elders received a good report,”* and that by faith. And to their credit, this good report has been registered, not only in heaven, but also on earth, written for our admonition and comfort. Their reward will be the greater for this record. But they have not yet received the fulfillment of the promises, *“God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”* The Old Testament worthies must wait till the resurrection of all the redeemed at the coming of Jesus [Dan.12:2]. Whom does Paul mean by *“us”* in Hebrews 11:40? Certainly he does not limit the better thing to Israel. The Church is included. The many blessings enumerated in this book are surely not for Israel alone. *“all Scripture is given by inspiration of God...that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* [2Ti.3:16-17]. The Church will be raised and translated first; then the believing dead of Israel will be raised. The book of Revelation gives the order of the resurrection, which is the perfection meant here. All the believing dead are embraced in the first resurrection; for they are blessed and holy. The phrase *“The rest of the dead”* [Rev.20:5], refers to the wicked. What a great and glorious reunion, when all the glorified will meet Jehovah in the air and forever be with Him [Rev.19:5-6].

## DIV.6, HOW TO RUN SO AS TO WIN [HEB. 12]

This interesting chapter begins by referring to the worthies of faith, as the great cloud of witnesses, recorded in Hebrews 11. Their manner of successful running is placed before us as an inspiration and encouragement. First, observe 7 rules for racing; then observe the glorious goal.

### THE 7 RULES FOR RACING

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1. *“Lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us”* [Heb.12:1]. These words are addressed to Hebrew Christians. The immovable kingdom was the prize for which they ran [Heb.12:28]. But the weights were practically the same as ours. Hence, Philippians 3 points out the weights as things of the flesh. Paul says, *“Have no confidence in the flesh.”* He had greater reasons for trusting the flesh than anyone else; but he refused the worst and the best of the natural man, counting all things loss and dung that he might win (gain) Christ. Natural gifts, attainments, ties, prospects—all these things impede progress on the racetrack to glory. Unbelief is the powerful sin that besets and upsets racers. Do you remember how vigorously unbelief and faith were contrasted in Hebrews 4 and 5? Why is faith emphasized in Hebrews 11? That un-faith (unbelief) may have no chance to hinder the racers. Weights and **THE** weight are dealt with at the very outset.
2. *“Run with patience.”* The race is not for 1 day only, it extends throughout life. Hindrances and handicaps will arise. Satan will stop you if possible. Men will try to detain you. Patience will be tried to the uttermost. A snail’s pace will not win. **“RUN”** is the exhortation and that with divinely-given patience. Beware of impatience (imps of fret and weariness). If people are willing to spend years to obtain an education, or to amass wealth, which last for a brief time only, how much more willing should we be to run for a Prize, which we will enjoy for all eternity? The Lord gives grace and patience to run and win.
3. *“Looking unto Jesus.”* He is the racing attraction. He is the **“Author (File-leader) and Finisher of the faith.”** He ran before us; resisting religious sinners who were bitterly opposed to Him. He suffered their devilish contradictions and finished His course by enduring the cross of shame. Jesus was inspired by the great joy that loomed high before Him. He reached the goal—*“the throne of God”*; but the climaxing joy is still ahead. His faith starts us running. His faith will take us through. We are linked up with Him. Nothing makes our racing easier than gazing steadfastly upon our coming Bridegroom and considering His conflicts and triumphs. Our running cannot be as difficult as was His. *“Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin”* as He did in His agony in the garden [Luk.22:44].
4. *“Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.”* The Apostle quotes from Proverbs 3:11. The proverbs of Solomon are a most excellent fodder rack for scriptural racers. We do well to eat often and abundantly of its provisions. The interferences on the way are to be received as necessary chastenings, which tend to make us hardy racers. We are

made overcomers by obstructions in the road; because, get over them we must. Let us not therefore despise them, but use them as leaping hurdles to higher heights. Resistance demands food, and food makes muscle. Before He gives us a whipping, our Master-Runner feeds us well so that we may be able to bear it.

5. *“Nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him”* [Heb.12:5]. Yes, chastening and reproof have a weakening effect at first. We seem to have fainting spells; but the new life is simply given opportunity and room to grow and increase in strength in the Lord. The old self-life is curbed and broken down; but the new heavenly life is invigorated and stimulated. *“No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto those who are exercised thereby”* [Heb.12:11]. The Lord trieth the righteous, because He is fitting us for a throne (study Heb.12:6: *“For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth”*). Consider Hebrews 12:7, *“If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”* He is not a son; he is a bastard, he does not belong to the family. He is illegitimate, of spurious birth; hence, he has no claim to parental care, or training.
6. *“Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees”* [Heb.12:12]. Unselfishness toward other saints is a striking characteristic of successful racers. Chastisement may induce heavy-heartedness, a drooping face and dragging feet for a brief time; hence, the need of lifting up by a word of comfort. Evidently, the Apostle quotes here from Job 4:3-4, who did these very things before his severe and prolonged trial of faith. Indirectly, Job is cited as a typical runner for the prize. Isaiah 35:3 intimates that the remnant of Israel will need such encouragement in the near future. Let us render our part to help weary racers today.
7. Finally, *“Follow after peace with all men and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord”* [Heb.12:14]. Under this last point, 4 possible divergences from faithful running are mentioned. Satan tries in very subtle ways to trip believers, and so much the more near the end. He will disturb the peace of every one and cause him to break rank if possible. These things are evident at this very day. Some are actually failing (falling from) the grace of God. A root of bitterness springs up, causing trouble and defilement. How it behooves every one of us to keep our eyes upon the File-Leader, Jesus, and do all we can to maintain peace, or endeavor to make peace when it is ruffled. Jesus said, *“Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God”* [Mat.5:9]. Let us judge any semblance of bitterness in our own minds, lest others be defiled. *“The little foxes spoil the vines”* [SSg.2:15].

*“Lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright.”* [Heb. 12:16]

On this verse, we quote the following from **“AFTERWARD”** in *Grace and Glory*, July 1935, page 3:

“Esau has not one thing recorded against him, as men could see. He was an exemplary citizen, a likeable fellow, a man of the world, full of life and vigor—a hunter, going in for all sorts of sport. A fisherman probably, an amusing sort of man, a good-time Charlie, the world would call him. A punster and wit, he was no doubt the life of the party, a slap-you-on-the-back kind of chum. Everybody was his friend and spoke a good word for him, and he was the friend of everybody. He was his father’s favorite. There is not a hint of evil in his life according to the history. Profane signifies to leave God out of our thoughts, irreverent, no fear of God, joking at religion, or sacred things. We have heard many profane people in our lifetime. Fornicator signifies one who has fellowship with the flesh, living in the enjoyments of the lower forms of sin, wanting no fellowship with God or spiritual people. Therefore we can readily infer why God chose Jacob to carry on the line of faith. Esau sold his birthright (he was the elder by a few minutes, or hours); but he cared naught for the inheritance. He sold it for a few moments of enjoyment and Jacob obtained the blessing which his brother lost. Esau represents Adam, the first, the man who ate of the forbidden fruit and lost his inheritance for himself and his progeny. Jacob figures Christ, the Second Man, who desired the things of God, sought them and bought them with His blood upon the tree. And He secured them for all His followers. Those that believe are born of God, have a right to share the heavenly inheritance with the great Overcomer.

But this is the special fact which was so striking to us and which we desire the saints to see. Our attitude to God and His things is what counts. What are His things to you? How do you esteem His riches in comparison with the mammon of unrighteousness? What place do you give His things and His honors? Are the pleasures of sin more to you than bearing the reproach of Christ? Your attitude to God and His Christ classifies you. Esau did not care for God. He wanted to have a good time upon the earth. And he received his wish. He prospered in worldly things; but he missed the best. The spiritual things were lost to him. He cried out in anguish when he realized what he had lost; but it was too late. He had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Jacob on the other hand was not a popular fellow. We believe the men of the world, Esau included, laughed in secret and maybe in public at the “poor sap” who had his head in the clouds and never had any enjoyment whatever. Jacob was not a bright and shining light, as men would read his life story; but he desired the blessing of God. He wanted the inheritance, went after it and secured it. But observe this fact—he did not get these things by his crooked dealings. He received them because of his heart-longings for God and His things. He wanted His blessing and inheritance more than any earthly honors, or riches. And this is what counts.”

*“Ye have come to Mount Zion and a city of the living God, a heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to a universal festive gathering and to an assembly of firstborn ones enrolled in the heavens and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men who have been made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel.” [Heb.12:22-24 Greek]*

The Apostle prefaces these statements by painting a picture of burning, blazing, quaking, thundering Sinai when The Law was given [Heb.12:18-21]. He thus describes the nature of The Law. It is stern, unfeeling, unrelenting, unbending. The Law shows no pity, no mercy, does not give another chance. Consider Paul’s words. Israel came that day to *“a mountain that burned with fire and unto blackness and darkness”*—The Law brings conviction, not light: “and to a tempest and a trumpet sound—law gives neither peace, nor quiet: and to *“the voice of words”* [Heb.12:18-19], which they that heard entreated that not a word should be addressed to them; for they could not bear that which was commanded; The Law is cold, hard, exacting, terrible. *“And if a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart”* [Heb.12:20]—even the flesh of innocent animals, being corrupted by the sinfulness of man, cannot come into God’s presence. So fearful was the spectacle, that Moses said, *“I exceedingly fear and quake”* [Heb.12:21]—however safe we are in the folds of grace, the very sight of law produces a feeling of terror.

The Law is the fixed and relentless expression of Divine Justice against sin. Therefore, if Moses, as a mediator, and Aaron, the high priest, as representing the basis of mediation (both figuring Christ), had not stood between God and the sinful people that day, they would all have been slain by that fiery law. But Jesus Christ stood in the breach 1,500 years later; for there was another Mount Sinai, if I may so say, called Mount Calvary. God’s righteous indignation against sin, displayed with such flaming majesty, was the vengeance that quivered and shook, leaped and flashed, surged and rolled, raved and roared, and was wreaked out with all holy and just impatience [Exo.19] upon the holy Son of Man on the Cross! The voice of The Law was hushed forever; for the stern demands of Divine Justice were met once and forever. Christ died for the ungodly and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; therefore, Paul exclaimed to those Hebrew believers, and of course to us also, *“Ye are not come to the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest”* but to the glorious mount of grace.

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## THE TEXT UNFOLDED

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First, observe the meanings of several names.

- **Sinai** (*“my thorns, a bush, a cliff”*) was located near a wilderness. There Israel was congregated when The Law was given to them. How expressive of religious people. Law-keepers have, more or less, a wilderness experience—rugged or cliff-like and thorny. They

have a bushy, thorny message. If they seem to have victory, it is by force of their own will and not by resting upon the Arm Omnipotent.

- **Zion** (“*a fortress, a projection, a monument*”) is situated just outside Jerusalem. It is upon Mount Zion that Jesus was crucified. Thus Zion, so near the cross, became the mount of grace, a fortress against sin and sickness. From thence is projected the glorious Gospel of grace; and Zion stands as a monument of redemption through grace. Hence, David exclaimed prophetically, “*the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion*” [Psa.48:2].
- **Jerusalem** means “*vision of peace, founded in peace, possession of peace*” and finally, “*double peace shall be taught there.*” Peace is the first conscious result of faith in salvation by grace—“*peace with God.*” We see it, we have it, we enjoy it, and it soon flows like a river. War is over; peace is declared. No thorns, no dangerous cliff, because it is all of grace. All of Paul’s epistles, save this one, are introduced by “*grace and peace.*”

Now, let us study 8 wonderful words in detail. Paul says to Israel, Ye are come to 8 prominent objects.

*“But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” [Heb 12:22-24]*

1. “*To a city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.*” From the city on earth, where Christ was crucified, the Apostle flies quickly upward to the “Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all” [Gal.4:26]. Redemption originated in heaven; and all who believe on Jesus are “born from above.” The earthly city was not to be despised; but Paul would have his kinfolk know that they are brought to a higher, a greater city than that one, not simply to the city of David, but to that of the living God, even where His throne is, which, through redemption, has become “a throne of grace” [Heb.4:26]. When he wrote this epistle, David’s city was in bondage; but the heavenly “Jerusalem is free”; hence, we are free also, being “free born.” “Sin shall not have dominion over you (neither shall law); for ye are not under law, but under grace” [Rom.6:14]. “O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee” [Psa.84:12]. The Scriptures speak of 3 Jerusalem’s.
- The heavenly Jerusalem, where God’s present throne is, from which all blessings now flow.
  - The earthly Jerusalem, the capital city of God’s kingdom over Israel.
  - The “New Jerusalem,” which will be our Lord’s headquarters in heaven during the millennium and where the heavenly saints will dwell with Him in glory. Therefore, Paul sought to show to his Hebrew friends, that they were not under law, but under grace, and

that they might understand unto what great privileges and wealth redemption had brought to them as well as to us.

2. “*And to an innumerable company (myriads) of angels.*” This indicates how near to the inhabitants of heaven we are brought by redemption. Concerning angels, the Apostle asks, “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?” [Heb.1:4]. That is, God causes the angels to guard those whom He knows will believe, even before they do believe. Wondrous grace! This age was introduced by angels. Gabriel announced the advent of John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ. And a host of angels gave glory to God at the birth of the latter. During this age, angels continue to serve the saints in various ways. As truly as demon forces are present some times to disturb the gathering together of God’s people; just so truly are angels sent to protect and defend His people. Saints are kept from many dangers, pitfalls, and sorrows by the intervention of these unseen messengers. God does not allow us to know them, lest we should idolize them.
3. “*To the general assembly.*” This phrase is an insufficient translation for it expresses only part of the truth; it is better rendered “*to a universal festive gathering.*” Two facts are expressed, differing widely from each other. The Greek word, **PANEGUEREI**, translated “*general assembly,*” properly means “*a gathering of a whole nation, a high festival, a solemn assembly.*” It is made up of 2 words: **PAS**, meaning “all” and **AGURIS**, meaning “*a gathering.*” The Apostle uses it here to define the nature and glory of the superb meeting to which saints are called under the new covenant. It occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means a universal banquet, where angels from heaven and redeemed humanity from the earth of every age and nationality meet in a holy sublime festival. It describes the universal festive character of the Gospel Age. Jesus called it “a great supper.” For nearly 2,000 years this Gospel supper has been spread, to which the Lord has been inviting folk from everywhere. In God’s reckoning, heaven and earth are brought nigh, even into His very presence. We are fanned with the wings of angels. We could not know these precious things but for this blessed Word. This is not spiritism; for we have no communication with departed spirits, or with angels. “Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” [1Jo.1:3]. This Scripture indicates the high altitude and spiritual atmosphere into which faith in God lifts us because of the amazing provision of grace. God “hath raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” [Eph.2:6]—a unique provision of grace, “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” [Heb.11:1].
4. “*And church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven*”; which is better rendered “*to an assembly of firstborn ones enrolled in the heavens.*” This refers to believers of the present Church Age (dispensation). Here again is a contrast. “*Ephraim is my firstborn*” [Jer.31:9]. That is, Israel was God’s firstborn enrolled on earth (compare Ps.69:28). But Paul speaks of the firstborn ones registered in heaven. Thank God, our enrollment is in the city from which we were born and to which we



are going. These firstborn ones are not yet in heaven with their glorified bodies; though the spirits of some of them are already there [2Co.5:8-9 and Phi.1:23]. Jesus was “*the firstborn from the dead*” [Col.1:18 and Rev.1:5]. Doubtless this refers to a special company of believers whom God sees in the same rank with Jesus Christ. They will be the firstborn ones from among the dead, and enjoy the “*out resurrection*” [Phi.3:11]. If Jesus was the firstborn from the dead, there must be others also born from among the dead. And if some are called “*firstborn*” ones, certainly some others are not firstborn ones; but they will be raised after these are raised.

The Holy Spirit employs the identical same Greek word **PROTOKOS** in Hebrews 1:6 as referring to Christ in resurrection—“*And when again He bringeth (see margin) the firstborn (Greek: PROTOKOS) into the habitable world,*” He says, “*let all the angels of God worship Him.*” But before Christ is thus worshipped, a company of saints will be with Him, in and around His throne, whose resurrection will be counted as in the same order with Him. Therefore, they are termed “*firstborn ones.*” This is solemnly wonderful. In Revelation 5, we have the positive proof of this interpretation. The angels are silent in heaven until the Lord is on His throne and the full-overcomers are with Him. He is found worthy to open the book of God’s final purposes and loosen the seals thereof. The full-overcomers (“*firstborn ones*” of our text) will break forth in exultant praise. They sing a new song [Rev.5:9]. Then the angels follow in obedience to Hebrews 1:6, saying, “*Worthy is the Lamb...*” Observe that Paul’s Hebrew auditors are not expected to be a part of the “*firstborn ones*”; but they are come to the great festive banquet in which the “*firstborn ones*” have such an honored place. He had cited this difference in explaining the tabernacle furniture [Heb.9:1-5]; but he passed by “*the cherubims of glory,*” which figure the 4 living ones and 24 elders of Revelation 4 and 5. He could say only, “*The cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat, of which we cannot now speak particularly.*” As long as they did not understand the simpler shadows, they could not understand this one. They who are in any measure under law, or are lawless or lascivious, will not be among the “*firstborn ones.*” Reader, consider this and take it to heart.

5. “*And to God the Judge of all.*” Yes, God is present in His own city. He is Judge of all men. He grades His people. His decisions are righteous, according to the deeds done in the body. No one can make-believe himself into the highest rank; and no one need be hindered by another from being in it. Neither does the ignorance or unbelief of any disprove this precious doctrine. Let us heed our Bridegroom’s entreaty, “*Hold fast that which thou hast (the vision and faith of an out-translation), that no man take thy crown*” [Rev.3:11]. Let us yield to the judgment of God upon the old creation and judge our own flesh continually [1Co.11:27-32], trusting in Christ only and always; then “*the Lord the righteous Judge*” will give us our due portion and place in “*that day*” [2Ti.4:8].
6. “*And to the spirits of just men (ones) made perfect.*” Old Testament believers are the “*just ones.*” In Habakkuk 2:4, we read that “*the just shall live by*

*faith.*” Peter termed Lot, “just or righteous Lot,” as to his standing. The perfection mentioned here refers to the resurrection. Jesus, referring to His 3 years ministry, His death, and resurrection, said, “*The third day I shall be perfected*” [Luk.13:32]. Paul refers to his own resurrection in Philippians 3:12. Hence, “*the just ones made perfect*” are Old Testament saints who have already received their glorified bodies. No doubt they are those recorded in Matthew 27:52-53, who “*obtained a better resurrection*” [Heb.11:35]. That was to them an out-resurrection; but the multitudes of Old Testament saints are still in their graves, awaiting the general resurrection of the just [Dan.12:2].

7. “*And to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant.*” The Hebrew fathers came to Moses; but New Testament Jews came to Jesus. Moses was a prophet and a great leader; but he could not save. He was only a type of Christ [Deu.18]. He was a typical mediator. Only Jesus could die for the sins of the people and redeem them. He alone was the true Mediator, and of the better covenant, even the covenant of grace. “*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*” [Joh.1:17]. Israel was baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea [1Co.10:1]. But we were baptized into Christ [Gal.3:27].
8. “*And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*” Elder Abel shed the blood of a lamb, which was accepted of God for him because it pointed to the Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the world. The blood of Abel’s offering had no merit in it. Behold the wisdom given to the Apostle. He points out all the attractive features of the great festive gathering; then names the foundation of it last. Of all the dozen betters in this book, “*The blood of Christ*” is the superlative better. It is the cornerstone of redemption upon which the glorious superstructure of full and eternal salvation is built. Thank God, we have not come to a mountain burning and terrible, but to the unspeakable wonderful mountain of grace, even to the throne of grace. With us is a day of gladness, of feasting, of plenty; a banquet which will never break up.

*“See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven; Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”*  
[Heb.12:25-27]

In giving The Law, God shook the earth, and showed His wrath against sin. He is about to shake both heaven and earth. He will shake the devil out of heaven; then shake him and his fiendish followers out of the earth into hell and the lake of fire. Nothing but Christ and His people will remain after He puts down all rule and all power and all authority; after which His Son shall reign for 1,000 years.

In Hebrews 12:28-29, the Apostle speaks especially to Israel. They had a kingdom, but it was removed because of disobedience and rebellion. When Jesus comes, they will receive the millennial kingdom, which never again can

be overthrown or removed. The Church will be a part of "*His heavenly kingdom*," which also cannot be removed [2Ti.4:18]. Finally, it will be said of His Anointed, "*And he shall reign forever and forever*" [Rev.11:15].

## DIV.7, OUR ATTITUDE TO MINISTERS [HEB. 13]

The last chapter of this interesting book is before us. Because of the everlasting redemption, wrought by Jesus Christ, the apostle offers a number of wholesome, practical instructions for the mutual benefit of Christian Hebrews. We Gentiles should profit by them also.

*"Let brotherly love continue." [Heb.13:1]*

For this will regulate all the other exhortations. The love of Christ, shed abroad in every heart and fostered continually, will insure healthy growth among saints. We will overlook one another's faults and bear one another's burdens. We will provoke one another to good works.

*"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." [Heb.13:2]*

Brotherly love is to be shown among acquaintances; but the Lord has other children who are also our brothers and sisters. By entertaining strangers, we meet some of them. Paul would have his Jewish brethren to know that they might find some of those angels among the Gentiles; for they too should believe on Jesus. The word **angel** simply means "*messenger, a servant of God*." We need to try the spirits today when professed ministers come around, because religious run-abouts abound. They seek a living without working.

*"Remember them that are in bonds." [Heb.13:3]*

In those early days, it was a common thing for saints to be imprisoned for the Gospel's sake. Paul was in bonds when he wrote this epistle from Rome. Today, multitudes are in adversity because they reject the Gospel. How vastly better it would be for humanity if they would turn to Christ instead of depending upon brains and brawn and inventions. Owing to universal conditions, many of God's people are in bonds and adversity. These we are to help and comfort.

*"Let marriage be had in honor." [Heb.13:4 RV]*

The sanctity of the family life is to be observed by all saints. Though people are saved and filled with the Holy Spirit, yet they possess bodies of humiliation, cumbered with infirmities, and surrounded with temptations. The flesh is treacherous in believers as well as in unbelievers; hence, the old creation must be counted dead so that the new life may always be in victory through Christ's indwelling.

*"Let your conversation be without covetousness." [Heb.13:5]*

Two different Greek words are translated **conversation** here and in Hebrews 13:7. The root words of both mean “to turn, to change.” Hence, “*let your turn of mind be free from the love of money*” (RV) better expresses the thought here; and, “*consider the issue of their manner of life*” expresses the thought in Hebrews 13:7. The Greek word generally rendered **conversation** in the New Testament means “*manner, or habit of life.*” Conversation is only one phase of the Truth to be conveyed. In Philippians 3:20, the Greek word is **POLITEUMA**, which means “*citizenship, or commonwealth.*”

Covetousness is a grave offence against God, because it is termed idolatry [Eph.5:5]. God wants our love and confidence; therefore, we should be content with what we have, content with the promise of His never failing presence and help.

*“Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the Word of God.” [Heb.13:7 RV]*

The Greek word for **rule** is from **AGO** meaning “to lead, to guide, not to rule in an arbitrary, or dominating sense, but with a father’s heart.” It is the same word also in Hebrews 13:17, 24. Peter, who also wrote to the Hebrews, expresses the nature of such rulership, by saying, “*Feed (or tend) the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but by being ensamples to the flock*” [1Pe.5:2-3]. Notice the past perfect tense of Paul’s entreaty in the Revised Version...“*had the rule.*” He refers to the ministry of Peter, James, John, and the other kingdom apostles. He confirms the truth which they had proclaimed. Observe by this verse and Verse 9, that faith and grace are the 2 outstanding points—faith on man’s part and grace on God’s part. “*By grace are ye saved through faith*” [Eph.2:8]. The manner or habit of the first apostles was to believe God in simplicity with a single eye. The one object of their faith was “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever (unto the ages)*” [Heb.13:8]; therefore, multitudes turned to Him and many miracles were wrought.

*“It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.” [Heb.13:9-10]*

Once more the Apostle seeks to turn his readers from the types and shadows to Jesus Christ, the True and Living Substance. Though grace shown brightly from them all, yet they had no saving power...only Christ can save. There is no salvation in a picture. “*We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.*” After Jesus came and fulfilled the Old Testament types and symbols, God could no longer accept the worship of Moses’ tabernacle. All men, Jews as well as Gentiles, must worship God in spirit and in truth, looking unto Jesus alone as the channel of worship. Even the disposition of the sacrifices taught separation from and abandonment of the types and shadows. Note how wonderful this is.

*“For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.” [Heb.13:11-13]*

What is the New Testament conclusion? *“Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach” [Heb.13:12-13].* Shadow and Substance cannot operate in the same camp. Continuing with the Shadows is, in effect, denying the Substance.

We are compelled to comply with Hebrews 13:13. Though the churches do not observe the Jewish ritual, in reality they are still rejecting Christ. They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, which is just as abominable as it is for the Jews to go on with the Mosaic form and ritual. Jesus knew that this condition would obtain (prevail); therefore He said, *“Where two, or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” [Mat.18:20].* Saints are continually compelled to come out from among religious people in order to worship God in the liberty and power of the Holy Spirit and serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Men will tie our hands and break our hearts if we let them. Hence, it is written, *“Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown” [Rev.3:11].*

In spirit, the early Jewish disciples were even cut off from their own city, as Paul says,

*“Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” [Heb.13:14-16]*

Therefore, he names 3 sorts of sacrifices: The *“sacrifice of praise,” “to do good”* and *“to communicate,”* or give of your earnings to support the Gospel. *“With such sacrifices, God is well pleased.”* Spiritual fruit is what God wants. Praise is the fruit of the lips. Doing good to others by pointing them to Jesus, the Savior, and communicating of our means, are fruits of our hands and feet.

*“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” [Heb.13:17]*

The word for **rule** is the same as in Verse 7; it refers to leaders. The Greek word **PEITHO** here rendered **obey** means *“to persuade, to yield to persuasion, to trust, to have confidence in.”* Therefore, here it means to obey our God-appointed leaders as those who are worthy of our confidence. To trust them is to put the responsibility upon the Lord, the Head of The Church. Obey them because *“they watch for your souls.”* They have the place of guardians (overseers) or spiritual custodians (shepherds); *“As they that must give account.”* God holds His shepherds responsible for the spiritual welfare of their flocks; for they are His sheep. Jesus said, *“Feed MY lambs ... feed MY sheep” [Joh.21:15-17].* Accordingly, the sheep should yield to their shepherds, that they may give account with joy; that is, render a good report. To be necessitated to render an unfavorable report would not be profitable for the sheep. The leaders and flocks should obtain a mutual reward at last. Therefore the Apostle adds,

*“Pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience in all things willing to live honestly.” [Heb.13:18]*

How mildly he speaks; and how greatly saints may help their leaders to help them. Let them maintain the yielded attitude steadfastly, even though they may think them unwise sometimes. Be very slow to put up your thoughts against your shepherds. Pray for them. Prayer never harms or hinders. Criticism and complaint do both. O yes, **PRAY**. If they are unwise, God will give them Divine Wisdom. If divinely chosen, they earnestly desire the perfect will of God for themselves and for their people. If they are not chosen of God, He will remove them. **PRAY** for them. Paul was a prisoner in Rome when writing this Epistle; hence, he requested his friends to pray for his deliverance.

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## THE BENEDICTION

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

What a beautiful and blessed benediction. He leaves his readers occupied with "*the God of the peace*" and with "*the Great Shepherd*," the Great One. Jesus announced Himself as "*The Good Shepherd*" who gave His life for the sheep [Joh.10:11]. Peter declares Him to be "*The Chief Shepherd*," when He shall come to reward the faithful under shepherds with "*crowns of glory*" [1Pe.5:4].

- As the **GOOD SHEPHERD**, Christ redeemed us.
- As the **GREAT SHEPHERD**, He ever liveth to make intercession for us.
- As the **CHIEF SHEPHERD**, He will come again to govern His people and enjoy them forever.

His right to these titles is proven by the fact that His Father raised Him from the dead. (Compare Rom.1:4). The blood which He poured out was demonstrated to be "*the blood of the eternal covenant*" (study Heb.9:20 with Exo.24:8 and Zec.9:11). Jesus purchased the right to be raised from the dead by His bleeding to death on the cross for there He died; not for His own sake, but for the sins of all men. If He had not been raised, it would have proved Him an imposter and unable to redeem and save. But, glory eternal to the triune God, He was delivered to Calvary for our offenses, but raised up from the grave for our justification [Rom.4:25]! God brought Him from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Upon the basis of this fact, Paul prays that his people may be perfected in every good work to do God's will. Note how that is done—by God working in them that which is well-pleasing in His sight; and all that He works in them is "*through Jesus Christ*." Nothing is done for humanity except through Jesus Christ, crucified and raised from the dead, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. "*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift*," Jesus Christ!

*"And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation; for I have written a letter unto you in few words. Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty, with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you."* [Heb.13:22-23]

Hebrews 13:18-19 with the above 2 verses should be conclusive proof that Paul wrote this Epistle (compare also Heb.10:34). He was imprisoned in Rome twice. The first time, he wrote this letter; but 2 Timothy was written during his 2<sup>nd</sup> imprisonment.

*"Salute all them that have the rule over you and all the saints. They of Italy salute you." [Heb.13:24]*

Paul certainly emphasized the importance of the right attitude of believers to their leaders. He closes by admonishing them to greet them warmly, embrace them fervently. In Hebrews 11:13, the word here rendered "*salute*" is there rendered "*embrace*." The saints in Italy sent fervent greetings to the Christians in Jerusalem.

*"Grace be with you all. Amen." [Heb.13:25]*

This is the customary closing of all of Paul's letters. The word **grace** occurs only 8 times in this letter (first in Heb.2:9); but the amazing and glorious truth of Divine Grace abounds and super-abounds herein. It was written that Israel might know the love of God toward them and enter into the riches of God's grace.

#### POETIC PEARLS

LITTLE WORDS OF KINDNESS,  
LITTLE LOOKS OF LOVE,  
SCATTER THOUGHTS OF BLINDNESS,  
COMFORT LIKE A DOVE.

LITTLE ACTS OF GOODNESS  
FROM A TENDER HAND,  
BREAK THE RAP OF RUDENESS,  
HELP THE WEAK TO STAND.

LITTLE SMILES OF SWEETNESS  
FROM A HOPEFUL FACE,  
MAY INSPIRE FLEETNESS  
TO THOSE IN THE RACE.

THESE ARE LITTLE PREACHERS  
WITH A MESSAGE GREAT—  
CHARMS FROM LIVING CREATURES,  
NEVER LAX, NOR LATE.

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