

SEVEN YEAR WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

**Year Seven
Lessons 1-13**

**First Quarter
Titus 1 --- Hebrews 10**

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FOREWORD

The Structure of Hebrews

If you will prayerfully and carefully study the book of Hebrews you will feel BETTER acquainted with Christ than ever before.

THEME of Hebrews: Christ.

HEBREWS CHRIST

The 1:1-2:4	Son The 2:5- 4:13	Of Son	God Of	Man THE ----- 4:14	PRIEST -----	---	-----	-----	--→ 10:18	THE -----	WAY -----	----→
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
-----DOCTRINAL-----										PRACTICAL		
-----INSTRUCTIONAL-----										EXHORTATION		

The book of Hebrews has thirteen chapters. Each numbered space on the lined chart represents a chapter.

The first ten chapters (up to Hebrews 10:18) are mainly DOCTRINAL. In these chapters, great truths are taught about Christ’s DEITY, His humanity, and His work.

Hebrews 10:19 to Hebrews 13:25 are principally PRACTICAL. They show, as you will discover, the PRACTICAL WORKING OUT, in daily life, of the truths taught in the earlier chapters of the book.

INSTRUCTION is chiefly contained in Hebrews 1:1-10:39. EXHORTATION is the main theme of Hebrews 11:1-13:25.

Note the word “CHRIST” at the top of the chart. The Holy Spirit is unfolding the theme of Hebrews seems to present Christ first as The Son of God, emphasizing His Deity (Hebrews 1:1-2:4). Then He is presented as The Son of Man, stressing His Humanity and the WORK which He accomplished on earth (Hebrews 2:5-4:13). As our Great High Priest, the writer presents His PRIESTLY WORK (Hebrews 4:14-10:18). Then His revealed as the “WAY” – His Leadership as the NEW and LIVING WAY TO GOD (Hebrews 10:19-13:25. See also John 14:6).

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 1

Page 1

Titus 1

Memory Verse: Titus 1:5

Memory Verses:

“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.” (Titus 1:5).

A MESSAGE TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

Titus and Timothy were trusted companions and helpers of Paul. Both were trusted and loved by him; both proved worthy of his confidence and esteem. However, they were men of striking contrasted character. Timothy was sensitive, affectionate, sympathetic and gentle. Titus revealed more of energy, vigor, discretion and decision.

Basic Background

Titus was a Greek who accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, stoutly resisted Titus’s circumcision (Gal. 2:3-5). Thus the name of Titus is inseparably connected with the Magna Charta of Christian liberty (read also Acts 15:1-35).

Some years later Titus appears with Paul in Ephesus, and was sent by Paul to Corinth to correct certain abuses (II Cor. 2:13f). He brought back good news (II Cor. 7:6, 13, 14), and took II Corinthians to the church there. He was Paul deputy in Crete after Paul’s first Roman imprisonment.

Crete was a great island, 150 miles long from east to west, and seven to thirty miles wide. Also known as Candia, it was southeast of Greece, on the border between the Aegean and Mediterranean seas. It was mountainous, but its valleys were fertile, populous and rich. It was known as the “island of a hundred cities.” The seat of a powerful and ancient civilization had already become legendary at the dawn of Greek history. Sir Arthur Evans and his successors gave the knowledge of the Cretan civilization to the world early in the twentieth century, The script was deciphered by Michael Ventris and found to be in primitive Greek.

The highest mountain in Crete is Mt. Ida, famous as the legendary birthplace of the Greek god Zeus. Home of the half-mythical lawgiver Minos, son of Zeus, and of the fabulous Minotaur. The people were akin to the Philistines, and thought to be identical with the Cherethites (I Samuel 30:14). The Cretans were daring sailors and famous archers, with a very bad moral reputation. In New Testament times a good many Jews were there.

Church in Crete

The Cretan church was probably started by the “Cretans” who were at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11). There is no New Testament mention of an Apostolic visit to Crete other than by Paul on his voyage to Rome (Acts 27:7, 8), and that implied in the Epistle to Titus. Paul was not inclined to build on other men’s foundations, and it is likely the Cretan Churches were the fruit of Paul’s work in Corinth or Ephesus, both of which cities were nearby.

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Titus was written by Paul (Titus 1:1), very soon after Paul left Crete, in Asia Minor while on his way to Nicopolis (Titus 3:12). It was probably written in 66 or 67 A.D.

I. Christian Salutation (Titus 1:1-4)

“Paul, a servant of God...” (Titus 1:1) Paul usually calls himself “a servant of Christ.” “Servant” is literally a “bondservant” or “slave.” He had once been a “servant” of sin. He had been made free from sin by obedience to the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 6:6-14). As far as obligation, service, and life were concerned he was in the last analysis, “a servant of God.” Paul uses this exact expression only here.

“And an apostle of Jesus Christ.” Jesus Christ gave Paul his commission and empowered him to work miracles as well as to declare divine truth (Acts 26:15-19). Paul’s special work was to the Gentiles, to whom he was sent to produce faith by the preaching of the gospel (Romans 10:17). Those who accepted the gospel, acknowledged the truth of it – Jesus, who said: “I am the... TRUTH” (John 14:6).

“In hope of eternal life...” (Titus 1:2) “Eternal life” is the “hope” or GLORIOUS GOAL set before every Christian.

“God, that cannot lie,” or “the non-lying God.” “The never-falsifying God promised before time began” the glorious hope for the Christian. God’s CHARACTER on “non-lying” is in striking contrast to the “lying” character of the Cretans (verse 12).

As Paul neared the end of his earthly career, this “HOPE” of God was more precious than ever. He kept his eye on heaven! God has “promised” the “redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:18, 23). Consider the joy of the day when the “mortal must put on immortality” (I Cor. 15:53-55). Think of his longing for the “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (II Cor. 5:1-2). Consider his CITIZENSHIP IN HEAVEN with a body like the Saviour’s (Phil. 3:20-21); his joy at the thought of being “caught up together” with the resurrected and transformed Christians, “to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). He knew the Lord had “laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to be only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (II Timothy 4:8).

“But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching...” (Titus 1:3) God has manifested the eternal life promised by His word in the gospel. See Acts 9:5, 6; 18:9, 10; 23:11 as to how Paul “bore witness” for Jesus Christ in the gospel, “his word,” entrusted to Paul, “according to the commandment of God.”

“To Titus, mine own son after the common faith.” (Titus 1:4) After defining his apostleship, Paul expressed his greeting to Titus, whom he calls “my true child after the common faith.” He was one of Paul’s converts. “A true son by our common faith” is an expression of tender affection, of close spiritual relationship, and of deep sympathy.

“Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father...” Paul invokes “grace, mercy, and peace” upon Titus “from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour. “God our Saviour” is united with “the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour” in the ONENESS of divine being as well as of SAVING GRACE!

II. A Fitting Introduction

The “salutation” to Titus forms a fitting introduction to the epistle.

A. It emphasizes the authority of Paul as one who is a “servant of God,” “An apostle of Jesus Christ,” and entrusted with a DIVINE MESSAGE “according to the commandment of God” (verse 3).

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This indicates that Paul is not merely writing a personal letter to his friend Titus, but is also sending an official communication to him AS ONE WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE CONGREGATION IN CRETE, so that this is in the truest sense one of the Pastoral Epistles.

B. Such a greeting is an appropriate introduction to the epistle because it describes the message in terms fitting the situation in Crete. The truth is declared to “after godliness;” it was unlike the heresies of the false teachers that were purely speculative and without practical aim or moral purpose.

In contrast to the deceitfulness of the Cretans and the faithlessness of those who were advocating error, the “hope of eternal life” was promised by God who “CANNOT LIE” (verse 2)!

“SOUND DOCTRINE” is ever intended to secure “HOLY LIVING!” Its supreme purpose is the promotion of godliness.

II. Clear Qualifications of Elders (Titus 1:5-9)

“For this cause left I thee in Crete...” (Titus 1:5) Paul had apparently stopped in Crete on his return from Spain about 65 AD AFTER HIS RELEASE FROM HIS FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT. Titus was with Paul, and the apostle left Titus in Crete to COMPLETE THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH ON AN ORDERLY BASIS. Many things needed to be set in order, in order to teach properly the LARGE NUMBER OF CONVERTS THAT HAD BEEN MADE. We do not know why Paul was called away from Crete before the TASK OF CONSOLIDATING HIS WORK WAS COMPLETE, but he left to TRUSTWORTHY TITUS the task of gathering the believers into churches and to effect in each a group of “elders!”

“Set in order the things that are wanting.” Only in organization, but in instruction and practice. He is to “straighten out unfinished business” – make a “clean job of it!”

“Ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.” “Appoint” in Revision and Berkeley. The mode of “appointing” is not here indicated. “Elders” or “presbuterous” are called “bishops” in verse 7, an identical term for the SAME OFFICE IN THE CHURCHES. Their qualifications are here enumerated are practically the same as those given in I Timothy 3:1-7. “Elder is the title, oversight is the function” (B. Weiss).

“If any be blameless...” (Titus 1:6) “Above reproach” (Berkeley). This means he is guilty of no wrong to his fellow men; of such character that no one can bring a reasonable accusation against him.

“IF” makes plain that the “appointment” is CONDITIONED on finding the right kind of men.

“The husband of one wife...” Not guilty of polygamy. Married to one wife – and faithful to her. Paul allowed and encouraged second marriages (see I Timothy 5:6, 11-14). A “faithful husband” is always “a man of one woman” AT A TIME IN HONORABLE, CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

“Having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.” The elder’s family life should also be commendable. He should have “believing children that are not charged with being incorrigible or unruly!” If an elder has “unbelieving” children, it might indicate he was either careless as a Christian, or a recent convert. If his children were insubordinate, it might indicate that the “elder” lacked the ability to rule the “household of God” as a “bishop” or “overseer!”

“A bishop... steward of God.” (Titus 1:7) The “bishop” or “elder” (verse 5) as an “overseer” of the “household of God” must be “blameless” as a “steward” (read I Cor. 9:17; Col. 1:25; Eph. 3:2; I Tim. 1:4).

“Not self-willed”: Self-satisfied, or arrogant.

“Not soon angry”: “Hot-tempered,” of passionate temper.

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“Not given to wine.” “Or a drunkard.” Drinking wine is recognized as an evil. One occupying the position of bishop must not use this or any intoxicating beverage (see Eph. 5:18; Prov. 20:1; 23:31).

“No striker”: No man of God regardless of his provocation should forget himself and raise his hand in physical violence against his fellow men. To do so is to lose one’s battle. Spiritual battles are not won by physical violence.

“No given to filthy lucre.” “Or greedy of dishonest gain.” The elder is to avoid gain by wrong means; a direction, of course, which applies to every Christian!

“But a lover of hospitality...” (Titus 1:8) “Instead, he must be hospitable,” a grace even more needed in the early church, or in mission lands, than in the present day or in Christian countries. Read Hebrews 13:2. The “elder” and every Christian must be ready to entertain strangers, and care for the homeless and needy.

“A lover of good men.” “In love with what is GOOD.” He must be a “lover of good,” not merely of “good men,” but of “GOOD” in its widest sense, even of “goodness” itself.

“Sober.” Characterized by complete self-mastery. “Just.” He is righteous in his dealings with others. “Holy.” “Saintly” in his relation with God.

“Temperate.” “Self-controlled” or able to refrain from all that may be unlawful before God.

“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught...” (Titus 1:9) The true “elder” must be a **GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH**. He must be “**SOUND**” in the gospel doctrine, **ABLE** to teach it to others, and “refute those who raise objections!”

“Elders” with a firm grasp of revealed truth would be able to meet the “clever heretics” of Crete, or of this city today. And “bishops” of high moral attainments were needed in view of the conditions in Crete, and the need is just as imperative here or where you live! Evil teachers in any age are sure to arise, and unless the church then and now goes by “**SOUND DOCTRINE**” it is sure to be corrupted and fail in its divine mission.

III. CHARACTER and Condition of the Church of Crete (Titus 1:10-16)

“For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...” (Titus 1:10) Paul here refers to the “false teachers!” Such “refractory, senseless talkers” were devoted to fanciful and foolish conceits especially the Judaizers, Jews or “they of the circumcision” who were troubling the Gentile churches (Matt. 15:7-9). They did not reverence the word of God. They refused to obey the plain word of God (see John 14:5, 14, 23, 24).

“Whose mouths must be stopped...” (Titus 1:11) “These ought to be silenced” (Berkeley). Such evil teachers must have zippers put on their “mouths”. They “upset whole families by teaching for dishonest gain what they should not teach.” They undermine faith in Christ and the pure gospel. They perverted or twisted the gospel for base gain. “Elders” must **PRACTICE**, then **PREACH**, the gospel (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:3; I Tim. 4:12).

“One of themselves... said, ‘The Cretans are always liars...’” (Titus 1:12) Paul is the only New Testament writer who quotes from a heathen writer. He does so three times -- here, in Acts 17:28, and in I Corinthians 15:33. This quotation is from a Cretan teacher, Epimenides, who lived about 500 BC.

“Evil beasts.” “Wicked brutes.” Was the Minotaur fable responsible for this reference?

“Slow bellies.” “Lazy gluttons.” A blunt and forceful picture of the sensual man (see Phil. 3:19). Paul agrees with the heathen writer (verse 13). Titus is to “correct them sternly, so they may be sound in the faith instead of applying their minds to Jewish fables and to injunctions of people who turn their backs on the truth” (verses 13-14, Berkeley). Elders, what is your duty when men turn from baptism “into Christ”

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(Gal. 3:26-27 and Acts 2:38) to SPRINKLING? Or from observing the Lord's Supper upon "the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7) to once a quarter or once a year? See also Mark 7:4, 8 and I Timothy 4:3.

"Unto the pure all things are pure..." (Titus 1:16) In the "Jewish fables" just referred to were RIGID REGULATIONS concerning foods and purifications. Hence Paul adds, "It is not food that makes one IMPURE. To the PURE ALL THINGS are PURE. When one is unbelieving and DEFILED, NO FOOD CAN MAKE HIM PURE" (see Rom. 14:14; I Corinthians 7:4-8). These teachers of Jewish fables and carnal ordinances profess to know and serve God, YET THEIR IMMORAL LIVES ARE A DENIAL OF GOD (verse 16).

QUESTIONS

1. In what ways were Titus and Timothy alike? How did they differ?
2. With what is the name of Titus inseparably connected (Gal. 2:3-5; Acts 15: 1-35)?
3. Did Paul entrust Titus with some important missions (II Cor. 2:13f; 7:6, 13-14)?
4. Who wrote Titus (Titus 1:1)?
5. How does Paul refer to himself? Why (Titus 1:1)?
6. Who probably started the church in Crete (Acts 2:11)?
7. Can you tell something of physical, moral and mythical character of Crete?
8. When was Titus written, and where was Paul probably going (Titus 3:12)?
9. What is the "hope" set before every Christian (Titus 1:2)?
10. What character is attributed to God in Titus 1:2?
11. How did God "manifest his word" (Titus 1:3)?
12. To whom did Paul send this letter (Titus 1:4), and can you give two vital reasons why this is a fitting introduction?
13. Why was Titus left in Crete (Titus 1:5)?
14. "Elders" in verse 5 are called what in verse 7? Explain.
15. Can you enumerate and define the positive qualities of the "elders" (Titus 1:5-9)?
16. Can you name and define the negative qualities of the "elders"?
17. Why are elders needed in the church (Titus 1:9)?
18. To whom does Paul refer as "vain talkers and deceivers" and what must be done (Titus 1:10-11)?
19. How did the Cretan teacher, Epimenides, describe his people (Titus 1:12)? Did Paul agree with his appraisal of the Cretans (Titus 1:12), and what did he command Titus to do (Titus 1:13-15)?
20. What is the acid test of one's profession (Titus 1:16)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 2

Page 1

Titus 2-3

Memory Verses: Titus 2:7,8

Memory Verses:

“In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing incorruption, gravity, sincerity. Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you” (Titus 2:7, 8).

A MESSAGE TO MINISTERS AND MEMBERS

“Good works” is the grand emphasis of the epistle of Titus. Not that we are saved by “righteous works that we have done,” but “according to His mercy He saved us” and “justified” us “by HIS GRACE” (Titus 3:5,7).

A minister and all Christians must be “zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14), “an all-round example of doing what is lovely” (Titus 2:7), “be ready to every good work” (Titus 3:1), “be careful to maintain good works” (Titus 3:5), “learn to maintain good work for necessary uses” (Titus 3:14). Sound doctrine must be accompanied by steadfast service in divine deeds and duties. A damning indictment of FALSE TEACHERS was that they were “unto every good work reprobate” (Titus 1:16).

Titus a Good Worker

Titus was a Greek, probably a native of Antioch, and one of Paul’s early converts (Titus 1:4; Gal. 2:3-5). Later he appears with Paul in Ephesus, and the apostle sent him to Corinth to CORRECT CERTAIN DISORDERS, and to START the OFFERING FOR THE POOR SAINTS at Jerusalem (II Corinthians 8:6, 10). The offering was finally gathered about a year later, and taken to Jerusalem (II Corinthians 2:3, 12, 13; 7:5, 6, 13, 14; 8:16-18, 23; 12:4, 18). That Titus was chosen to do this work AFTER TIMOTHY HAD FAILED indicates that Paul considered him a very wise, capable, tactful and faithful worker.

Conditions at Crete demanded such a worker as Titus to correct those unchristian disorders. For this reason Paul “left Titus in Crete, that thou should set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee” (Titus 1:5). Clear qualifications are given concerning the type of men to be chosen as “elders” (Titus 1:5), or “bishops” (Titus 1:7). The character of the church is highlighted (Titus 1:10-16). Paul directs Titus to emphasize two kinds of conduct.

I. Correct Conduct Among Christians (Titus 2:1-15)

A. A message for Titus (Titus 2:1, 7, 8, 15).

“But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine...” (Titus 2:1). The false teachers at Crete were spreading doctrines that did not agree with the teaching of the inspired apostle (Titus 1:10-14). By example and teaching they were fatally lowering the standards of the Christian life. Paul directed Titus to teach HEALTHY or SOUND DOCTRINE and practical duties. He was to shun “Jewish fables, and commandments of men” (Titus 1:14).

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“In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works...” (Titus 2:7) “And offer in your own person an ALL-ROUND EXAMPLE of doing what is lovely.” A preacher ought to practice what he preaches, as every member must try to MEASURE UP TO THE MASTER’S STANDARD (Matthew 5:48).

“In doctrine showing incorruption.” “Teaching with sincerity and seriousness, and present a wholesome, unobjectionable message, so that your opponent may be put to shame at finding nothing bad to say about us” (verse 8, Goodspeed). Being able to find no evil to report will silence opponents of Christian character and conduct.

“These things speak... with all authority.” (Titus 2:15) Assertion of authority is sometimes necessary. None must regard lightly the ambassador of Christ. The minister must speak with the “authority” which comes from knowledge of the divine will and of the saving purpose of God.

“Let no man despise thee.” Command respect with right character and conduct.

B. A message to the aged (Titus 2:2-3).

“That the aged men be sober...” (Titus 2:2) “The older men” must be taught to “be temperate, venerable, sound in the faith, in the love and in the patience.”

“Sober.” Be temperate in all things. Not given to wine. These Christians were converts from heathenism and it was necessary to caution them against heathen vices.

“Grave.” Be serious in speech, behavior, and dress. “Temperate.” Exhibiting self-control. “Sound in faith.” Aged men are healthy, true believers.

“In charity.” In love. Not bitter or vindictive. Love keeps the heart young, tender and sincere.

“In patience.” Older saints must bear the infirmities of the body with cheerful patience.

“The aged women likewise...” (Titus 2:3) “Shall be reverent in their behavior” (Berkeley). They must live holy lives.

“Not false accusers”: “Neither gossips;” not slanderers.

“Not given to much wine.” The women of Crete were “slaves to drink.” It is proved by experience that the reclamation of a woman drunkard is almost impossible” (White). But God can do the “impossible!” Christ frees us from such appetites which DESTROY ONE’S WILL, influence and body (Prov. 20:1; II Peter 2:18, 19; John 8:32; 14:6; Phil. 4:13).

“Teachers of good things.” This teaching is private, not public, instruction. They were to teach both by example and precept.

C. A message to the young (Titus 2:4-6).

“That they may teach the young women to be sober.” (Titus 2:4) “The aged women” have a special mission to teach “the young women.” They were the natural teachers of “the young women.” “They should be teachers of what is noble, so they may wisely train the young women to be loving wives and mothers, sensible, chaste, good housekeepers, good-natured, submissive to their own husbands, so that the word of God may not be slandered” (verses 4-5). There can be no doubt that Paul believed that the husband IS and OUGHT to be the “HEAD OF THE WIFE” (Eph. 5:22-23). He showed that the relation must be that of mature love, recognizing a complete spiritual EQUALITY. These very teachings of the Apostle Paul have resulted in the EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN.

“Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.” (Titus 2:6) Because of the former evil teaching and practice of the Cretans, again Paul urges Titus to stress complete self-mastery in body and mind of the “young men.” “Sober-minded” occurs four times in six verses, and may be accounted for by the volatile character of the Cretans.

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D. A message to slaves (Titus 2:9-10).

“Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters...” (Titus 2:9) “Servants” or “SLAVES” are “to be submissive to their own masters; to please them in every way; not to talk back” (Berkeley).

“Nor purloining...” (Titus 2:10) “Not to pilfer,” or steal. Men robbed of liberty and labor have always been under temptation to steal.

“But showing all good fidelity.” Slaves are to show “complete reliability,” This will secure the master’s confidence.

“That they may ADORN the doctrine of God...” That slaves in the age of Augustus Caesar might be an ornament to the system of divine truth showed the POWER OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST to TRANSFORM DEGRADED BEINGS into obedient, chaste, sober men and women (Rom. 1:16, 17). Slaves could so live that they would REFLECT HONOR upon the “doctrine of God our Saviour in all things!”

E. The blessed hope of Christians (Titus 2:11-14).

“For the grace of God... hath appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11) God loves the “world” (John 3:16) and wants “every creature” (Mark 16:15-16) in the world to hear and obey the gospel and be saved! God’s Grace... appeared” in the FIRST ADVENT of our Lord and made “salvation” available “to all men!” Salvation is the fundamental fact. It is for “slave” and “master,” “young” and “aged” – yes, for “every creature”!

“Teaching us that... “ (Titus 2:12): The gospel has “trained us to renounce godlessness and worldly passions, and to live discreet, upright, and godly lives in this present world,” Read I John 2:15-17.

“Looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing...” (Titus 2:13): The Lord’s “I will come again” (John 14:1-3,6) supplies the MOTIVE to godly living in the present world. It is mentioned in almost every book of the New Testament. Compare I Cor. 1:7; Phil. 3:20; I Thess. 1:9, 14.

“Who gave himself...” (Titus 2:14) Our Lord Jesus “GAVE HIMSELF for us to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify for Himself a people all His own that is eager to do good works”! Study Exodus 19:5-6; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; John 15:1-8.

II. Conduct toward Unbelievers (Titus 3:1-15)

A. Practical citizenship (Titus 3:1).

“Put them in mind to be subject...” (Titus 3:1) Christians must “be subject” to those in authority over us, unless they require something CONTRARY TO GOD’S WILL (Acts 4:19-20).

The Cretans were subjected to Roman sway BC 67, but had always been turbulent and impatient. Christians must not take part in seditions that could only work evil. Let us “be obedient” to “ruling authorities” and “prepared for every good activity.” Jesus paid taxes (Matt. 17:24-27). It is right for us to do so (1 Pet. 2:13-16). Christians are good citizens (Romans 13:1-7).

B. Practical godliness (Titus 3:2).

“To speak evil of no man...” (Titus 3:2): Christians are “not to slander anyone; not to be quarrelsome, but lenient, showing unqualified mildness toward all people.”

C. Their former condition (Titus 3:3).

“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish...” (Titus 3:3) “For we ourselves were thoughtless, disobedient, deluded, SLAVES to passions and pleasures of all sorts; wasting our time in malice and envy;

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detestable, and hating one another.” We Christians in the unconverted state were once just as foolish, disobedient and sinful as others.

D. What led to our transformation (Titus 3:4-7).

“But after that the kindness and love of God... appeared.” (Titus 3:4) The threefold memory of WHAT WE WERE, of how the CHANGE HAS BEEN WROUGHT, and of WHAT WE ARE, will serve to create the spirit of subjection to authority, equip us for honest toil, silence all evil speech, and generate an unceasing compassion. This “grace” of God “appeared” as shown in Titus 2:11-14 by the coming and redeeming work of Christ in whose death, burial and resurrection SALVATION WAS MADE POSSIBLE for “ALL MEN!”

“Not by works of righteousness... HE SAVED US!” (Titus 3:5) We are NOT SAVED by “works of righteousness” or MERIT of OUR OWN, “but in agreement with His mercy, He saved us!” That means chosen by His mercy to place us in the STATE OF SALVATION are next spoken of.

“By washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” “All commentators of reputation refer this to baptism” (Johnson). The Holy Spirit through the Word of God STARTS the SPIRIT LIFE within us (Luke 8:11; James 1:18). We are “BORN” out of the water (John 3:3, 5). By hearing the Word we are brought to faith, repentance, confession and baptism (Rom. 10:17; Acts 17:30-31; Matt. 10:32-33; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:37). Romans 6:1-8 shows that the sinner “DIES” to the practice of sin, is “BURIED IN BAPTISM,” RISES to a NEW LIFE, and is a “NEW CREATURE” (11 Cor. 5:17).

“Which he shed on us abundantly...” (Titus 3:6) The Holy Spirit has been “poured out richly on us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, counted righteous by His personal grace, we might be made heirs in agreement with our hope of eternal life” (verse 7).

E. Need for practical piety (Titus 3:8).

“This is a faithful saying...” (Titus 3:8) What has been said in verses 4-7. The great essentials of RELIEF that the apostle has stated are ABSOLUTELY TRUSTWORTHY. Timothy is to “affirm constantly” so “that those who have become believers in God may be minded to apply themselves to good works; which is excellent and beneficial for all people.” Notice again the emphasis on “GOOD WORKS!” NOT to be at work for Christ is a sure sign that one is NOT SAVED! Christians are God’s “workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Eph. 2:10). As a “believer” YOU must TAKE THE LEAD in “good works.” Do not wait for a committee to put you to work. Christ has commissioned YOU. “GO...” (Matt. 28:19-20, Acts 8:4).

F. What to avoid (Titus 3:9).

“But avoid foolish questions... for they are unprofitable and vain” (Titus 3:9): Wordy fights about Mosaic and Pharisaic and Gnostic regulations “are futile and purposeless.” Such “fightings” are utterly powerless to produce higher life, nobler character and purer conduct.

G. Whom to avoid (Titus 3:10-11).

“A man that is a heretic...” (Titus 3:10) A “heretic” is a “divider,” one who creates strife over things NOT TAUGHT in God’s Word. If he keeps on introducing unscriptural things, “after a first and second warning,” IF HE DOES NOT STOP, reject him from the fellowship of the church. It is a waste of time to argue with such self-willed men. The church must MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE to guard against corrupting the

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truth, but we must do it in love and firmness. A “heretic” is “distorted and is, when he sins, his own condemner” (verse 11).

H. Conclusion (Titus 3:12-15).

“When I shall send Artemas unto thee...” (Titus 3:12) The epistle closes with reference to workers who will replace Titus when he has finished his work in Crete. The mention of these names indicates growth of the Christian movement.

“Come unto me to Nicopolis, for there I have determined to winter.” An ancient city of Epirus situated on the Gulf of Actium, and founded by Augustus Caesar to celebrate his decisive victory over Mark Antony, 31 B.C. In modern terms “on the Gulf of Arta” on the West Coast of Greece.

“Bring Zenas... Apollos on their journey.” (Titus 3:13) It is the duty of members of the Christian Church to **CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUPPORT OF THOSE DEVOTED TO THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY** (verse 14). Of “Zenas” nothing more is known. “Apollos” is the “eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures” (Acts 18:24-28).

“All that are with me salute thee...” (Titus 3:15) The closing benediction harmonizes with the opening salutation. It is a benediction of grace to all those to whom Titus ministered. To fulfill one’s work as steward of God’s house, His grace is **NEEDED** and supplied!

QUESTIONS

1. What is the grand emphasis of the epistle of Titus (Titus 3:5, 7; 2:14; 2:7; 3:8, 8; 1:16)?
2. Was Titus a good worker, and what do you know about him (Titus 1:4; Gal. 2:3-5; II Cor. 8:6, 10; 2:3, 12, 13; 7:5, 6, 13, 14; 8:16-18, 23; 12:4, 18)?
3. Why did Paul “leave Titus in Crete” (Titus 1:5)?
4. What did Paul command Titus to “speak” (Titus 2:1)? Why (Titus 1: 10-14)?
5. Is it essential that “in all things” the minister and member be “an all-around example of what is lovely” (Titus 2:7)?
6. Was Titus to be timid in teaching, or to speak “with all authority” (Titus 2:14)?
7. How should “aged men” and women act (Titus 2:2-3)?
8. What responsibility rests upon “the aged women” (Titus 2:4)?
9. There is the young women’s responsibility, in the home or outside (Titus 2:4-5)?
10. Who were told to “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things” (Titus 2:9-10)?
11. What marvelous thing has “appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11)? Is this “grace” for “slave,” “master,” “young” and “aged” (Mark 16:15-16; John 3:16)?
12. What does the “grace of God” teach us all (Titus 2:12-13; I John 2: 15-17)?
13. Is that “blessed hope and glorious appearing” real to you (Titus 2:13; John 14:1-3, 6; I Thess. 1:9, 14)? Why?
14. In what respect are Christians a “peculiar people” (Titus 2:14)?
15. Are you “zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14)? If not, read John 15: 1-8!
16. To whom are Christians to “be subject” (Titus 3:1)? To what practical course of conduct are Christians to be dedicated (Titus 3:2)? And what was the former condition of the Cretans (Titus 3:3)?
17. What led to our transformation (Titus 3:4-7)?
18. How are men “saved” (Titus 3:5-7)?
19. To what are men “saved” (Titus 3:8)? In what way are “good works” profitable (Titus 3:8)?
20. What treatment is prescribed for “heretics” (Titus 3:10-11)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 3
Philemon

Page 1
Memory Verse: Philemon 17

Memory Verse:

“If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself” (Philemon 17).

A SLAVE AND HIS MASTER

Paul’s private correspondence is priceless. This letter is the only example that has been preserved. It is brief. It is a gem. “If I were to covet any honour of authorship, it would be this: That some letters of mine might be found in the desks of my friends when their life struggle is ended” (W. Robertson Nicoll).

When Written?

Paul sent this letter of twenty-five verses to Philemon by Onesimus. He was a CONVERTED RUNAWAY SLAVE, along with Tychicus who is going to Colossae with Onesimus (Colossians 4:7-9). Onesimus also bore the Epistle to the Ephesians (Eph. 6:21f). Philemon was written about 63 A.D. from Rome during Paul’s first imprisonment.

Why Written?

Paul probably wrote Philemon without dictation. “I Paul have written it with mine own hand... “ (Verse 19). The apostle applies the spirit of Christianity to the PROBLEM OF SLAVERY in words that have ultimately set the slaves free from bondage to men!

Aristotle the enlightened Greek affirmed that the Creator had made the majority of the human race for slavery. Slavery was universal. The Mosaic Law permitted slavery, but surrounded the condition of the slave with such regulations that made Jewish slavery the mildest in the world.

Some five years after Paul had left Asia Minor, the apostle was in prison in Rome. Onesimus probably stole some money from his master Philemon and ran away to Rome. Had Philemon learned to love Paul in his master’s house? Anyway, Onesimus found Paul in a city of 1,500,000. Paul persuaded him to be a Christian, and sent him back to his master, bearing this beautiful letter.

I. Christian Greeting (Philemon 1-3)

“Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ...” (Philemon 1) According to the custom of his day Paul began his letters with his own name. This gives this personal letter its great value, as no other man in Christian history has done so much or been so greatly used of God, as was Paul.

“A prisoner.” Paul was a prisoner at Rome. The apostle wished to awaken a sympathetic attitude in Philemon, as Paul reminds him that he writes with his manacled right hand. Paul refers to his chains five times in this letter (verses 1, 9, 10, 13, 23).

“And Timothy... “; He was with Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:22), probably known to Philemon, and now with the apostle in prison. Two other epistles of the captivity name Timothy in the first verses (Philippians 1:1 and Colossians 1:1).

“Unto Philemon our dearly beloved...” Philemon was a resident of Colossae, possibly converted by Paul at Ephesus, perhaps coming to Ephesus while Paul was there when his ministry had so much influence over the province of Asia (Acts 19:9f, 26; I Cor. 16:19). He was a man of wealth and social position, whose generosity and love were well known. He was active in the church in Colossae. Paul refers to him as “our dearly beloved, and fellow laborer.”

“And to our beloved Apphia.” (Philemon 2) She was probably Philemon’s wife.

“And Archippus our fellow soldier...” It is supposed that as a member of this household he was a son of Philemon and Apphia. Paul addresses a special message to him: “Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it” (Colossians 4:17). He may have been the minister of the Colossian Church, a part of which met in his father’s house,

“And to the church in thy house.” “Before the third century there is not certain evidence of special church buildings for worship” (White, Expositor’s Greek Testament). There was a church in Mary’s house (Acts 12:12), in Aquila’s (I Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:5); in Nympha’s (Col. 4:15).

“Grace to you, and peace...” (Philemon 3) Grace is unmerited favor, The greeting may be regarded as a wish, a prayer, or a promise. God is the source of this “grace” and “peace,” and come to us through the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. The Character of Philemon (Philemon 4-7)

“I thank my God...” (Philemon 4) Paul’s salutation is followed with a thanksgiving and a prayer. “The thanksgiving is expressed in his prayer, and is the occasion of his prayer.” The apostle is grateful for the reports that have been brought to him of Philemon and the Colossians (Colossians 1:7-8).

“And toward all saints.” (Philemon 5) Philemon’s love was no empty profession. His deeds of “love and faith” toward the Christians in need PROVED HIS LOVE of the Lord Jesus (read John 14:15, 21-24). Deeds speak louder than words.

“That the communication of thy faith...” (Philemon 6) Rather, “fellowship” as the Revised Version has it. It cost Philemon money to SHOW HIS LOVE for Christ and the less fortunate Christians! Faith in Christ which does not lead one to SHARE WITH OTHERS IN NEED is a “DEAD” faith (James 2:14-17, 26; Acts 2:42).

“For we have great joy and consolation in thy love...” (Philemon 7) Paul’s expression of joy at hearing of the kindness of Philemon forms an admirable introduction to the request that now follows.

“Because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee...” Rather, “the hearts” of the saints. See Philippians 1:8 for this use of this word of the nobler viscera (heart, lungs, liver) and here for the emotional nature.

“Brother.” Used here and in verse 20 with marked emphasis of affection of intimacy of friendship and love. Paul had been speaking of the love of Philemon that MADE HIM A BROTHER INDEED TO ALL THE SPIRITUAL FAMILY OF GOD! Of course, this “love” INCLUDED ONESIMUS, the slave, who now is a Christian!

III. A Christ-Like Intercession for Onesimus (Philemon 8-21)

“Wherefore... bold... to enjoin thee... rather beseech” (Philemon 8, 9): After his tactful introduction, Paul states the purpose of the letter. His purpose was to seek an action by Philemon in harmony with his Christian position.

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Owing to the fact that he had been instrumental in converting Philemon, Paul had the right to be “bold” and URGE Philemon to do the proper thing toward Onesimus. “Although in Christ I feel very free to GIVE YOU DIRECTIONS as to YOUR DUTY, I prefer to MAKE MY APPEAL on the BASIS OF LOVE” (verses 8-9, Berkeley). “I rather beseech,” not directly command, Philemon to do the Christ-like thing toward this once unprofitable slave, Onesimus.

“Paul the aged.” Paul is called “neanias” (a young man) at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58). He was perhaps a BIT UNDER SIXTY NOW. Hippocrates calls a man “presbutes” from 49 to 56 and “geron” after that. The papyri use presbutes for old man as in Luke 1:18 of Zacharias and in Titus 2:2. But in Ephesians 6:20 Paul says “presbeuo en halesei” (I am an ambassador in a chain). There is no real reason why Paul should not term himself properly, “Paul the aged.” He reminded Philemon that he was an “old, gray-haired, scarred veteran of Christ, who has grown aged in His service, and is now a prisoner suffering for his Lord.” No service is more exacting or will take a higher toll of life than an evangelistic ministry. Sufferings, anxieties, incessant labors had made Paul OLD BEFORE HIS TIME!

“I beseech thee for my son Onesimus...” (Philemon 10) His spiritual son in the gospel. Paul is proud of winning Onesimus to Christ, though a prisoner himself. Paul may have known Onesimus in Ephesus some five years before this letter was written. Onesimus, the slave of Philemon, had probably stolen some money from his master and fled to Rome.

Roman law allowed a master to sell his slave, “give him away, torture him, crucify him, put him to death, even feed him to his fishes, and there was NO LAW (that is, man-made law) to interfere in his behalf!” Paul’s problem was to SEND THIS RUNAWAY SLAVE, NOW A CHRISTIAN, back to his master and SAVE HIM FROM A CRUEL PUNISHMENT that he merited according to Roman law.

Paul wanted to “CONCILIATE Philemon, without humiliating Onesimus; to commend the WRONGDOER WITHOUT EXTENUATING HIS OFFENSE!” How was he to do this? Tychicus goes along as a mediator and Onesimus carries this personal letter. The letter is a model of tact and courtesy to his master, Philemon. Paul commends Onesimus to the whole church making it more difficult for Philemon to avoid pardon and restoration of Onesimus, the runaway slave who is now a Christian (Colossians 4:7-9).

“Which in time past was... unprofitable, but now profitable” (Philemon 11) As a rebellious slave, Onesimus was “unprofitable” or “useless” to Philemon. “But now he is helpful both to you and to me.” Onesimus the name means useful, profitable. It was a common name among slaves. Paul makes a pun on the meaning of the name. His conversion to Christ made Onesimus “profitable” both to Paul and Philemon.

“Whom I have sent again... receive him.” (Philemon 12) “I am sending him back to you and MY HEART WITH HIM!” Paul loves Onesimus as his own son.

“Whom I would have retained with me...” (Philemon 13) “I should like to retain him for myself, so he might serve me instead of you during my imprisonment for the Gospel.” Paul wanted very much to keep Onesimus. He needed his service, Philemon would have SERVED PAUL had he been in Rome! Paul knew that the service of Onesimus would be by proxy the service of Philemon himself to the apostle.

“But without thy mind would I do nothing...” (Philemon 14) Onesimus knew what God’s will was regarding the slave toward his earthly master. “Servants,” slaves, “obey your secular masters in every way, not as men-pleasers when working under their eyes, but out of reverence for the Lord with unmixed motives. Whatever you may do, work wholeheartedly as for the Lord and not for men, for you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your remuneration; you are working for your Master Christ” (Colossians 3:22-24).

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Paul needed the services of Onesimus. “But I do not wish,” says Paul the... aged prisoner, “to do anything WITHOUT YOUR (Philemon’s) consent, so that your kind action may not be COMPULSORY but VOLUNTARY.”

For Philemon to be unkind to Onesimus would wound Paul’s heart. In the light of such a need and such an appeal, it is hard to see how Philemon could refrain from sending Onesimus BACK TO PAUL! Possibly he did. God alone knows. There is a tradition that Onesimus afterward became bishop of the church in Berea. “Ignatius, about fifty years later, mentions an Onesimus as bishop in Ephesus.”

“For perhaps he departed for a season...” (Philemon 15) Paul does not say “ran away,” but “departed” in describing the FAULT and FLIGHT of Onesimus. Before asking Philemon to FORGIVE THE PAST, Paul “places upon it this surprising, conciliatory, instructive interpretation. He intimates that it may have been a part of God’s loving plan.” In God’s Providence, Onesimus comes back to Philemon “that you might have him forever; no longer as a servant, but better than a servant, a beloved brother, unquestionably to me, but how much more so to you both personally and in the Lord.” The TEMPORARY SEPARATION has RESULTED in AN ETERNAL RELATIONSHIP!

“If thou count me therefore a partner...” (Philemon 17) Paul now makes his plea. “So, if I am YOUR PARTNER, then welcome him as you would me,” He asks Philemon to give the converted runaway slave Onesimus a gracious Christian reception and COMPLETE, PARDON! All the preceding verses have been penned to prepare for this plea.

“Welcome him as you would me” in surpassing delicacy and consummate art. These words sound the death-knell of human slavery wherever the spirit of Christ is allowed to have its way, It has been a long and hard fight to break the shackles of slavery even in Christian countries. There are still millions of slaves in pagan and Mohammedan lands. Paul wrote these words with wisdom, courage and sincerity. Here is GOD’S METHOD of bringing FREEDOM to the slave and to his master.

“If he hath wronged thee, or owes thee...” (Philemon 18) Onesimus had probably robbed Philemon before he ran away. Paul pledges to REPAY ANY DEBT that Onesimus may owe Philemon.

“I Paul... will repay it.” (Philemon 19) Paul signs a PROMISSORY NOTE with a touch of humor. “I will REFUND it – not to mention that, over and above, you owe me your very self!” Paul used every available argument to bring Philemon to see the HIGHER GROUND of brotherhood in Christ about Onesimus.

“Yea, brother, let me have joy... refresh my bowels.” (Philemon 20) The apostle “should like to make some profit out of you in the Lord,” playing on the name of Onesimus. “Buoy up my deepest feelings in Christ,” Paul pleads with Philemon.

“Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee...” (Philemon 21) Paul knows Philemon will refresh his heart and “do more than I request.” Paul “knows” that Philemon will set Onesimus free. He prefers that it come as Philemon’s idea and wish rather than as a command from Paul. Paul has been criticized for not denouncing slavery in plain terms. In the light of conditions in the Roman Empire, he is a wise man who can suggest a better plan than the one pursued by Paul for the ULTIMATE OVERTHROW OF SLAVERY!

IV. Closing Request, Salutations and Conclusions (Philemon 22-25)

“But withal prepare me also a lodging...” (Philemon 22) While still in prison at Rome, Paul expects his liberty ere long and to REVISIT the churches in Asia Minor via Philippi (Philippians 2:24). Paul requested

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that “through your prayers I restored to you,” and that Philemon “prepare entertainment for me.” This hope was doubtless fulfilled.

“There salute thee Epaphras...” (Philemon 23) Epaphras was the Colossian preacher who apparently started the work in Colossae, Hierapolis, and Laodicea. He was Paul’s “fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus” at home. He “sends you greetings.” Others who sent greeting are then mentioned.

“Marcus...” (Philemon 24) Mark now was a “co-worker” with Paul (see Colossians 4:10-14).

“Aristarchus.” A Macedonian (see Acts 27:2).

“Demas.” See II Timothy 4:10 for his later history.

“Lucas,” or Luke. See also Colossians 4:14. These are all mentioned as “my fellow workers.”

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen” (Philemon 25): This great word occurred in the greeting (verse 3) as it does in the farewell.

QUESTIONS

1. Who wrote Philemon (Philemon 1:1)?
2. Is such private correspondence valuable, and what wish did W. Robertson Nicoll make?
3. When was Philemon probably written?
4. By whom was this letter borne to Philemon (Colossians 4:7-9, Eph. 6:21f)?
5. Why did Paul write the epistle to Philemon? How does Paul refer to him (Philemon 1)?
6. Do you think Paul wrote it with his “own hand” (verse 19)?
7. How does Paul describe himself in Philemon 1?
8. How many times does the apostle refer to his “bonds” or imprisonment (verses 1, 9, 10, 13, 23)?
9. Who shared Paul’s greeting and captivity (Philemon 1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1)?
10. Who was “our beloved Apphia” (Philemon 2)? “And Archippus... “?
11. Where did the church meet in Colossae (Philemon 2)? Was this the usual custom? When did Christians begin to build churches?
12. Why did Paul “thank my God” for Philemon (Philemon 4-7)?
13. On what basis did Paul make his appeal to Philemon (Philemon 8-9)?
14. How does Paul describe himself (Philemon 9), and how old do you think he was?
15. For whom did Paul “beseech” Philemon (verse 10)? Why? To whom had Paul commended Onesimus (Colossians 4:7-9)?
16. Who was once “unprofitable” but now “profitable to thee and to me” (verse 11)?
17. Although Paul wanted to “retain” Onesimus in Rome, why did he send him back to his master (Philemon 12-14)?
18. What delicate thing does Paul suggest about the “departure” of Onesimus (Philemon 15-16)? Do you believe that this principle, honestly applied, would banish all anti-social evils?
19. On what basis does Paul make his plea (verse 17)? As the apostle signs this PROMISSORY NOTE, what does he remind Philemon (verses 18-21)?
20. What “preparation” does Paul ask Philemon to make and why (Philemon 22)? Who joined with Paul in the “salutations,” and how does he close his priceless letter (Philemon 23-25)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 4

Page 1

Hebrews 1

Memory Verses: Hebrews 1:1-4

Memory Verse:

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (Hebrews 1:1-4).

GOD SPEAKS BY HIS SON

The Epistle to the Hebrews is undoubtedly one of the greatest and most important in the New Testament. While much briefer than the Gospel of John, in a sense it carries on further the exalted picture of the Risen Christ as the King-Priest who reigns and pleads for us now.

From the earliest days, Hebrews has been ascribed to Paul. Some have denied this, and suggest that Luke, Apollos, Barnabas, Philip and even Priscilla wrote the book.

Origen, Greek writer, teacher and church father (185? - 254? AD) wrote of Hebrews: “It was not without reason that the men of old time have handed it down as Paul’s; but who wrote the epistle God only knows certainly.” Origen held that the thoughts were Paul’s while Clement of Rome or Luke may have written the book. Clement of Alexandria (Eusebius says) thought that Paul wrote it in Hebrew and that Luke translated it into Greek.

In the King James Version it is called, in the title, “The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews.” In the American Revised Version it is anonymous, because in the older manuscripts, found since the King James Translation was made, its author is not named.

On the whole, the traditional view, held through the centuries and still widely held, is that PAUL WAS THE AUTHOR.

To Whom Addressed?

The Epistle does not name the Persons to whom it is addressed. It is clearly addressed to Hebrew Christians who were members of some definite community (Hebrews 13:7, 17-19, 22-24), and not to Hebrew Christians as a whole. The writer knew their NEEDS, and there is a PERSONAL TONE THROUGHOUT (Hebrews 5:11, 12; 6:9, 10; 10:32-34; 12:4). Clearly, the author seems to refer to a definite church in the experiences alluded to in Hebrews 10:32-34. The church in Jerusalem had undergone sufferings like these, but we really do not know where the church was. Apparently the author was in Italy when he writes (Hebrews 13:24), though “They of Italy salute you” can mean those who have come from Italy. The Jewish Christians may even have lived in Rome itself. But whether Jerusalem or not, the Hebrew Christians RECOGNIZED THE OBLIGATION of the LAW, and were familiar with the temple worship.

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Date of Hebrews?

Since Hebrews was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the **TEMPLE WAS STILL STANDING**. (Hebrews 8:4; 9:6; 12:27; 13:10) The allusion to “**THE DAY APPROACHING**” (Hebrews 10:25) seems to indicate the catastrophe which happened in 70 AD in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus (40? - 81 and Roman Emperor 79-81 AD). If Paul wrote Hebrews, it seems likely that it must have been written from Rome 61-63 A.D.

Timothy was with the writer (Hebrews 13:23). He had gone to Jerusalem with Paul (Acts 20:4), from whence he had accompanied Paul to Rome (Colossians 1:1), “**Know ye that our brother Timothy is SET AT LIBERTY; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you**” (Hebrews 13:23). Paul was sending Timothy back east (Philippians 2:19, 24). He hoped soon to come himself. And it looks as though he and Timothy were planning to come to Jerusalem (Hebrews 13:23, 19),

James the Overseer of the Jerusalem Church was killed in A.D. 62. Paul and James were beloved friends. Paul had been in Jerusalem some three years before. Probably on hearing of the death of James, Paul wrote this Epistle to the leaders of the Jerusalem church. This would help the leaders to steady their flock for the terrible times ahead.

If this is correct, then there was reason for the Epistle being sent without – Paul’s name; for Paul was not very popular in Jerusalem. While the leaders knew **WHO WROTE IT**, the epistle would have more weight if it were read in the Churches without Paul’s name! New Testament Epistles were written to be **READ IN THE CHURCHES**, a practice now generally overlooked. Our **WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE** wants every New Testament Christian to **HONOR THE WORD OF GOD** so that the **GOD OF THE WORD MAY HONOR YOU!**

Purpose of Hebrews?

The Epistle was intended to lead these Jewish Christians from the **ABC’s** of Christian truth to a mature knowledge of the Gospel. They had **STARTED WELL** in the Christian life, but had **SHOWN A TENDENCY** to be “**dull of hearing**” and go back to Judaism (Heb. 5:11, 12; 6:10; 10:32-34). They had not made progress or striven after a **FULLER** and **DEEPER** spiritual experience (Hebrews 6:1). For this reason **THOROUGHNESS** and **STEADFASTNESS** are shown to be essential.

The two stages of the Christian life are represented by **BABES** and **MEN** (Hebrews 5:12-14), and the Christian life intends that we are to become **MEN** of “**full age**” or development! Were they unwilling to **GO FORWARD** because they feared further persecution (Hebrews 10:34). “**So, let us leave behind the elementary teachings of Christ, and ADVANCE TOWARD MATURITY**” (Hebrews 6:1, Berkeley). The cure for **FAINTHEARTEDNESS** and **BACKSLIDING** is a right conception of the **GLORY** and **WORK** of Christ!

Key Words

Certain keywords are found in Hebrews that help to a fuller appreciation of the **PURPOSE** and **PLAN** of the Epistle.

One of these is **PERFECTION**. It occurs eleven times and never means sinlessness, but refers to a mature Christian experience, in contrast to a rudimentary one. See Hebrews 7:19, 11; 6:1; 10:14; 12:1, 2; 2:10; 5:8; 7:28.

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Another key word is ETERNAL (Hebrews 5:9, 6:2, 9:12, 14, 15; 13:20) and FOREVER (Hebrews 1:8; 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24, 2S; 13:8).

“BETTER” is shown throughout the Epistle (Hebrews 1:4; 6:9; 7:7, 7:19; 7:22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:6, 35, 40; 12:24).

Outline

- I. Doctrinal Instruction (Hebrews 1:1-10:18)
 - A. The Great High Priest (Hebrews 1-7).
 - B. The Atoning Work (Hebrews 8:1 to 10:18).
- II. Practical Exhortations (Hebrews 10:19-13:17)
 - A. The Privileges of the Christian Life (Hebrews 10:19-25).
 - B. A Warning against Willful Sin (Hebrews 10:26-31).
 - C. The Principle of the Christian Life (Hebrews 10:32-12:2).
 - D. The Trials of the Christian Life (Hebrews 12:3-13).
 - E. The Necessity of Peace and Purity (Hebrews 12:14-17).
 - F. A Warning against Refusing God’s Voice (Hebrews 12:18-29).
 - G. Duties of the Christian Life (Hebrews 13:1-17).
- III. Personal Messages (Hebrews 13:18-25)

I. The Son and the Prophets (Hebrews 1:1-4)

A. The Fact of a Divine Revelation (Hebrews 1:1)

“God...” (Hebrews 1:1) This vital introduction of four verses is summed in “GOD... HATH... SPOKEN.” The Bible never argues for the existence of God; it always assumes His existence (Genesis 1:1). “God... HATH... SPOKEN” whether in the Old Testament or the New, it is the VOICE OF GOD! Since “God is LOVE” (I John 4:8, 16), the probability of revelation becomes assured, since LOVE MUST OF NECESSITY MANIFEST ITSELF. So God has SPOKEN HIS WILL to us (John 3:16). God’s REVELATION calls for a RESPONSE from man. “He that is of God hears God’s words” (John 8:47).

B. The Reality of the Old Testament as a Divine Revelation (Hebrews 1:1).

“After God had of old spoken to our fathers at various times and in many ways by means of the prophets...” (Hebrews 1:1) God has REVEALED His will to us. Man did not DISCOVER GOD’S WILL. God is the EXISTING ONE, the Being Absolute who has given us “At sundry times” in the Old Testament a divine revelation of His will concerning His Son Jesus Christ “in many parts.”

This gradual revelation of God’s will was to Eve (Genesis 3:15), to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3), and was “here a little, and there a little” of God’s will (Isaiah 28:10-14).

This emphasis on the REALITY and yet the INCOMPLETENESS of the Old Testament is of vital importance TODAY, because it bears witness at once to the FACT and also the LIMITATIONS of that part of “Holy Scripture.”

“IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME” Jesus FULLY REVEALED the way of salvation (John 14:6; 8:12; 11:25, 26).

“Divers manners...” God sometimes made His will known to “the fathers” by dreams, visions, symbols, and audible voices.

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“By the prophets...” God first worked in the prophets, and then through them, in making known to the Hebrew fathers the various messages of His grace.

C. The Superiority of Christ as a Divine Revelation (Hebrews 1:2-4).

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...” (Hebrews 1:2) “The Old Testament slopes UPWARD TO CHRIST” (John R. Sampey). The revelation of Christ to us IS COMPLETE, not preparatory. It is embodied in One Who is SUPREME, and did not come to us through sub-ordinates. “Thus the revelation in Christ is seen to be SUPERIOR to the Old Testament in relation to Character, time, destination, and Agent.” Both testaments are Divine, but the New Testament is God’s FULL and – FINAL MESSAGE, TO MAN through His only begotten Son. To show that Christ was a “SON-REVELATION” the writer gives the proofs of Christ’s superiority. There are seven references to Christ as THE SON in the Epistle (Hebrews 1:2, 5, 8; 3:6; 4:14; 5:8; 6:6; 7:28; 10:29).

1. “Whom He hath appointed heir of all things” (Hebrews 1:2): Christ the Heir. SONSHIP passes to HEIRSHIP. Study Gal. 4:7; Rom. 8:17; Matt. 11:27. The Son is to be the UNIVERSAL RULER. This points to the END and CROWN of ALL HISTORY (Rev. 11:15). God made this appointment in his eternal purpose as recorded in Psalm 2:7, 8; 110:1.

2. “By whom also he made the worlds.” (Hebrews 1:2) The Heir of all things was their Creator. “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). “Worlds” or “ages” seem to refer to the plan and arrangement of the various dispensations through which the created world has passed, is passing, and will pass.

3. “Who being the brightness of his glory...” (Hebrews 1:3) Christ the Revealer. Jesus is the EXACT EXPRESSION of God’s being. “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). Jesus is “the reflection of God’s glory.” He is the “effulgence” or “irradiated brightness” of God. “And the express image of his person...” Christ is the “exact representation of His very Being.” Christ, like the Shekinah glory, is the visible representation of the substance of God.

4. “And upholding all things by the word of his power...” Christ the Sustainer. “And He is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17). History is His-Story. He carries forward, He guides, He governs and brings to a right conclusion the whole course of nature and of history.

5. “When he had by himself purged our sins...” Christ the Redeemer. Jesus is not only the REVEALER OF GOD, but also the REDEEMER OF MAN. This is the HEART OF THE GOSPEL! “Purged our sins” is probably emphasized here because CLEANSING is the main theme of the Epistle. It is the ONE EFFECT OF REDEMPTION, and seems to point back to the ceremonial defilement dealt with in the old law (see Numbers 19). It is appropriate as this Epistle is for believers rather than for alien sinners.

6. “Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Christ the Ruler. The Lord FINISHED HIS WORK, and “SAT DOWN.” No priest ever did this in the temple, as his work has NEVER “FINISHED”! Only Christ could say, “It is finished” (John 19:30).

7. “Being made so much better than the angels...” (Hebrews 1:4) Christ Supreme. In view of what Jesus did, God gave Him a “NAME” or a rank, a dignity, ABOVE that given to the highest of created beings. Jesus is the universal King (Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 28:18-20; I Corinthians 15:24). Because Jesus arose from the dead, He “was declared to be the Son of God with power” (Romans 1:4).

Christ is PROPHET (verse 2), PRIEST (verse 3), and KING (verse 3).

“Being made so much better than the angels...” (Hebrews 1:4) This phrase is really a transition to the argument of Hebrews, in which the writer shows the superiority of the SON to angels, and to all other mediators between God and men. The apostle shows Christ’s SUPERIORITY TO ANGELS, because

through angels the Jewish law was given. “You, who received the Law through mediation and have not observed it” (Acts 7:53). Because the Jews venerated “angels” because of their place in giving the law, it was needful to show that CHRIST IS “BETTER” or SUPERIOR to “angels” (Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:3). This is done with SEVEN Quotations from the Old Testament.

There are at least 35 quotations from the Old Testament in the Letter to the Hebrews. Some of these quotations, like Deut. 32:43 (Heb. 1:6), are from the Greek Septuagint rather than from the Hebrew Old Testament.

II. Christ the Son Is “BETTER THAN ANGELS” (Hebrews 1:5-14)

“For unto which of the angels said he at any time...” (Hebrews 1:5): The comparison of Christ with angels as a MEDIATOR between God and man forms the substance of the first two chapters of this Epistle. Hebrews 1:5-14 represents Christ as the SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD. Hebrews 2:5-18 represents Him as the TRUE REPRESENTATIVE OF MEN.

Between these two passages a warning AGAINST NEGLECT is introduced (Hebrews 2:1-4).

“Thou art my Son...” No angel was ever addressed as “Son.” “This day” refers to the time of Jesus’ resurrection (Acts 13:33) and the time when the King entered upon His exalted office at God’s right hand. The quotation is taken from Psalm 2:7.

“And... I will be to him a Father, and he... a Son?” This quotation is from II Samuel 7:14. It contains words spoken by Nathan in reference to the heirs of David, who are assured of divine grace and guidance in their kingly tasks. Their real fulfillment is IN CHRIST, and NOT IN ANGELS!

“And let all the angels of God WORSHIP HIM” (Hebrews 1:6): This quotation from Psalm 97:7 calls on angels to worship the Son in His second Advent, thus showing the Son’s SUPERIORITY TO ANGELS.

“And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits...” (Hebrews 1:7) In contrast to be paid to the Son by the angels, the angels are described as SERVANTS. This quotation is based on Psalm 104:4.

“But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever...” (Hebrews 1:8) This quotation is from Psalm 45:6. In further contrast with the angels, “ministering spirits,” the Son is declared to be divine Sovereign whose rule is eternal. This rule is a righteous rule, exercised with unique joy (verse 9; Psalm 45:7). Christ is the Divine King with an eternal Kingdom. He is the “ANOINTED” of God and is ABOVE ALL other “anointed” Prophets, Priests, and Kings!

“And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth...” (Hebrews 1:10) A quotation from Psalm 102:25-27. The Son is the eternal Creator in contrast with the “angels” whom He brought into being.

“And the heavens... shall perish.” (Hebrews 1:10b, 11) All created things shall grow old and pass away. But God’s Son “REMAINS” as Creator and Preserver of the universe (John 1:1-3, Col. 1:14f).

“And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up... changed.” (Hebrews 1:12) The “heavens” shall be rolled away. They are rolled up to be put away like a worn out garment.

“BUT THOU ARE THE SAME...” The Son is ETERNAL. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

“But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand.” (Hebrews 1:13) The last contrast is linked with the first (Hebrews 1:5) by the clause with which it is introduced: “But to which of the angels said he at any time.” In the form.” case the thought was the greater “name” given to the Son. Here it is of his superior place and power, as indicated by a quotation from Psalm 110:1, a Messianic Psalm. The figure

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is borrowed from an ancient custom followed by Joshua when he commanded his captains of war to place their feet upon the necks of the conquered kings. Here it is used to picture the ultimate universal reign of Christ. Christ is now seated at the “right hand of the Majesty on high,” yet He is to wield the scepter of dominion over all His foes. Angels exercise no such rule.

“Are they not all ministering spirits...” (Hebrews 1:14) This last question is a further indication that the angels do SERVICE, while the Son possesses “ALL AUTHORITY” (Matthew 28:18).

“Minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” “Salvation” occurs here for the first time, and refers to believers (Hebrews 2:3, 10; 5:9; 6:9; 7:25; 9:28). “Salvation” covers PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE, and deals with the PENALTY, the POWER, and the PRESENCE OF SIN. It involves the believer’s COMPLETE REDEMPTION, and POINTS FORWARD TO SOMETHING STILL to be possessed and enjoyed in the “land that is fairer than day!” Until that day when we as Christians shall receive the full inheritance of our salvation, let us put our trust in our exalted Lord, and look to Him for grace.

“Angels” to service for the saved and are used for our good. “And if so, may we not be aided, inspired, guided by a cloud of witnesses – not – witnesses only, but helpers, agents like ourselves of the immanent God?” (Sir Oliver Lodge, THE HIBBERT Journal, Jan. 1903, page 223).

The ONE THOUGHT of all these passages is the SUPERIORITY OF THE SON TO ANGELS. Such language as is here quoted was never used of angels. There is a five-fold superiority:

1. Sonship (verse 5).
2. Worship (verse 6).
3. Heirship (verses 7-9).
4. Kingship (verses 10-12).
5. Rulership (verses 13-14).

QUESTIONS

1. What did Origen the church father say of Hebrews?
2. To whom is Hebrews addressed (Hebrews 13:7, 17-19, 22-24; 10:32-34)?
3. When was Hebrews probably written? Why (Hebrews 8:4; 10:25; 13:19, 23)?
4. Why did Paul probably not sign his name to Hebrews?
5. What is the purpose of Hebrews (Hebrews 5:11, 12; 6:1, 10; 10:32-34)?
6. What is your favorite “key-word” in Hebrews?
7. Who spoke to men “in time past” (Hebrews 1:1)?
8. How did He speak (Hebrews 1:1)?
9. How has God spoken to us (Hebrews 1:2)?
10. Can you enumerate the proofs of Christ’s superiority (Hebrews 1:2-4)?
11. In what respect is Christ “better” than the angels (Hebrews 1:4; Philippians 2:9)?
12. How is Christ represented in Hebrews 1:5-14?
13. Was any “angel” ever addressed as “Son” (Hebrews 1:5; Psalm 2:7; Acts 13:33)?
14. Do the words of II Samuel 7:14 find fulfillment in Christ or in angels?
15. What had the Father said to the “Son” which He could not say to the angels (Hebrews 1:8-13)?
16. How do these passages show that Christ is better than the “angels” (Hebrews 1:6; 2:5)?
17. What are we told regarding the ministry of “angels” (Hebrews 1:7, 14)?
18. How did the Father testify to the deity of Christ (Hebrews 1:8)?
19. How is Christ related to Creation (Hebrews 1:10-12)?
20. Can you enumerate the five-fold superiority of the “Son” to “angels” (Heb. 1:5, 6, 7-9; 10-12; 13-14)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 5

Page 1

Hebrews 2

Memory Verse: Hebrews 2:10

Memory Verse:

“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.” (Hebrews 2:10)

OUR GREAT SALVATION

The Lord Jesus Christ is GREATER THAN BOTH the prophets (Hebrews 1:1-3) and the angels (Hebrews 1:4-2:18).

It is the method of the author of Hebrews to use the truth that he has established as the BASIS FOR AN EXHORTATION or WARNING that he addresses to his readers. These warnings may seem to interrupt his argument. In a sense this is true. They are somewhat of the nature of a parenthesis. However, they touch the very heart of the Epistle, as they are all designed to KEEP THE READERS TRUE TO CHRIST and to prevent their becoming apostate from the truth. “What must I do to be lost?” a man asked. “Nothing!” was the startling answer.

I. The Peril of Drifting (Hebrews 2:1-4)

“Therefore...” (Hebrews 2:1) Because Jesus is SUPERIOR to prophets and angels and because the NEW REVELATION is SUPERIOR to the OLD, or Mosaic Law. This word is the “HINGE of the apostle’s argument. It is the connecting link between the conclusion which follows, and all that he has said in the preceding chapter.”

“We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard...” There is a real danger of neglecting what God has clearly and finally revealed to us through His Son. This first warning is AGAINST INDIFFERENCE! Christians must “give the more earnest heed” to the SAVING MESSAGE SPOKEN BY CHRIST to us. There is NEED of such an appeal. A great danger of the Christian life is LOSING INTEREST IN WHAT IS FAMILIAR (study Matthew 22:5; Hebrews 8:5), STEADFASTNESS is essential to a true Christian life (Hebrews 3:14; 4:2, 12, 13; 6:1, 19; 10:26; 12:27-28; 13:8). There is no substitute for steadfastness in our relationship to Christ. We do not NEED a NEW REVELATION, we daily NEED to HEED the Son’s revelation to us!

“Lest at any time we should let them slip.” There is a real danger that we “DRIFT AWAY FROM THEM” – from the wonderful revelation God has given us through His Son. The figure of that of a “boat being swept along past its anchorage with no oars and no sails, and at the mercy of the currents.”

“For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast...” (Hebrews 2:2) An allusion to the USE OF ANGELS by the Lord at Sinai (Acts 7:38; Galatians 3:19; Deuteronomy 33:2). Every transgression of the divine law received its righteous punishment. Since God’s word has NOW COME TO US, NOT THROUGH ANGELS, BUT THROUGH HIS SON, our responsibility is GREATER (see Luke 12:47-48).

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation...” (Hebrews 2:3). If the revelation introduced by angels was so sacred that all disobedience to it was severely punished, there is NO HOPE OF ESCAPE for those who refuse to HEAR and OBEY THE, SON who was God’s FULL REVELATION to US.

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There are many that reject God's salvation; there are many more that NEGLECT it because they find it so easy to DRIFT. Did you ever try drifting down the river with the current? It is easy – and dangerous. "So" expresses an unfathomable depth (John 3:16).

"Great salvation." It is "GREAT" because it is divine, free, full, sufficient, universal and everlasting. To "neglect so great salvation" means there is NO "ESCAPE" from the righteous judgment in this and the world to come, the gospel has been "spoken unto us by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." The apostles who had HEARD and SEEN THE RISEN Christ first proclaimed his gospel publicly on Pentecost (Acts 2).

"God also bearing them witness..." (Hebrews 2:4) The gospel of Christ "was additionally corroborated by God with signs and wonders and a great variety of miraculous powers, as distributed by the Holy Spirit according to His will."

"With signs." The purpose of miracles was to attest the truth of the Message of the apostles of our Lord. "Wonders." Expresses the effect of the "signs" upon the observers. "Divers miracles" or works.

"Gifts of the Holy Ghost." In addition to the "confirming" the gospel with "signs... wonders, and with divers miracles," the "gifts of the Holy Spirit" were granted particularly to members of the Apostolic Church. The "gifts" were those of healing, of prophecy, and of "tongues". They were for the purpose of substantiating the truth of the gospel. It is not LACK of EVIDENCE that turns us from Christ and the Gospel. It is hellish NEGLECT. The only protection against the NEGLECT and DRIFTING from the Gospel is to have Christ as the ANCHOR and RUDDER OF LIFE. "The anchor will hold to the truth, while the rudder will guide us by the truth."

II. The Person of the Representative Man (Hebrews 2:5-9)

"For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come..." (Hebrews 2:5): The writer now reverts to the mainline of teaching after the plain warning of Hebrews 2:1-4. Verse 5 reverts to Hebrews 1:14. The author now proceeds to show in Hebrews 2:5-18 that the very humanity of Jesus, the Son of Man, likewise proves his SUPERIORITY to ANGELS.

"The world to come" is literally "the inhabited earth in the future." It is God's purpose that MAN, NOT ANGELS, is to rule in the future the habitable world under the reign and government of the Messiah. God did not put the new order in charge of angels.

"But... What is man..." (Hebrews 2:6) A quotation from Psalm 8:4-7. Here is found a statement of the weakness and insignificance of man and of man's inferiority to angels. But here is also an assurance of man's dominion and universal rule. God made man "a little lower than the angels" (verse 7). God created man to have mastery "over the works of they hands."

"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet" (Hebrews 2:8): Man's sovereignty was meant to be ALL-INCLUSIVE including the administration of the world to come. "He is crowned king of nature, invested with a divine authority over creation" (Moffatt). But how far short of this DESTINY HAS MAN COME!

"But now we see not yet all things put under him." "All things" except God (I Corinthians 15:27) have been made subject to man. Not even in this wonderful twentieth century with man's triumph over nature has man reached God's goal for him. Wonderful as are the researches by the help of telescope and microscope, the airplane, the submarine, steam, electricity, radio, television, and satellites, walks on the moon – "not yet" still applies to man. Sin entered and ROBBED MAN OF HIS DOMINION OVER "all things!"

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“But we see Jesus...” (Hebrews 2:9) Paul here “makes a very striking contrast between Jesus and man, to whom by the decree of God, the world is to be subjected.” While we do not see MAN TRIUMPHANT, WE DO SEE Jesus TRIUMPHANT. “Death has defeated man, but Jesus has conquered death.” Jesus actually “tasted death for every man.” Death was a “BITTER EXPERIENCE, not a rapid sip” (Moffatt) for our Lord! His death was “sufficient for all, efficient for some.” WHAT we LOST THROUGH ADAM’S SIN, we REGAIN THROUGH THE SUFFERING and DEATH of our Lord Jesus Christ! Jesus “ranked lower than the angels for a little while” and identified Himself with man that He might bring man to his God-appointed place!

III. The Precious Work of the Representative Man (Hebrews 2:10-18)

A. Its Fitness in Relation to God (Hebrews 2:10-13).

“For it became him...” (Hebrews 2:10) “For it befitted Him” or “It was appropriate” (Goodspeed) that Christ should “suffer... taste death for every man.” It was part of God’s gracious purpose toward man, for the purpose of “bringing many sons unto glory.”

“To make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” “Captain” or “Author” means Leader, and is only found four times in Scripture, twice in this Epistle (Hebrews 12:2) and twice in Acts (3:15; 5:31). He is both PRINCE and LEADER. Christ was “perfected” through His sufferings. He was “being equipped for His work as Saviour.” There was no moral fault of sin in Christ (Hebrews 4:15), but He lived His human life in order to be able to be a sympathizing and effective leader in the work of salvation.

“For both he... they... are all of one.” (Hebrews 2:11) Jesus is not ashamed to OWN US AS “BROTHERS,” unworthy though we are. To show our Lord’s willingness to take His place among men as their brother, the writer quotes two passages as though they had been spoken by Christ (Psalm 22:22; Isaiah 8:17-18). The first quotation Christ applied to Himself when on the cross. The language quoted from the Psalm is ascribed to Christ, but is addressed to God. The point is that the speaker calls the worshippers “BRETHREN!”

The second quotation shows Christ’s dependence upon God and His close fellowship with us His “brethren”! Here we have the picture of public worship and the Messiah sharing it with others as we know Jesus often did (verse 12). The third quotation (verse 13) the Messiah shows Himself closely linked with the “children of God” (Isaiah 8:18), the “sons” of verse 10.

B. Its Necessity in Relation to Men (Hebrews 2:14-16).

“Forasmuch... he also... took part of the same.” (Hebrews 2:14) “Since, then, the children share flesh and blood, He personally shared it with them, so that by means of His death He might neutralize the one who wields the power of death, namely the devil, and set free those who throughout life were held in slavery by fear of death” (verses 14-15). Now comes the HUMAN SIDE after the presentation of the DIVINE (verses 10-13). The Incarnation is seen to be REAL (verse 14), and its purpose is stated as being to “bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Satan uses death to frighten God’s children, but Christ through His death has robbed the devil of this power, for by dying He broke the association between sin and death.

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Satan can not determine the continuance or the ending of human life. He tempts man to sin, and “the wages of sin” brings DEATH TO MAN (Romans 6:23). As Christians, we can regard death “as a servant in dark livery who ushers” us into a larger and better life with God forever (II Corinthians 5:6-8). Jesus has the KEYS of LIFE and DEATH and said, “I am the life...” (John 14:6). Thank God for that (John 14:19).

“For verily he... took on him the seed of Abraham” (Hebrews 2:16): Jesus did not lay hold of an ANGEL FORM in order to save angels, but the HUMAN FORM and NATURE, in order to be man’s Saviour. He chose to be the “seed of Abraham,” being the Son of Mary, a descendent of Abraham.

C. Its Obligation in Relation to Christ (Hebrews 2:17-18).

“Wherefore... it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.” (Hebrews 2:17) For the reasons given above, it was necessary that Christ take man’s nature. Because Jesus undertook the work of redemption (John 3:16), voluntarily (John 10:17), He was under obligation to be properly equipped for that priestly service and sacrifice.

“In all things”: Jesus was “made like” us “in every respect” except yielding to sin (Hebrews 4:15).

“That he might be a merciful and faithful high priest...” Christ is here called “Priest” for the first time, but it is only mentioned, the full treatment being deferred. “Merciful and faithful” are important, for both are needed. He was “merciful” to man and “faithful” to God as he “made reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

“Reconciliation.” It means “atonement,” propitiation. The word “propitiation” is very important. It means “that which makes it consistent for God to pardon.” It is sometimes said that propitiation in the New Testament is never directed to God, as though it were necessary to “propitiate” God. But the question arises as to the real object of the word. How could man be propitiated? There must be one who propitiates and another who is propitiated. When the publican offered his prayer it was “God be PROPITIOUS to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13). The true idea seems to be, that God offers to Himself the sacrifice of Christ, so that He is at once the ONE WHO PROPITIATES and the One WHO IS PROPITIATED. This sets aside all idea of anything unworthy of God, like anger or offense, and refers to His righteous attitude toward sin. God’s justice could not overlook sin and His love could not be indifference to the sinner, and so what His righteousness demanded, His love PROVIDED (John 3:16), and Christ, God’s gift to the world, is “the propitiation for our sins.”

“For in that he him self hath suffered... he is able” (Hebrews 2:18) The outcome of this work is stated in this verse. Christ had all the qualifications for being our High Priest, hence “HE IS ABLE” to help us who are in need. Christ was “tempted” to escape the cross (Matthew 4:8-11), by Peter in the spirit of Satan (Matthew 16:22f), in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39). Satan caused Jesus intense suffering (Luke 22:44; Hebrews 5:7-8). Jesus “is ABLE” to help man not merely because He was God in the flesh, but because He was the Son of man in the flesh (Hebrews 4:15).

“To succor...” Touched with a feeling for our weaknesses Jesus will run to us as our Elder Brother when we CALL FOR HELP (Matthew 15:25).

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QUESTIONS

1. In chapters 1 and 2 our Lord is shown to be greater than who (Hebrews 1:1-2:18)?
2. What is the “hinge” word in Hebrews 2:1? Why?
3. Against what danger are the hearers of the Word warned (Hebrews 2:1-4)?
4. “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation” (Hebrews 2:3)?
5. In what ways did God confirm His Son’s Gospel (Hebrews 2:4)?
6. Did God intend for man or angels to rule in “the world to come” (Hebrews 2:5)?
7. When, and for what purpose, was Christ made “a little lower than the angels” (Hebrews 2:7-9, Philippians 2:6-8)?
8. What crown did Christ receive from the Father after the cross (Hebrews 2:7-9, Philippians 2:8-11)?
9. What is it that “we see not yet” fulfilled (Hebrews 2:8)?
10. What do we “see” now (Hebrews 2:9)?
11. What not yet put under man’s subjection (Hebrews 2:8-9)?
12. Who “tasted death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9)?
13. How was the “captain of our salvation” made “perfect” (Hebrews 2:10)?
14. What is meant by “bringing many sons unto glory” (Hebrews 2:10)?
15. Is Jesus ashamed to call us “brethren” (Hebrews 2:11)?
16. If you are “ashamed” of Jesus and His words now, what will be His attitude toward you “when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels” (Mark 8:38)?
17. Why was Christ made LIKE MAN (Hebrews 2:11-14, 16, 17)?
18. Was Jesus made like us in “all things” (Hebrews 2:17)?
19. What offices are ascribed to Christ thus far in Hebrews (1:2, 3, 8, 10, 12; 2:9, 17)?
20. What does this lesson tell us about the death of Christ (Hebrews 2:9, 14, 15)? Is He “able” to help you (Hebrews 2:18)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 6
Hebrews 3

Page 1
Memory Verse: Hebrews 3:3

Memory Verse:

“For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath built the house hath more honor than the house” (Hebrews 3:3).

CHRIST BETTER THAN MOSES

How great is Moses! But Jesus is greater. Many Jewish Christians, in their babe-like state (Hebrews 5:11-13), had not fully learned the relation of Christ to Moses. “It seems that they still thought of Moses as the Law Giver, and of Christ as an Executive to enforce the Law of Moses on all other nations; MOSES FIRST, CHRIST UNDER HIM. But they had it JUST BACKWARD!”

Better Than Moses

Today we shall see WHY Christ is BETTER THAN MOSES. Remember that Christ is

1. Greater than the prophets (Hebrews 1:1-3).
2. “Better than angels” (Hebrews 1:4-2:18).

Hebrews 1 shows our Lord’s DIVINITY. Hebrews 2 presents His HUMANITY. Hebrews 3 affirms His APOSTLESHIP (Hebrews 3:1f).

Our kinship with Christ (Hebrews 2:14-17) suggests His Priesthood. Priesthood “IMPLIES a SPIRITUAL HOUSEHOLD, which in turn gives rise to the thoughts of service in the case of Moses and the builder of the house, God, and Christ the Son.”

I. The Son and the Servant (Hebrews 3:1-6)

A. The Address, Exhortation and Description (Hebrews 3:1).

“Wherefore...” (Hebrews 3:1) This is an adverb used conjunctively. By reason of the fact that Christ is GREATER THAN PROPHETS AND ANGELS as shown in chapters 1 and 2.

“Holy brethren...” The use of the term “brethren” is one of personal endearment. It denotes relationship. “Holy” shows their position of consecration.

“Partakers of the heavenly calling...” Their wonderful privilege. Does “heavenly calling” imply a contrast between the EARTHLY PROMISES of the followers of Moses and the hopes of THINGS ABOVE shared by the followers of Christ? This is a common contrast in this Epistle, the contrast between the world and heaven, between the material and the transient, and the ideal and the eternal.

“Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.” These “holy brethren” are urged to “take notice how faithful Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of our confession” was to God. To “consider” means to observe as to appreciate and understand. To put the mind down on a thing; to fix the mind on as in Matthew

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7:3. To observe “Jesus” as to appreciate and understand Him, will prevent APOSTASY of the readers by helping them realize the incomparable glory and saving power of Christ! The exhortation is based on the two preceding chapters by “wherefore.”

“Apostle...” This is the only time in the New Testament that Jesus is called ‘apostolos,’ though He often used ‘apostello’ of God’s sending him forth as in John 17:3. “Apostle” means one who is sent; a messenger of any kind, as the one sent by God for the redemption of mankind. “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (I John 4:14). Christ is God’s Apostle in this gospel of grace age, as Moses was His Apostle under the Law (Exodus 3:10, 13-15, 4:28).

“High Priest of our profession.” This is the second meaning of “high priest” (Hebrews 2:17), and here (Hebrews 3:1). This expresses His relation to God as man’s representative, and as such may be said to correspond to the position of Aaron the Priest. “Apostle” and “High Priest” are the two titles that complete our Lord’s work as sent by God and as representing man.

“Our profession.” Or “our confession.” These Hebrew Christians had confessed Jesus as their Apostle and High Priest. They do not begin to understand what Jesus is and means if they are tempted to give Him up! We must “HOLD FAST our profession” (Hebrews 4:14; 10:23; 13:15; see I Timothy 6:12-13). “Confession” of Christ through word and life is essential to our salvation (Matthew 10:32-33, Romans 10:9-10).

B. The Comparison and Reminder (Hebrews 3:2-6).

“Who was faithful to him that appointed him...” (Hebrews 3:2) The faithfulness and trustworthiness of our “High Priest... Christ Jesus” is to be considered by all “holy brethren.” Christ is likened to Moses who was “faithful in all his house.” The writer does not disparage Moses. “Moses was faithful”; he was willing for the sake of Israel to be blotted out of the book of God; he was worthy to be trusted. It is almost startling to read “Jesus... was faithful... as... Moses!”

“Moses was faithful in all his house.” An allusion to Numbers 12:7. The “His” is God’s. The use of ‘oikos’ for the people (family) of God, not the building, but the group (I Timothy 3:15) in which God is the Father. But wherein is Jesus SUPERIOR TO MOSES?

“But this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses...” (Hebrews 3:3) “This man” refers to Jesus. “The architect is superior to the house just as Sir Christopher Wren is superior to St. Paul’s Cathedral.” God assigned to His Son the position of one that organizes and regulates His household. Christ is superior to Moses. 1. We see His superior glory as the BUILDER of the house has more glory than the house itself (Hebrews 1:2; 3:3-4). 2. There is the superiority of position, as a “SON” is higher than a “servant.” (Hebrews 3:5-6)

It is significant that in Hebrews 3:1 our Lord is spoken of by His human name “Jesus.” In Hebrews 3:6 he is spoke of by His Divine Name or title “Christ.”

“But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we...” (Hebrews 3:6) Our Lord is the builder and Head of His church (Matthew 16:16-18; Colossians 1:18), as well as the builder of the house of Israel. Cod’s “household” of Israel existed before Moses (Hebrews 11:2, 25). Jesus as God’s Son founded and supervised this house of God.

“Whose house are we.” “Ye are God’s building” (I Corinthians 3:9), the CHURCH TODAY. “Ye also, as lively stores, are built up a spiritual house...” (I Peter 2:5).

“If we hold fast...” As Christian, then, we are Christ’s “house.” We will continue to be Christ’s “house,” “IF to the very end we firmly maintain the confidence and sense of triumph which our hope inspires.” “Be thou faithful UNTO DEATH, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10c).

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The possibility of FALLING AWAY, as Israelites fell away from God's house of Israel, is pointed out in the next section. As Christians we MUST BE LOYAL TO CHRIST, or we are traitors and deserters. We must "HOLD FAST" to Christ (Hebrews 3:14; 4:14), or we shall never share Heaven with Him (John 12:26; 14:3). There is an old saying about "whistling to keep up the courage." The way to be a good Christian is DAILY and BOLDLY to glory in our Christian hope.

II. The Sad Example of Israel (Hebrews 3:7-19)

The second interjected warning extends from Hebrews 3:7-4:13. This section concerns the PERIL of DISBELIEF, as the first warning concerned the PERIL OF DRIFTING (Hebrews 2:1-4). We shall study today Hebrews 3:7-19.

A. An Example (Hebrews 3:7-11).

"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith)..." (Hebrews 3:7) The quotation is from Psalm 95:7. David earnestly invites his brethren to worship God because God is above all gods, the Creator of all things, and the Good Shepherd of Israel (Psalm 95: 1-2; Hebrews 3:3-7). Note that the Holy Ghost inspired David (see II Peter 1:21; II Timothy 3:16-17).

Since Jesus is SUPERIOR TO MOSES, and since Christians are a part of the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD TODAY IF WE HOLD FAST to the end of life, take this warning to heart which God made to our fathers.

"Today... hear his voice." The warning points out the PERIL of UNBELIEF and the DANGER of LOSING THE PROMISED REST! It is "TODAY" or NEVER. God wishes us to hear Him "TODAY," not tomorrow (see Acts 2:41; 16:33:18:8; II Corinthians 6:2).

"Harden not your hearts..." (Hebrews 3:8) A prohibition urging that we not render the heart insensible to God's plea. To "harden" is to dry up, or stiffen.

"Provocation... in the wilderness." Two possibilities may be referred to in this exasperating "provocation."

Ten (10) UNBELIEVING SPIES bring back a report of Canaan: "We are as GRASSHOPPERS" (Numbers 13:33). Ten unbelievers CAUSED A WHOLE GENERATION OF their fathers to LOSE CANAAN (read Numbers 14:21-37).

Exodus 17 may be referred to "where your fathers for forty years tried me by putting Me to the proof and saw what I did" (Hebrews 3:9). Here the Israelites cried against Moses and COMPLAINED AGAINST GOD (Exodus 17:1-7). Moses called the "Name of the place Massah..." (Exodus 17:7) "Strife," proving, tempting. "Ye shall not tempt the Lord Your God, as ye tempted him in Massah" (Deuteronomy 6:16). "And at... Massah... Ye provoked the Lord to wrath" (Deuteronomy 9:22). The name is connected with Meribah (Deuteronomy 33:8). "...and Meribah" (Exodus 17:7): "Contention," chiding. We do not know to which of the two places David referred.

"When your fathers tempted me... forty years." (Hebrews 3:9) "Wilderness" (verse 8) refers to any wasteland. God led them through the "wilderness" because 1. It was less likely to lead to war, and 2. It gave God a chance to prove His power and love,

"In the wilderness" Israel "tested" or "tempted" God "by putting Me to the proof" for forty years! God gave them water, manna and quails for food, and "the cloud by day... the pillar of fire by night." (Exodus 13:22) for guidance and protection (see Deuteronomy 8:15f). Yet Israel asked: "Where is His Power?"

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“Wherefore I was grieved with that generation...” (Hebrews 3:10) “Generation” means race, or men of one age. Israel was not content with God’s promises; they demanded positive proof or “works” (verse 9). Such disbelief of His Word “grieves” God. God could have led Israel from Horeb by way of Mt. Sinai to Kadesh Barnea in eleven days! Because of their refusal to follow His leading, it took “forty years”.

“They do always err in their heart...” “Err” means to wander, go astray.

“So I swore... They shall not enter into my rest.” (Hebrews 3:11) “Swore” refers to what God spoke concerning DISBELIEVING Israel (Deuteronomy 14:20-40). “Wrath” refers to God’s condemnation. Read these passages and see how Israel DISHONORED GOD (Exodus 14:1-12; 15:22-26; 16:1-3; 17:1-7; 32: 1-29; Numbers 11:1-34; 14:1-40)! This last rejection FILLED UP THE CUP OF ISRAEL’S INIQUITY. They had killed their last hope of entering God’s promised “rest” in the land of Canaan.

The thought of “rest” here and throughout this section is “not that of relief from fatigue, but cessation from work which has been well done.”

B. The Warning (Hebrews 3:12).

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief...” (Hebrews 3:12) The loving appeal is to “brethren;” very tactfully the suggestion is made that they, too, with DISBELIEVING HEARTS would “fall away from the LIVING GOD” (see Hebrews 10:31). UNBELIEF is due to a HARDENED HEART. Hardening of the heart is caused by sin. The result is apostasy – in the days of Moses, and in the day when this epistle was written!

C. An Appeal (Hebrews 3:13).

“But exhort one another daily... TODAY” (Hebrews 3:13): During this “day of grace,” let us “exhort” or encourage one another daily. In strengthening other Christians to hear the voice of God through Christ, we are “growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (II Peter 3:18). Not to do this is to be “hardened in the delusion of sin.” Sin seduces the soul to be disloyal to Christ. “Sin” is like Jael, who, when asked by Sisera for water, brought forth milk, “butter in a lordly dish,” but had the hammer and nail behind (Judges 4:15, 17’21). The victory over Sisera was attributed to divine leading: “From heaven the stars fought; in their courses they fought against Sisera” (Judges 5:20).

D. The Statement (Hebrews 3:14-15).

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if...” (Hebrews 3:14) Only if we maintain “firmly to the very end” our salvation through Christ, will be “made partakers” or “sharers of Christ!” Can we expect a FAITHFUL CHRIST to SAVE an UNFAITHFUL CHRISTIAN (Matthew 25:21, 23; Revelation 2:10c)?

“While it is said, Today... harden not your hearts.” (Hebrews 3:15) The solemn warning of Psalm 95:7 is quoted again. We have only ONE CHANCE (Hebrews 9:27). No purgatory, or second chance, is taught in Hebrews!

E. An Inquiry (Hebrews 3:16-18).

“For some...” (Hebrews 3:16) “Some” should read “who” as in the Revised Version. There are three questions and three answers, the questions indicating so many stages of human sin and divine displeasure.

“Who, having heard, provoked?” The very people that were delivered from Egypt, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 14:6-10).

“But with whom was he grieved forty years...?” (Hebrews 3:17) “Was it not with THOSE WHO SINNED, whose CORPSES FELL IN THE DESERT?”

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“And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest...” (Hebrews 3:18) The DISOBEDIENT DIED IN THE DESERT. There are three stages in the sinful attitude to God: (1) Provocation (verse 16), (2) sinning (verse 17), and obstinacy (verse 18; see John 3:36).

F. An Explanation (Hebrews 3:19), and Exhortation (Hebrews 4:1-2).

“So... they could not enter in because of UNBELIEF.” (Hebrews 3:19) Ten unbelievers caused a whole nation to be DEFEATED BY DISOBEDIENCE!

Meet the DANGER of DISBELIEF in these seven appeals: “Consider” (Hebrews 3:1); “hear his exhort voice” (verse 7); “Harden not your hearts” (verse 8); “Take heed” (verse 12); “Hold... steadfast unto the end” (verse 14); “Let us therefore FEAR...” (Hebrews 4:1-2)!

QUESTIONS

1. How does Paul here address Christians (Hebrews 3:1)?
2. Who were the “holy brethren” told to consider? By what two terms does the writer refer to Christ (Hebrews 3:1)?
3. To whom was Christ “faithful” (Hebrews 3:2)?
4. Moses was “faithful” in WHOSE HOUSE (Hebrews 3:2, 5)? What was the purpose and the Mosaic system (Galatians 3:24, Numbers 12:7)?
5. Christ is OVER WHOSE HOUSE (Hebrews 3:6; Matthew 16:16-18; Colossians 1:18; I Corinthians 3:9; I Peter 2:5)?
6. What example does Paul present to illustrate their danger (Hebrews 3:7-11)?
7. What was the “provocation” (Hebrews 3:8)? What had their fathers done (Numbers 14:21-37, Ex. 7:1-7)? Define “Massah” and “Meribah”.
8. What was God’s attitude toward “that generation” (Hebrews 3:10)? And what did God “swore” concerning them (Hebrews 3:11)?
9. What were the Christians to do to prevent “an evil heart of unbelief” (Hebrews 3:12-13)?
10. On what condition are we made “partakers of Christ” (Hebrews 3:14)?
11. What plea and warning is repeated in Hebrews 3:15; Psalm 95:7)?
12. Can you explain what is meant by “some... did provoke” (Hebrews 3:16)?
13. Did all that came out of Egypt “provoke” (Hebrews 3:16, Numbers 14:6-10)?
14. With whom was God “grieved forty years” (Hebrews 3:17)?
15. How many “unbelievers” caused a whole nation to be defeated (Numbers 13:30-33)?
16. What was the specific transgression of Moses (Numbers 20:7-12)?
17. What was the age of those who did get to enter into “my rest” (Hebrews 3:11; Numbers 14:29)?
18. “To whom” did God “swore” (Hebrews 3:18)?
19. Is failure to take God at his word, even by those who claim to believe, equivalent to “UNBELIEF” or rebellion? True or false (Numbers 14: 20-28)?
20. Can you name the seven DANGERS OF DISBELIEF in our study (Hebrews 3:1, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 4:1)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 7
Hebrews 4

Page 1
Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:11

Memory Verse:

“Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Hebrews 4:11).

A REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

What prevents one’s ENTRANCE into “my rest,” the REST OF GOD? WHAT did Israel lack? WHY did so many perish?

“So we see that they could not enter in BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF” (Hebrews 3:19, 4:6). Disobedience to God defeats individuals and nations in every age. Note the seven solemn appeals made by the writer of Hebrews.

Seven Appeals

Today we shall see that “REST” is available for those who are ready to “trust and obey”. We are not to treat Christ as Israel treated Moses or else we shall suffer in like manner. Caleb and Joshua HEARD and BELIEVED GOD. The TEN SPIES and all Israel OVER TWENTY YEARS OF AGE “Sinned, whose corpses fell in the desert” (Hebrews 3:17).

See how the danger of disbelief is to be met by the seven appeals: “Consider...”(Hebrews 3:1). “Today... hear his voice” (Hebrews 3:7). “Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation...” (Hebrews 3:8). “Take heed...of... an evil heart of unbelief” (Hebrews 3:12). “But exhort one another daily...”(Hebrews 3:13).

“For...if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end” (Hebrews 3:14). “Let us therefore fear...” (Hebrews 4:1).

Consider these important facts.

1. Christ Is Superior to Moses (Hebrews 3:1-6).
2. Sad Example of the Israelites (Hebrews 3:7-19).
3. The Rest Remains (Hebrews 4:1-13).
4. Ascended High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16).

I. THE REST THAT REMAINS (Hebrews 4:1-13)

A. A Special Privilege (Hebrews 4:1-2).

“Let us therefore fear...” (Hebrews 4:1) This is the application of the fearful result of disobedience to God’s will for His people. Those who DISOBEYED GOD UNDER MOSES “dropped dead in the desert” (Hebrews 3:17, Goodspeed).

God’s promises are CONDITIONAL. A “rest” is promised, hut WE MUST TAKE HEED THAT WE DO NOT COME SHORT OF IT BY FAILING TO KEEP GOD’S CONDITIONS.

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“His rest...” The promise of entering into God’s “rest” is made sure to all who like Caleb and Joshua are “faithful unto death” (Revelation 2:10c; Matthew 10:22; Numbers 14:22-24, 29). We face the awful peril of not entering the “rest” God has promised us. “We should dread even the appearance of failure” (Westcott).

“For unto us was the gospel preached...” (Hebrews 4:2) “For we are enjoying the good tidings as well as they did.” They had an earthly “rest” preached. We have a heavenly “rest.” Those who believe and obey benefit” by entering into God’s “rest”.

There is a five-fold “rest” in these two sections:

1. God’s Creation “Rest” (Hebrews 4:4).
2. Israel’s Entrance into Canaan “Rest” (Hebrews 4:8).
3. The “Rest” of Salvation Through Christ (Matthew 11:27).
4. The “Rest” of Consecration (Matthew 11:30),
5. The Eternal “Rest” of Heaven (John 14:1-3; Revelation 21, 22).

The believer is regarded as already out of the Egypt of sin and journeying toward Canaan, or heaven ABOVE!

“The word... not being mixed with faith.” Israel heard the words of Moses. They promised to obey, but did not. “All the people answered, ‘EVERYTHING THE LORD HAS SAID WE WILL DO’” (Exodus 19:7-8, 24:3). They were “rocky soil,” “shallow soil,” and “thorny soil” (Matthew 13:4-7). Only two over twenty years of age, Caleb and Joshua, could be considered “good soil!” Food unless properly digested will not help but injure the body.

It is dangerous to “hear” and not be “DOERS OF THE WORD, and not DELUDERS OF YOURSELVES BY MERELY LISTENING” (James 1:22-25; Matthew 7:21f).

We must not treat Christ as Israel treated Moses, or we shall suffer for our disobedience to God’s Son! Church members whose lives are barren of Bible study, prayer, faithful in attending the services in the house of God are “DEAD” in sin (Romans 6:2f). They “ROB GOD” instead of “BRINGING ye all the TITHES into the storehouse...” (Malachi 3:8-10), and live DEFEATED LIVES because they keep on DISOBEYING God’s Word.

B. The Significant Confession (Hebrews 4:3-8).

“For we which have believed do enter into rest...” (Hebrews 4:3) Grace saves us (Ephesians 2:8), but only by obedient faith on man’s part (read James 1:17, 24). Faith discussed here is the active kind – like that of Caleb’s and Joshua’s.

“We... enter into rest.” From a “spirit of fear” (II Timothy 1:7; see also Romans 8:1, 2, 15). McKnight says the “rest” here spoken of is all future “rest.” It is an INWARD “rest” on earth for us, although the FINAL “REST” will be future. We have the HOPE of the PROMISED “REST” of God eternally in heaven (I Peter 1:3-5).

“...if they shall enter into my rest.” Rather, “They shall not enter into my rest.” The same quotation as in Hebrews 3:11. Psalm 95:11 is quoted from the Old Testament, which proves its accepted inspiration. “They shall not enter” is a strong negative. Repeated in verse 5.

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“Although the works were finished...” Creation did not exhaust the meaning of God’s “rest”, because He spoke of a “rest” to Israel by Moses long after Creation was finished. Though God completed His work in six days and rested the seventh, a type of the “rest” to be given to His saints, YET KEEPING THE SABBATH DAY IS NOT ENTERING INTO THAT REST! The Sabbath was given to man at Sinai (Genesis 2:3; Deuteronomy 5:15; Nehemiah 9:13-14).

“And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.” (Hebrews 4:4) “On the seventh day God ended His work which He had been doing; He rested... from all the works which He had accomplished” (Genesis 2:1-2). As God “rested”, He intends for his people to have a “rest” (Hebrews 4:10).

“Seeing... that some must enter” (Hebrews 4:6): This carries the – idea of necessity. God did not forsake all men. Faithful ones like Joshua and Caleb did receive the promise. God’s promise to Abraham must not fail. God used the YOUNG GENERATION to conquer Canaan. “Those who previously got the GOOD NEWS did not enter (Canaan) because of DISOBEDIENCE” to God!

“Again he limits a certain day...” (Hebrews 4:7) “He fixes a new Today,” or “defines” a certain time in which His grace will work (Genesis 6:3). When God decides on the “day,” it will not be tomorrow, but TODAY.

“Saying in David, Today...” David by the Spirit is warning the people of his own “day,” some 500 or 600 years later, of the DANGER OF UNBELIEF. Such a warning is never out of date. Because men err and disobey, men of every generation need to be warned.

“For if Jesus had given them rest...” (Hebrews 4:8) “Joshua” in the Greek is “Jesus.” In Acts 7:45, it is translated “Jesus.” Both names mean “savior.” Joshua was the successor of Moses. Our Lord Jesus is GREATER THAN Joshua OF OLD (read Joshua 1:10f).

C. The Special Explanation (Hebrews 4:9-10).

“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9): There is something better yet to follow for “the people of God.”

Since God has a “rest” for His people, and neither the SABBATH nor CANAAN is this “rest,” these being only types of that “rest,” a “rest” remaineth to the people of God. We have this “rest” NOW as Christians. It is a “rest” from striving, a “rest” through believing, and refers to the attitude of the soul toward God (Isaiah 11:10). Read Matthew 11:28-30 and Revelation 14:13, 21:1-5.

“For he that is entered into his rest...” (Hebrews 4:10) McKnight expresses it: “For the believer who has entered into God’s ‘rest’, hath himself also rested from his works of trial and suffering.” The Christian enters into a “rest,” just as God did when He “rested,” not from tiredness, but because His work was completed.

D. The Solemn Warning (Hebrews 4:11).

“Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest...” (Hebrews 4:11) Here is an exhortation to “exert ourselves to enter into that rest, so that none may fall on account of such disobedience as they exemplified.” Israel disobeyed and rebelled against God. They DIED IN DISBELIEF in the DESERT. As Christians, we must not disobey Him and die in our sins (read I Corinthians 10:1-12; II Peter 1:5-11). We must strive according to His Word and Way and “be faithful unto death” to gain a “crown of life” (Revelation 2:10c; Romans 10:4; Philippians 2:13).

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E. The Searching Admonition (Hebrews 4:12-13).

“For the word of God is quick...” (Hebrews 4:12) God’s word is “living, effective and sharper than any two-edged sword.” It has power to “penetrate even to the dividing line of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and is skilled in judging the heart’s ponderings and meditations.” Read Ephesians 6:17, Revelation 19:15.

“Discerner of the thoughts...” “Discerner” is our word for “critic.” This suggests the Word of God as the “CRITIC” of our lives. It is more than likely that if WE ALLOWED the Bible to “criticize” us more, we would “criticize” the Bible a good deal less. The Bible “wounds the sinner, condemns the hypocrite, and rebukes the saint!”

Our best hope of reaching our Promised Land, Heaven, is only in obedience to God’s Word (John 14:6). If our Restoration Movement is a Bible movement, then will you join us in studying and getting the WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE into the hand and heart of “EVERY CREATURE” (Mark 16:15-16). Alas! We try everything else but God’s Eternal Word!

“Neither... but... opened.” (Hebrews 4:13) God is ALL WISE and our Judge. We cannot hide ANYTHING from God. We are like a criminal with head thrown back, face and neck EXPOSED TO THE FULL VIEW. Chrysostom understood “opened” as of victims hung by the neck and flayed. It is a picture, too, of a wrestler who seizes the neck and thrusts back the head of his opponent.

Let us be GUIDED BY THE BIBLE that we not stand before God in eternal shame.

The Bible CONVICTS OF SIN (Hebrews 4:12), “converts the soul” (Psalm 19:7); we are “made CLEAN THROUGH THE WORD” given to us by our Lord (John 15:3); we are SANCTIFIED “through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). “All scripture is... profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect (mature or well-fitted), thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:16-17). “The truth shall make you FREE” (John 8:31).

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11).

III. Our Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16)

A. The High Priest in Relation to Us (Hebrews 4:14-15).

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest...” (Hebrews 4:14) The writer concludes his comparison of Christ and Moses. He now touches the very heart of his doctrinal discussion by presenting Christ as “a great high priest.” He now begins to show wherein Christ is greater than Aaron.

After the long warning against UNBELIEF (Hebrews 3:7-4:13), the epistle returns to its main point, the PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST. The ‘high priest’ has already been described as “a merciful and faithful high priest” (Hebrews 2:17). His character as “faithful” was shown in Hebrews 3:1-6.

“Great high priest.” He is called “GREAT” because of His Divine Nature. He is God’s SON (Hebrews 1:1-2). He is Christ “as a SON OVER HIS OWN HOUSE” (Hebrews 3:6).

There is no difference between a priest and a high priest. The difference is one of degree and not of kind. Our Lord is sometimes called “Priest,” or here, “Great HIGH PRIEST.” Priesthood has reference solely to believers.

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Christ is our Mediator or “go-between of God and of men” (I Timothy 1:5) and restores God to man and man to God. As our “Advocate” or “Counsel for defense in the Father’s presence” (I John 2:1-2), “Jesus the Son of God” restores man after his sin. The PRIEST sustains man, and provides against his committing sin. The name of our Great High Priest is “Jesus the Son of God,” the name “Jesus” referring to His humanity, and suggesting nearness, oneness and sympathy, and “Son of God” indicating His Deity, and suggesting POWER. Thus the DIVINE and the HUMAN are blended, after having been separately considered in chapters 1 and 2.

“Priest... passes through the heavens.” Our Lord LIVED IN HEAVEN, and passed through the heavens to earth (Philippians 2:5-11). He LIVED ON EARTH and “FINISHED” God’s will for Him here (John 19:30), and then “passed into the heavens” where He now makes “INTERCESSION” for us (Hebrews 7:25f) in the true HOLY OF HOLIES IN HEAVEN!

“Let us held fast our profession.” The human sympathy of our Great High Priest is mentioned as a special encouragement to loyalty. It enforces the exhortation to “hold firmly to our confession” of Christ. We are SAVED to serve. We are WON to WIN (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 4:12).

“An high priest... tempted like as we are” (Hebrews 4:15): Christ is able to sympathize with the weaknesses that make it difficult for us to resist evil, because He Himself has SUFFERED THE FULL FORCE AND BITTERNESS OF TEMPTATION. He came to “save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). He is a compassionate High Priest, who CAN “BE TOUCHED WITH THE FEELING OF OUR INFIRMITIES” (see also Hebrews 2:17; Revelation 3:10; Hebrews 9:26).

“Yet without sin.” Jesus “knew NO SIN” (II Corinthians 5:21). “In Him is no sin” (I John 3:5). Plato says: “The best doctor is the man whose knowledge, not whose experience, of bodily ills is the GREATEST.” Because of His sinlessness He felt temptation most keenly. Jesus was TESTED but NEVER ENTICED TO SIN. There was nothing base in His nature to respond to sin!

B. Our Relation to the High Priest (Hebrews 4:16).

“Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace...” (Hebrews 4:16) Christians approach God through Jesus Christ Who sits at God’s right hand (Hebrews 12:1-2). The “throne of grace” is God’s. Note that it is NOT A THRONE of justice, but a throne of “MERCY” to which we are invited.

“What a world this would be if God sat on a throne of justice ONLY, and if NO MERCY were ever to be shown to man” (Albert Barnes).

But because of the work of Jesus Christ “FINISHED” ON CALVARY (John 19:30), the Son of God, our Saviour and our Great High Priest, GOD CAN SHOW MERCY TO MAN – “every creature” (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:4). Through Christ’s work in our behalf, God is able to be both “JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER OF HIM THAT BELIEVETH IN Jesus” (Romans 3:23-26)!

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QUESTIONS

1. What prevents entrance into “his rest” (Hebrews 4:1, 6; 3:18-19)?
2. By what seven appeals is the DANGER OF DISBELIEF shown (Hebrews 3:1, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14; 4:1)?
3. What four exhortations in this chapter begin with “Let us...” (Hebrews 4:1, 11, 14, 16)?
4. What “fear” is expressed (Hebrews 4:1)? Why (Hebrews 3:17, Good-speed)?
5. Why did not Israel not profit by the “word preached” (Hebrews 4:2)? What had Israel promised (Exodus 19:7-8; 24:3)?
6. To whom did God swear, “They shall not enter into my rest” (Hebrews 4:3,5)? When (Psalm 95:11; Numbers 14:23)?
7. Since Israel had the Sabbath when God said that they should not enter into my rest, it follows that God was talking of something besides the Sabbath, is it TRUE or FALSE that the Sabbath was not the ultimate “rest” that God had planned (Genesis 2:3, Deuteronomy 5:15; Nehemiah 9:13-14)?
8. Can you give one argument to show that a “REST” remains, and that it is neither the Sabbath nor Canaan (Hebrews 4:6-9)?
9. What is true of those who have as Christians entered into God’s “rest” (Hebrews 4:10; Rom. 5:1; Matthew 11:28-30)? When will Christians enjoy the full, complete and eternal “rest” of God (Revelation 14:13; 21:1-5)?
10. What must Christians do to prevent apostasy in falling “after the same example of unbelief” as Israel failed (Hebrews 4:11; Galatians 5:4; Romans 10:4; Revelation 2:10c)?
11. Whose “word” is described in Hebrews 4:12? Point out three characteristics of “the word of God!”
12. What does “the word of God” do (psalm 19:7; 119:105; Acts 2:41-42, 47; 8:37-39; 22:16; II Timothy 3:16-17; John 8:31)?
13. Can we hide anything from God (Hebrews 4:13)?
14. What have we already learned about our “great high priest” (Hebrews 2:17, 3:1-6)?
15. Who is our “great high priest, and where is He (Hebrews 4:14; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 7:25f)?
16. What of Christ and “our infirmities” (Hebrews 4:15)? In what way is Jesus unlike us (Heb. 4:15b, II Corinthians 5:21)?
17. Through whom must we come “boldly” to the “throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16, 14; Hebrews 12:1-2; John 14:6)?
18. What can we “obtain” at the “throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16)?
19. On what basis can God show “mercy” to “every creature” (Mark 16:15-16) who believes the “word of God” (Heb. 4:12; John 19:30; Acts 8:4; Romans 3:23-26)?
20. What is our “great high priest” later called with reference to us who believe (Hebrews 6:20)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 8
Hebrews 5

Page 1
Memory Verse: Hebrews 5:4

Memory Verse:

“And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron” (Hebrews 5:4).

OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Our Lord Jesus Christ is greater than

1. The Prophets (Hebrews 1:1-3).
2. Angels, the Mediators of the Law (Hebrews 1:4-5:18).
3. Moses, the Deliverer who led Israel to the Promised Land (Hebrews 3: 1-19).
4. Joshua Who Led Israel into Canaan (Hebrews 4:1-8).

Superior to Aaron

Now the Lord Jesus is shown to be superior to Aaron (Hebrews 4:14-10:18). The connection between this and the foregoing paragraph is indicated by the word “For...” (Hebrews 5:1).

Aaron was the first high priest of Israel. God selected Aaron as high priest, and his sons (descendants) as priests (Exodus 6:18, 20; 28:1). They were of the tribe of Levi; Christ was of the tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14). Aaron as the typical high priest was the very symbol and embodiment of the ancient liturgy. Christ is like Aaron in the priestly nature of His office and in the qualifications for His task (Hebrews 5:1-10). Our Lord is SUPERIOR TO AARON in that His priesthood is ETERNAL (Hebrews 7:1-28). Christ by HIMSELF “purged our sins” (Hebrews 1:3). He is a “merciful and faithful high priest” (Hebrews 2:17). We are to “CONSIDER Christ Jesus” as our HIGH PRIEST (Hebrews 3:1).

The priests of Levi were many: He was ONE. They offered animal sacrifices: Jesus OFFERED HIMSELF as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). They died: HE LIVES! “I am ALIVE FOR EVERMORE, Amen” (Revelation 1:18).

I. The Essentials of Priesthood (Hebrews 5:1-4)

Two qualifications were necessary to make a man a priest.

A. Fellowship with Mon (Hebrews 5:1-3).

“For every high priest... is ordained for men” (Hebrews 5:1): The priest is “taken from among men,” as was Aaron and all the high priests of Israel. He is “appointed to represent his fellowmen in their relations with God” (Goodspeed).

“That he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.” “Gifts” were bloodless offerings; “sacrifices” required the life (BLOOD) of the victim. God did not need the high priest, but MAN NEEDED HIM. Aaron and his sons were not appointed to any secular calling, such as cultivation of the soil, or commerce, but to minister in holy things, such as caring for the tabernacle (Leviticus 8:1-5, 35).

“Who can have compassion on the ignorant...” (Hebrews 5:2) The true priest must have the CAPACITY FOR SYMPATHY WITH MEN BECAUSE OF THEIR WEAKNESS AND SIN. He “can bear gently with the ignorant and the wayward, since he is himself liable to weakness.” “Bear gently” means one who “can have a moderated feeling.” He is neither too lenient, nor too severe, because he knows what weakness is. He, too, is a man and hence has the infirmities of man. Jesus had compassion for the harlot (John 8:11) and drunkard and “woes” for the self-righteous hypocrites (Matthew 23:1f).

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“And... for the people... for himself.” (Hebrews 5:3): On account of his OWN SIN as well as FOR HIS PEOPLE the priest offers sacrifice for sins. If a man sinned through ignorance or in error, that is, without knowledge of God’s will in the case, atonement could be made (Numbers 15:22-31). IF the sin was committed with haughty rebellion against God, there was NO ROOM FOR REPENTANCE or sacrifice (Numbers 15:32-36). The presumptuous sinner “shall utterly be cut off” (Numbers 15:30). “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death” (Deuteronomy 17:6).

B. Authority from God (Hebrews 5:4).

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself...” (Hebrews 5:4) The priest was called of God. He was not self-elected. Aaron did not elect himself; God called him to the priesthood (Exodus 28:1; Leviticus 8:2).

II. The Essentials of Priesthood Fulfilled in Christ (Hebrews 5:5-8)

In this section we see how Christ meets the two vital necessities of fellow-ship with man and authority from God. Note that the order is reversed.

A. Christ Was Divinely Appointed (Hebrews 5:5-6).

“So also Christ glorified not himself...” (Hebrews 5:5) Christ’s priesthood is based on His Sonship, the latter being the theme of chapter 1. And because He is Son, He is, therefore, PRIEST, and has been appointed by God.

“Thou art my Son...” The divine appointment is established by two quotations from Scripture. “My Son” is a quotation from Psalm 2:7; it was quoted previously in Hebrews 1:5. This refers to the time Christ was “BEGOTTEN” from the dead, the first-born of the NEW CREATION (Ephesians 1:20-23). When RISEN FROM THE DEAD, Christ entered fully, at the call of God, upon His HIGH PRIESTHOOD in behalf of men.

“As he saith... Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” (Hebrews 5:6) This is a quotation from Psalm 110:4, specifically designates Christ as a “priest,” and adds the significant phrases, “FOR EVER,” and “After the order of Melchizedek.” The PRIESTHOOD of our Lord was to be ROYAL and PERPETUAL, of the rank of Melchizedek. The priesthood of Aaron was temporary – he died at age 123 (Numbers 20: 22-29).

B. Christ Also Had Fellowship with Men (Hebrews 5:7-8).

“Who in the days of his flesh... “ (Hebrews 5:7) The time when Christ was on earth as a man.

“Who... offered up prayers... crying and tears”: Luke 22:39 gives us a picture of the anguish and pathos of Gethsemane. “Jesus wept” at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35). “And when he (Jesus) was come near... the city (Jerusalem), and WEPT OVER IT” (Luke 19:41). Intense symptoms are shown in “...let this cup pass from me” (Matthew 26:39; see 27:46). The “cup” of suffering and the death of the cross did not pass from Jesus, but God gave His Son grace that He “should TASTE DEATH FOR EVERY MAN” (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus did not pray to BE SAVED FROM DYING, but saved “OUT OF DEATH” through the resurrection.

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience...” (Hebrews 5:8). Beneath the old olive trees our Lord bowed in agony and bloody sweat (Luke 22:41-46). He had never been disobedient to God, yet He discovered by painful experience all that obedience and submission might mean. “Not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42), meant that in drinking the “CUP” of suffering and death He was doing the will of God. “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.”

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“And being made perfect...” (Hebrews 5:9a) His suffering resulted in moral perfection or maturity; ripened or fitted Him for His work (see Luke 13:32). There is a difference between “innocence” and “virtue.” INNOCENCE is LIFE UNTESTED. VIRTUE is INNOCENCE TESTED AND FOUND TRIUMPHANT!

III. Christ’s Priesthood (Hebrews 5:9-10)

“He became the author of eternal salvation...” (Hebrews 5:9) “Author” is from the Greek word, “cause.” By entering into the experience of dying on the cross, “He became the Author of eternal salvation for all who obey Him.” Read Acts 4:12; Hebrews 7:25.

“Called of God an high priest...” (Hebrews 5:10) See again the SCHOOL in which Christ was taught (verse 7); in verse 8 the LESSON he LEARNED; in verse 9 the RESULT. He became our Saviour, and as such was “addressed,” or greeted, “by God as ‘High Priest of Melchizedek’s order.’”

IV. The Peril of Spiritual Degeneration (Hebrews 5:11-14)

The writer now gives his third interjected warning. Remember the warning against

1. Drifting (Hebrews 2:1-4).
2. Disbelief (Hebrews 3:7-19), and now the PERIL OF SPIRITUAL
3. Degeneration (Hebrews 5:11-14).

A. The Problem and Its Explanation (Hebrews 5:11).

“Of whom... ye are dull of hearing.” (Hebrews 5:11) There were “many things to say” in discussing the Priesthood of Christ, “and it is difficult to explain, since you have grown hard of hearing”! The trouble was with them, and not with the subject. The apostle seeks to arouse their attention by rebuking them for their infantile ability to understand the spiritual truth that Christ is our “High Priest of Melchizedek’s order.” His hearers lacked “push and go”; they had become “slothful” and were in danger of “growing disinterested” (Hebrews 6:12). Through DRIFTING, they were inviting DISBELIEF, and the peril of spiritual DEGENERATION. God’s will is that the Christian “GROW in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (II Peter 3:18). Let us strive for CONSTANT SPIRITUAL PROGRESS!

B. The Rebuke (Hebrews 5:12).

“For... ye ought to be teachers” (Hebrews 5:12) They had been Christians long enough to be able to teach others. However, they needed someone to teach them the ABC’s of the gospel. It is sad to see one who has been a Christian for years and who still needs “someone to teach you the elementary beginnings of God’s lessons.” “First Principles” are vital, but for the Christian to RELAY FOUNDATIONS ALI, THE TIME IS FOOLISH and SINFUL (read prayerfully Matthew 13:14-15). As a Christian you ought to be GIVING instead of receiving help from others.

C. The Reminder (Hebrews 5:13-14).

“For every one that uses milk... is a babe.” (Hebrews 5:13) Those who only understand the ABC’s of Christianity are only “BABES” in Christ, like the “babe” who has only “need of MILK” (verse 12).

A Christian who can but will not “GROW in grace” is stunted. The objective of all Christians is to be able to teach “every creature” (Mark 16:15-16). Attend Bible school, worship, prayer meetings, evangelistic services so YOU can “GROW” and teach “the whole purpose of God” (Acts 20:27).

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Spiritual babyhood is natural and beautiful directly after conversion. “As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (I Peter 2:2). IF a baby has ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT HOW TRAGIC IT IS!

The New Testament frequently emphasizes this difference between the SPIRITUAL BABE and the SPIRITUAL ADULT, pointing out both the admirable and also the regrettable features (read I Corinthians 2:6; 3:1-9).

“But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age...” (Hebrews 5:14) Spiritual DEGENERATION is sinful and harmful. There is a cure for it. “Meat” or “solid food is for the mature, for those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish between good and evil.” His readers “neglected” to use their spiritual faculties. We must “USE” or “LOSE” our lives in His service. A great pianist once said that if he ceased practicing for one day, he realized the loss; if he ceased for two days, his friends became conscious of it; while if he ceased for three days, the public quickly recognized it.

QUESTIONS

1. Our Lord Jesus is greater than whom (Hebrews 1:1-3, 4-5, 14; 3:1-9; 4:1-8; 5:4-6)?
2. For whom was “every high priest... ordained” and what two things was every Aaronic high priest expected to do (Hebrews 5:1)?
3. On whom could the “High Priest” have compassion, and why (Hebrews 5:2)?
4. For whom did the “High Priest” offer sacrifices (Hebrews 5:3; Leviticus 16:11, 15)?
5. Although He was always “without sin” (Hebrews 4:15), what two qualities does Jesus possess as our “High Priest” (Hebrews 2:17; 4:15)?
6. Did Christ make Himself “High Priest” (Hebrews 5:4-6)?
7. Who made Christ “High Priest,” and what had God said about Jesus (Hebrews 5:5-6; Psalm 2:7; 110:4)? How long will Christ’s “High Priesthood” last?
8. What did Christ do in “the days of His flesh” (Hebrews 5:7; John 11:35; Luke 19:41; Matthew 26:39; 27:46; Hebrews 2:9)?
9. How did Christ learn “obedience” (Hebrews 5:8, Luke 22:41-46)? If Christ had been spared the death of the cross, what would have he-come of our salvation (Hebrews 4:14-16, 9:22)?
10. What was the purpose of Christ’s sufferings (Hebrews 2:10, 5:8-9)?
11. To whom is Christ “the author of eternal salvation” (Hebrews 5:9)?
12. What fact about Christ is repeated (Hebrews 5:10)?
13. Can you summarize the warnings thus far given by the writer (Hebrews 2:1-4; 3:7-19; 5:11-14)? Do you need these warnings?
14. Paul had “many things to say” about whom (Hebrews 5:11)?
15. What was wrong with those to whom this epistle was written, and is this true of many of us today (Hebrews 5: 1 1b, 6:12)?
16. By this time what should these Christians have been able to do (Heb. 5:12)? Why (I Corinthians 2:9-12)?
17. What diet do some Christians need because they are “babes” in Christ (Hebrews 5:12)? If one is spiritually mature, what diet can he enjoy?
18. What is meant by “milk” and “strong meat” (Hebrews 5:12, I Peter 2:2)?
19. “Strong meat” belongs to whom (Hebrews 5:14)? Are you a “milk” or “meat” Christian?
20. Can you say what Job and the Psalmist said about God’s word (Job 23:12; Psalm 119:103, 105)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 9

Page 1

Hebrews 6

Memory Verse: Hebrews 6:11-12

Memory Verse:

“And we desire that every one of you do show 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” (Hebrews 6:11, 12).

“LET US GO ON UNTO PERFECTION”

Do you HEAR WELL physically and spiritually? I pray you have not “grown hard of hearing” (Hebrews 5:11).

The writer of Hebrews addressed an admonition to the Hebrew Christians of the Jerusalem Church because they had become sluggish in studying God’s Word. They were content with the ABC’s of the gospel. They were Christian “babes” (Hebrews 5:13) who could only take gospel “milk”! They had not spiritually matured enough to take the “strong meat” of the gospel (Hebrews 5: 12-14).

Instead of “Growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord” (II Peter 3:18) so they could TEACH “Every creature” (Mark 16:15-16), they had need again to be taught the “FIRST PRINCIPLES” (Hebrews 5:12) of the gospel! This chapter consists of the third appeal and warning.

I. Exhortation and Warning (Hebrews 6:1-6)

A. The Need of Progress (Hebrews 6:1-3).

“Therefore...” (Hebrews 6:1) In view of their dullness of hearing the gospel, the writer’s rebuke develops into an exhortation to cease being spiritual “babes”; he urges them to go on unto a ripe spiritual experience in Christ.

“Leaving the principles...” These “First Principles” (Hebrews 5:12) are named in Hebrews 6:1-2. They are not “LEFT,” in the sense of forsaking them, but serve as the FOUNDATION.

“Let us go on unto perfection...” “Let us press on” (Revised Version). “Let us be borne on” (Westcott). “Advance toward maturity” (Berkeley). We are to leave the ABC’s of the gospel, the “milk” fitted only for babes, and “GO ON TO THE HIGHER LESSONS WHICH BELONG TO FULL-GROWN MEN... go on from the lessons of Christian childhood to those of MANHOOD IN CHRIST.” Prayerfully read I Corinthians 13:11-13, 14:20, 40).

“Not laying again the foundation...” The first thing necessary in erecting a building is “lay the foundation.” Always to be at work “laying the foundation” is silly. The superstructure ought to rise ABOVE THE FOUNDATION. There are the “first principles” of the gospel; they are essential to progress in the Christian life. Knowledge of the ABC’s of the English alphabet is essential to the study of English literature. Paul now notes the list of doctrines, which he adds as illustrating the ABC’s of the gospel. Some pride themselves on the fact they are preaching the “simple” gospel when confining themselves to one or two of these doctrines.

1. “Repentance from dead works...” (Hebrews 6:1) This includes everything from which the sinner is required to turn in his conversion from “darkness to light,” and from the service of Satan to the service of

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God. Study II Corinthians 7:1-11; Galatians 4:19-21; II Peter 3:9. "Repentance" is not only to turn from sins, but even to turn from "good works done in mere obedience to law OR TO WIN MERIT, aside from any vital relation to God." The remedy for such lifeless or "dead works" is

2. "Faith in God..." "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Read also John 20:30-31. The "first principle" of Christian faith is FIRM INTELLECTUAL CONVICTION that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the "only begotten Son" of the living God (John 3:16-17). "Neither is there salvation in any other!" (Acts 4:12) Until a sinner "HEARS" the gospel, of course he cannot "repent." However, not until the sinner wholly surrenders to the will of God can he fully TRUST GOD. "FAITH leads to REPENTANCE; while REPENTANCE again serves very greatly to increase our faith" (see Romans 10:9-10: 4:5; Acts 16:31; 2:38).

3. "Of the doctrines of baptisms..." (Hebrews 6:2) In the Christian era we find 1) A baptism in water for all sinners who "repent" or turn from their sins (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26-27). 2) The "baptism of the Holy Spirit, administered by Christ Himself" and fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). 3) A "baptism" in fire for the WICKED WHO REJECT CHRIST (see Matthew 3:11-12; Revelation 20:15).

There is but "ONE BAPTISM" in water for the sinner who "repents" and turns to God through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:5). "The point to gain is that it is an INITIATORY STEP, and one is not to sit on the edge of the baptistry" (Boatman).

4. "And of laying on of hands..." In the early New Testament Church the "extraordinary operation of the Holy Spirit was imparted by the laying on of the APOSTOLIC HANDS"! Peter and John came down from Jerusalem to Samaria and "laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:17). See also Acts 6:6; 13:3; 14:23; I Timothy 4:14; 5:22 where men were ordained to the work of the ministry to God's people.

5. "And of resurrection of the dead..." "The resurrection is one of the "first principles," for it is a part of the gospel (I Corinthians 15:1-5).

6. "And of eternal judgment": "Eternal punishment" or "judgment to come" in Paul's sermon to Felix caused that wicked man to "tremble" (Acts 24:25). There is an impelling motive in fear, but it is a "first principle" (Hebrews 5:12). The reason some never "repent" is that they have never heard the doctrine or teaching of "eternal punishment"! Jesus, Peter and Paul all preached this doctrine to move people to action! Read II Corinthians 5:10, Matthew 25:46.

These six truths are foundational. Yet the writer pleads with his readers to advance beyond these "first principles" to higher stages of knowledge.

"And this will we do, if God permit." (Hebrews 6:3) With God's help they will build on the foundational "first principles" and "go on unto perfection" or spiritual maturity. If a person does not advance, he is in danger of GOING BACKWARD!

B. The Solemn Warning (Hebrews 6:4-8).

"For it is impossible..." (Hebrews 6:4) These Christians are to GO FORWARD, "FOR it is IMPOSSIBLE to bring anew to repentance those who" willfully choose continued spiritual babyhood and "fall away" (verse 6). G. Campbell Morgan says, "There can be no doubt that those described are such as have been brought into living relationship with Christ." Note they were

1. "Once enlightened..." They had the knowledge of the truth concerning Christ who is "the LIGHT of the world" (John 8:12).

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2. “Tasted of the heavenly gift...” The word “tasted” means to experience, partake (Milligan). They had experienced “the heavenly gift” or the NEW LIFE IN CHRIST. “BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:31). “He that HATH THE SON HATH LIFE... “(I John 5:12).

3. “Made partakers of the HOLY Ghost...” “Have become participants of the Holy Spirit” (Berkeley). “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). “...the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him” (Acts 5:32). Read also Galatians 3:26-27; Romans 8:9b; John 7:37-39.

4. “Tasted the good word of God...” (Hebrews 6:5) “Fed on that word which is food for the soul” (see John 7:17; Romans 12:1, 2; Psalm 19:12; Revelation 10:10).

5. “Powers of the world to come... “: “By faith we see IN SPIRIT the blessed immortality that is HID FROM OUR PHYSICAL SENSES.”

This five-fold description is undoubtedly that of a person who has entered into the blessed experiences of a Christian. Yet of them the writer adds these words:

“If they shall fall away...” (Hebrews 6:6) The PERIL described is not STUMBLING, but “FALLING AWAY, that is, FINAL AND POSITIVE APOSTASY. The DANGER is DELIBERATE, ULTIMATE REJECTION OF CHRIST” (Morgan). “It is as if a person in the bottom of a well, to whom a rope is let down, slashes the rope above the reach, thus cutting off his only hope of escape.” Note that “impossible” occurs in verse 4. The apostle bluntly says an apostate who deliberately “crucifies the Son of God afresh, and puts him to an open shame” has no CAPACITY LEFT FOR REPENTANCE. Judas sorrowed; his sorrow became despair. This was REMORSE – not “repentance” (Matthew 27:1-5). These men were once professing, obedient Christians. They chose to “fall away” from God, from Christ, from salvation; they RENOUNCE or REJECT Christ and place themselves with those who “crucified” Christ because He claimed He was the Son of God! For those who reject Christ, there will never be another sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 10:26-31). They will have to suffer for their own willful sin.

“For the earth... bringeth forth herbs.” (Hebrews 6:7) Here is an illustration from the soil. The kind of fruit borne determines the treatment the soul receives. “The earth” or soil here is used to illustrate the Christian, of whom much is expected. The Christian is like the “earth” that “drinks the often falling rain, produces “herbs” or fruit. The Christian should be like the GOOD SOIL IN the parable of Jesus (Luke 8:4-15). “The seed is the Word of God” (Luke 8:11). The seed is GOOD. Let that seed fall “on the GOOD GROUND and “bring forth fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15).

“But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected...” (Hebrews 6:8): Christian GROWTH is the point of this parable, and “thorns and briers” are the enemies of growth. They result when God is not allowed to be the husbandman. God cannot accept “thorns and briers” and hence must “reject” such fruitage. When God blessed us with the gospel, He expects us to “bear fruit... more fruit... much fruit” (John 15:2, 5-10). The heart which by choice produces “thorns and briers... is rejected... whose end is to be burned” (verse 8).

Such is the law of human life. To use God’s gifts is to be BLESSED; to neglect His gifts makes us “worthless... a curse and ends up with BEING BURNED”! No peril can compare with that of FALLING AWAY from Christ and despising the gospel of His grace and love!

II. Encouragement and Hope (Hebrews 6:9-20)

A. Strong Confidence (Hebrews 6:9-10).

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“But, beloved...” (Hebrews 6:9) After warning comes encouragement. The appeal is based on the intimate word “beloved.” This striking expression is found only in this epistle. The writer is convinced that they will not bear “thorns and briars.” “We are persuaded BETTER THINGS OF YOU, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.” They were still in a SAVED STATE!

“For God is not unrighteous to forget...” (Hebrews 6:10) Though the Hebrew Christians had not advanced in knowledge, they had shown the fruit of Christian “LOVE” (Galatians 5:22-23) “as you have ministered to the saints, and are still ministering” (Berkeley). “He that hath pity upon the poor lends unto the Lord” (Proverbs 19:17; see also Matthew 10:42; 25:40). God will not “forget your work and labor of love.”

B. Earnest Desire (Hebrews 6:11-12).

“And we desire that every one of you...” (Hebrews 6:11) Many of them were still “babes” in Christ (Hebrews 5:13); they were not all “of full age,” or grown up in the knowledge of Christ (Hebrews 5:14). The writer wants “every one of you to show the same diligence” and “enjoy the full assurance of your hope to the limit.”

“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them...” (Hebrews 6:12) Do not “grow disinterested,” be like the heroes of the faith, like Abraham and Moses, like Stephen and James. Through “faith and patience inherit the promises.” A Christian must be “faithful unto death” (Revelation 2:10c).

C. Hearty Encouragement (Hebrews 6:13-20).

1. God Pledged Himself to Give (Hebrews 6:13-15).

“For when God made promise to Abraham... “ (Hebrews 6:13): Faith and patience are now illustrated by the life of Abraham. Abraham accepted God’s PROMISE and after painful endurance he obtained WHAT GOD HAD PLEDGED HIMSELF to GIVE. Note the seven-fold promise of God to Abraham. Abraham would be personally blessed. He would have numerous descendants, through him the Messiah would come, his spiritual followers would be great (Romans 4:11-17), his name would be great, God would curse them that “cursed” him, “and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1f; 22:15-18). “God swore by Himself -- since He could swear by none greater” (Berkeley).

“...Surely blessing I will bless thee...” (Hebrews 6:14). The quotation of verse 14 is from Genesis 22:16f. It denotes intensity of God’s purpose and promise.

There are THREE DIVINE OATHS or promises in Hebrews:

1. One refers to willful nonbelievers (Hebrews 3:11).
2. One refers to Abraham, an example for us all (Hebrews 6:13).
3. One refers to Christ, “a Priest forever” (Hebrews 7:21).

“And so, after he patiently endured...” (Hebrews 6:15) Abraham waited patiently for twenty-five years for the FULFILLMENT of God’s promise of a son, Isaac (Genesis 12:4; 21:5)! God’s “precious promises” then and NOW will be fulfilled.

2. God’s Promise and Oath (Hebrews 6:16-18).

“For men verily swear by the greater... “ (Hebrews 6:16): Just as men commonly take oaths or “do indeed swear by the greater... the oath serves for settlement beyond all dispute.” This ends “all strife” about any question.

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“Wherein God... promise... oath” (Hebrews 6:17) So God in order to give absolute assurance to His people, confirmed His promise BY AN OATH. God’s “OATH” came AFTER, not before Abraham’s “faith,” and as a reward of his “faith” concerning Isaac (Genesis 12:1-3; 22:1-2, 10-18). This revelation shows that God is “righteous” (Hebrews 6:10). God is faithful and will not “lie” (Hebrews 6:18). Why?

“That by two immutable things...” (Hebrews 6:18): By two unalterable facts, God’s PROMISE and OATH, Abraham had and all Christians “HAVE a strong Consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the HOPE SET BEFORE US”! “God is not a man that He should lie” (Numbers 23:19; Psalm 12:6-7; Matthew 24:34; II Timothy 2:13).

3. The Christian’s Hope (Hebrews 6:19-20).

“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul...” (Hebrews 6: 19) Our “hope” is of SALVATION IN CHRIST, a “hope” of PRESENT security and deliverance, a “hope” for FUTURE GLORY (I Corinthians 3:11; Acts 4:12). It is to Christ that we the, as the sinner “fled for refuge” to the six cities of refuge in ancient Israel, “Kedesh in Galilee... Shechem in mount Ephraim... Hebron in the mountain of Judah. And on the other side of Jordan by Jericho, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness. Ramoth in Gilead... Golan in Bashon” (Joshua 20:7-9; Deuteronomy 4:42; 19:5).

“Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus...” (Hebrews 6:20) Christ is to our soul what “a sure and steadfast” anchor is to a ship, “Anchor” occurs here only in the New Testament. Our risen Lord has “entered into that within the veil.” The veil was before the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, and it was a type of heaven. As our High Priest and our Representative, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ is “seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2). We shall follow Him there. As “the forerunner” he has “entered FOR US, “He is the “HERALD and GUARANTEE of our entrance. As our Advocate and High Priest he has MADE ATONEMENT FOR SIN, and now in His unceasing office at God’s “right hand,” He secures access for us, “having become a HIGH PRIEST FOR EVER AFTER THE ORDER OR MELCHIZEDEK”! Here the writer comes back to his main theme (Hebrews 5:10).

Prayer and the Supreme Court

A reader in Williamson, West Virginia sent me a copy of an editorial in verse that had been presented over WKRC-Radio in Cincinnati. It is entitled, “Now I Sit Me Down in School.”

Now I sit me down in school,
Where praying is against the rule.
For this great Nation, under God
Finds public mention of Him odd.
And prayer a class recites
Now violates the Bill of Rights.
Any time my head I bow
Becomes a Federal matter now.
Teach us of stars or pole and Equator
But make no mention of their Creator.
Tell of exports in Denmark and Sweden
Not one word on what Eve did in Eden.

The law is specific, the law is precise
Praying out loud is no longer nice.
Praying aloud in a public hall
Upsets believers in nothing at all.
In silence alone can we meditate
And if God should get the credit, great.
This rule, however, has a gimmick in it:
You’ve got finish in less than a minute.
So all I ask is a minute of quiet
If I feel like praying then may be I’ll try it.
If not O Lord, this plea I make:
Should I die in school my soul you’ll take.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the spiritual condition of those to whom this chapter is addressed (Hebrews 5:11-14)? How is YOUR SPIRITUAL HEARING today?
2. What are they told to “do” (Hebrews 6:1)?
3. Can you define “leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ” (Hebrews 6:1)?
4. Can you list and explain the six things from which the Christians were “to go on to perfection,” or spiritual maturity (Hebrews 6:1-2)?
5. “If God permit,” means what (Hebrews 6:3)?
6. Is it possible to restore the “backslider” (Psalm 23:3; Hosea 14:4; Acts 8:22; I John 1:9; 2:1)?
7. Can a Christian choose to turn his back on Christ and “fall away” into deliberate and final rejection of Christ (Hebrews 6:4-6)? From what five things does he turn?
8. How does “the earth” or nature illustrate willful “falling away” (Hebrews 6:7-8; Luke 8:4-15)? Does God expect the Christian to “Bear fruit” (John 15:2, 5-10)? What is the “end” of those who CAN and WON’T “bear fruit”?
9. What two convictions did Paul have (Hebrews 6:9, 10)?
10. What did Paul want “every one” to do (Hebrews 6:11-12)?
11. When God made His promise to Abraham, what else did He do (Hebrews 6:13-14)?
12. How long did Abraham “patiently endure” before “he obtained the promise” (Hebrews 6:15; Genesis 12:4; 21:5)?
13. Since God confirmed His “promise” by an “oath,” what are the “two immutable things” (Hebrews 6:17-18)? In whom is this promise fulfilled (Galatians 3:16)?
14. Why may Christians “have a strong consolation” (Hebrews 6:18)?
15. What is the “anchor of the soul” (Hebrews 6:19)?
16. Is our “hope” a “what” or a “WHO?”
17. Our “hope” is in “WHOM” (Hebrews 6:19-20)?
18. Where is Christ (Hebrews 6:20, 12:2)?
19. Who has “entered into that within the veil” as our “forerunner” (Hebrews 6:19-20)?
20. To what main theme does the writer return in Hebrews 6:20 (Hebrews 5: 10)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 10
Hebrews 7

Page 1
Memory Verse: Hebrews 7:25

Memory Verse:

“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. (Hebrews 7:25).

CHRIST A PRIEST AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK

How amazing is the grace of God in giving tact and wisdom to the apostle as he writes to help his bewildered fellow-countrymen! Where there is “dullness of hearing,” he rebukes (Hebrews 5:11). Where there is danger, he warns (Heb. 6:4). Where there is evidence of “diligence,” he encourages (Hebrews 6:9f).

NOW in faithfulness he must point out to them the IMPERFECT and TRANSITIONAL CHARACTER of the CEREMONIAL LAW that has been the central thing in the Jewish national life for 1600 years. The writer patiently instructs and explains.

Three Outstanding Themes

Hebrews 7 is the central chapter in this Epistle, and has three outstanding themes:

1. The Greatness of the Person of Melchizedek.
2. The Inferiority and Limited Term of Aaron’s Priesthood.
3. The Excellence and Permanence of the Priesthood of Christ.

As Mediator He RECONCILES, as Advocate He RESTORES, and as Priest He SUSTAINS (Hebrews 7:25).

I. Christ A Priest after the Order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:1-10)

A. The Personal Dignity of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:1-3).

1. Melchizedek was King-Priest (Hebrews 7:1-2).

“For this Melchizedek, king... priest.” (Hebrews 7:1) Who was Melchizedek? He is spoken of three times in the Bible: HISTORICALLY (Genesis 14:18-20), PROPHETICALLY (Psalm 110:4), and DOCTRINALLY (Hebrews 7).

The first three verses of Hebrews 7 form one broken sentence. Their main affirmation is seen if we connect the first three words of verse 1 with the last four words of verse 3: “For this Melchizedek... abideth a priest continually” (Hebrews 7:1, 3). Between the subject and predicate of this sentence lies all we know of the King-Priest of Salem.

“Hebrew tradition is that he has SHEM, who was still alive in the days of Abraham, as far as is known, oldest living man at the time. Some think he was an ANGEL; some, as INCARNATION of God;

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some, the MESSIAH. Considering he was 'KING' of a city, the SHEM TRADITION seems most probable" (Halley). He lived in a palace and officiated in a temple.

The two offices of KING and PRIEST were separate in Israel. Before the time of Moses, THE HEADS OF FAMILIES OFFERED SACRIFICES. The priest of each family was the father or grandfather – the OLDEST LIVING MAN in the PATERNAL LINE. When the family grew to be a TRIBE, the HEAD OF THE TRIBE came to be King as well as Priest: King-Priest! Thus, Melchizedek bursts upon us as "KING... PRIEST." Melchizedek means "King of Righteousness."

"King of Salem." Or Jerusalem. "Salem" means "peace." The "City of Peace" has seldom known peace. Today there is Jerusalem, Jordan, and Jerusalem, Israel.

"Priest of the most high God..." As "priest," Melchizedek offered sacrifices and ministered in other sacred things to God.

"Who met Abraham..." The story is short. It is told in Genesis 14. Abraham had rescued Lot from Chedorlaomer and his confederates (Genesis 14:1-17). Returning home, Abraham was met on the way by "Melchizedek king of Salem... and he was the priest of the most high God" (Genesis 14:18). "And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth" (Genesis 14:19). Being a "priest" of the God that Abraham worshipped, we can see why these two would be on friendly terms.

"To whom also Abraham gave a TENTH PART OF ALL..." (Hebrews 7:2) This verse makes it plain that Abraham gave a tenth, or TITHE, to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:20).

"The custom of PAYING TITHES TO GOD for the maintenance of His worship and the support of true religion, was of very remote antiquity... there is NO REASON to doubt that the paying of tithes... WAS OF DIVINE ORIGIN, and that a law to this effect was given to Adam and his family soon after the fall" (R. Milligan).

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). As far as the Bible record is concerned, Abraham COMMENCED tithing (Genesis 14:20), Jacob CONTINUED tithing (Genesis 28:22), Moses CONFIRMED tithing (Leviticus 27:30), Malachi COMMANDED tithing (Malachi 3:8-10), Jesus COMMENDED tithing (Matthew 23:23), and the early church CONCURRED in it. In fact, the love of "Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas" gave TEN TITHES – ALL HE HAD to meet a special need (Acts 4:36-37; see also I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 8:5, 7-9, 24; 9:6-11).

2. Melchizedek "Abideth a Priest Continually" (Hebrews 7:3).

"Without father... mother... descent" (Hebrews 7:3): No mention is made in the Bible of the ancestry of Melchizedek or his priestly pedigree, of his birth or his death. The Jews were accustomed to use a term "Without father" of persons whose parents were not named in the Scripture, or in their genealogies. This silence is taken as an illustration of the ETERNAL and CHANGELESS PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST. Melchizedek was "made to resemble the Son of God, he remains a PRIEST in PERPETUITY" (Berkeley).

Thus, by this story of Melchizedek, the discussion of the PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST is resumed. It was begun by a statement of the qualifications of a "high priest" (Hebrews 5:1-10), and by a solemn warning against falling away from Christ (Hebrews 5:11-6:20). Both sections closed with the fact that Jesus was "Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:10), "MADE an high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 6:20).

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B. The Priesthood of Melchizedek Superior to That of Aaron (Hebrews 7:4-10).

1. Melchizedek Blessed Abraham (Hebrews 7:4-6).

“Now consider how great this man was...” (Hebrews 7:4). Abraham, the founder of the Jewish nation, recognized the greatness of Melchizedek and gladly received his blessing, thus admitting Melchizedek was SUPERIOR to HIMSELF because he paid Melchizedek “the tenth of the spoils” (verses 2, 4), and received his blessing (verses 6-7). The best title is suggested. “The top of the heap” (Milligan).

“And verily they... sons of Levi” (Hebrews 7:5): The superiority of Melchizedek is established by the fact that Abraham, the ancestor of Levi – and of Aaron, who came from the tribe of Levi, paid tithes to Melchizedek and was blessed by Melchizedek. The receiving of tithes indicated a certain preeminence (verses 5-6).

2. A Changeless Principle (Hebrews 7:7).

“And... the less is blessed of the better” (Hebrews 7:7): Melchizedek “blessed” Abraham, Therefore, the “less” is Abraham, To “bless” is a symbol of greater authority, and indicates great power,

3. Christ “Receiveth Them” – Tithes (Hebrews 7:8).

“And here... but THERE he receiveth them.” (Hebrews 7:8) As David still LIVES in the PERSON of CHRIST, his throne endures throughout all generations (Psalm 89:36-37). And so also Melchizedek, as a royal “King-Priest” still lives in Christ, and his priesthood endures forever. Christ the ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST CANNOT RECEIVE OUR TITHES IF WE DO NOT BRING THEM TO HIM IN LOVE!

4. Superior through Human Position (Hebrews 7:9-10).

“And... Levi also... paid tithes through Abraham” (Hebrews 7:9): Levi himself could be regarded as having paid tithes to Melchizedek in the person of his great-grandfather Abraham. He was not born when “Melchizedek met” Abraham (verse 10). Hence the priesthood of Melchizedek is of a higher order than that of Aaron, just as the PRIEST-HOOD OF CHRIST is SUPERIOR TO THE LEVITICAL!

II. Christ the Eternal High Priest (Hebrews 7:11-28)

The writer goes on to show that while the priesthood of Christ is “after the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 5:10) in that it is ETERNAL, our Lord’s priesthood is after the PATTERN OF AARON IN PRESENT MINISTRY AND FUNCTION. There are five differences between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Christ.

A. Christ Was Not of Levi, But of Judah (Hebrews 7:11-14).

“If therefore perfection...” (Hebrews 7:11) The Levitical priest-hood could not bring “complete pardon of sins and make men holy.” If it could have brought ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS, Christ’s coming would have been unnecessary (Galatians 3:21-29). The AIM of all priesthood is the PERFECTION

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OF THE BELIEVER. 500 years AFTER the Levitical priesthood, God told David “that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron” (Hebrews 7:11; Psalm 110:4). A change of priesthood meant a “CHANGE also of the law” (verse 12). When our Lord was on this earth, He could NOT be a “priest,” for “He, of whom this was said, belongs to a different tribe, no member of which officiated at the altar, for obviously our Lord sprang from Judah, regarding which tribe Moses never mentioned priests” (verses 13-14). The Lord meets our NEED (Hebrews 2:3; 13:20-21).

B. We Have Another Priest: A Better Hope (Hebrews 7:15-19).

“And... there ariseth another priest” (Hebrews 7:15) The INFERIORITY of the Levitical priesthood brought “another priest,” one “after the similitude of Melchizedek.” The whole Mosaic economy has disappeared. The RISE OF THE NEW PRIEST implies the inferiority of the old.

“Who is made... after the power of an endless life” (Hebrews 7:16): Our Lord’s priesthood is described as CHANGELESS and IMPERISHABLE. Israel’s priests took office according to the LAW OF PHYSICAL DESCENT FROM AARON. It was witnessed of Christ “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek” (verse 17; read Psalm 110:4).

“For there is verily a disannulling...” (Hebrews 7:18) “Law” is contrasted with “power”; the former restrains; the latter ENABLES. “Commandment” is contrasted with “life”; the one being EXTERNAL, and the other INTERNAL. The law as “a previous regulation is set aside because of its ineffectiveness and its uselessness – for the Law brought nothing to perfection – and a BETTER HOPE IS INTRODUCED through which we draw near to God” (verse 19).

C. We Have A Divine Oath: A Better Surety (Hebrews 7:20-22).

“And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest” (Hebrews 7:20): The superiority of this Melchizedek PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST to the priesthood of Aaron is proved by still another. It was RATIFIED) by a SOLEMN DIVINE OATH, which was absent from the ritual of the Levitical priesthood. This “OATH” declared the priesthood of Christ to be A PERPETUAL PRIESTHOOD, permanent and changeless (verse 21).

“By so much was Jesus made a surety of a BETTER TESTAMENT” (Hebrews 7:22): Beyond the Son there is no necessity for any priest, since God has appointed Him by an “OATH” forever. Therefore our Lord be-comes the GUARANTOR of a “better covenant.” Hebrews 6:13-14 is – God’s first recorded “oath”; Hebrews 7:20-22 is God’s LAST “OATH”. Both Christ and His priesthood are changeless.

D. Dying Men versus A Living Savior (Hebrews 7:23-25).

“And they truly were many priests... by reason of death” (Hebrews 7:23) The Levitical priests were ever changing, being compelled “by reason of death” to give place to OTHERS IN A CEASELESS SUCCESSION.

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“But this man... continueth ever... an unchangeable priest hood” (Hebrews 7:24): Christ LIVES ON, “Mediator” of an ETERNAL COVENANT and an ENDLESS LIFE. God placed Christ in His PRIESTHOOD, and no one else can step into it.

“Eternal” is one of the favorite words of Hebrews. “Eternal Salvation” (Hebrews 5:9). “Eternal Judgment” (Hebrews 6:2). “Eternal Redemption” (Hebrews 9:12). “Eternal Spirit” (Hebrews 9:14). “Eternal Inheritance” (Hebrews 9:15). “Eternal Covenant” (Hebrews 13:20).

“Wherefore he is able...” (Hebrews 7:25) Since Christ is no longer dead but ALIVE, “HE is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, living as He does forever to intercede for them.”

“Uttermost...” Jesus saves completely. Only here and in Luke 13:11 is this word found in the New Testament. The poor woman was unable to lift up herself “completely” or “to the uttermost.” There is no need, circumstance, time or place, but that Jesus SAVES TO THE UTTERMOST, Let us take this message EVERYWHERE, and to “EVERY CREATURE” (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8; John 14:6).

E. Infirm Priests versus the Perfect Lord (Hebrews 7:26-28).

“For such an high priest became us...” (Hebrews 7:26) In Hebrews 7:4 our attention was called to the greatness of Melchizedek. In Hebrews 7:26 we are reminded of the Glorious One of whom Melchizedek was a TYPE. After this previous discussion comes this outburst: “SUCH AN HIGH PRIEST BECAME US”! “Became us” is wonderfully impressive. Christ has been depicted from the standpoint of God, “IT BECAME HIM” (Hebrews 2:10) and now it is shown that “HE BECAME US.” We possess Him because we have NEED. In our helplessness “HE IS ABLE”, and in our sinfulness “He is ABLE TO SAVE them to the uttermost!”

WHY is ONE PRIEST better than a succession of “priests” (Hebrews 7:23-24)? “New” priests did not promote continuous loyalty. Our ever— loving Christ (Hebrews 2:19-18; 4:14-16) assures us of complete empathy with us sinners. Note that He is...

1. “Holy... “: Holiness of character. Levitical priests were some-times corrupt.
2. “Harmless...” “Innocent.” Free from all baseness.
3. “Undefiled... “: Spotless.
4. “Separate from sinners...” He is “like us” (Hebrews 2:17; 4:14; 5:7-9), but he is UNLIKE US. He was “in a different class from sinners.”
5. “And made higher than the heavens.” He is “seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2).
6. He had no need to renew His sacrifice (Hebrews 7:27; Leviticus 16:11-16).
7. His priesthood was divinely “perfect” and authorized, and not limited to human weakness (Hebrews 7:28).

QUESTIONS

1. Who was Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:1)? Meaning of his name?
2. How many times is Melchizedek spoken of in the Bible (Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:1-3)?
3. What did Abraham give to Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:2)? What does R. Milligan say of “The custom of paying tithes” (read Romans 10:17)?
4. How was Melchizedek “without father... mother” (Hebrews 7:3)?
5. What points of similarity existed between Melchizedek and Christ (Hebrews 7:1; 6:20; I Timothy 6:14-15; Hebrews 7:3,23-24,13-14)?
6. What were they asked to “consider” (Hebrews 7:4)?
7. Who received tithes under the “law” (Hebrews 7:5)? Who is SUPERIOR, those who “receive tithes” or those who PAY TITHES?
8. Can you give two proofs that Melchizedek was SUPERIOR to Abraham (Hebrews 7:6-8)?
9. What did the Levites DO in Abraham (Hebrews 7:9-10)? Since Abraham was inferior to Melchizedek, what about the Levites, who were still unborn?
10. Since the Levites paid tithes to Melchizedek in Abraham, who was “BETTER,” Melchizedek or the Levites? Is Christ “BETTER” than the Levites? Can Christ “receive” our tithes IF WE DO NOT BRING THEM TO HIM IN WORSHIP each Lord’s day (verse 8, I Corinthians 16:2)?
11. If the Levitical order could have given “perfection,” there would have been NO NEED OF WHAT (Hebrews 7:11)?
12. If the “priesthood” had been changed, what about “the law” (Hebrews 7:12)?
13. Was Jesus of Levi, the tribe that furnished all the Levitical priests of Israel (Hebrews 7:13-14)? Why can one not hold to Christ as “high priest” and still cling to “the law” (Hebrews 7:13-17)? Could Christ be “priest” under “the law”?
14. Why, when, and how was the law “disannulled” (Hebrews 7:18-19; 10:4, Colossians 2:14)? What did bring “perfection” (Hebrews 7:19)?
15. What is the difference with respect to an “oath” (Hebrews 7:20-21; 6:13-14)?
16. Christ is “a surety” of what (Hebrews 7:22)?
17. Why were there “many priests” under the “law”? How is Christ’s priesthood “unchangeable” (Hebrews 7:23-24)?
18. What is the difference in ability to save (Hebrews 7:11, 25)?
19. Can you name seven characteristics of our “High Priest” (Hebrews 7:26-28)?
20. Is your living Lord “making intercession” for YOU before the throne of God daily (Hebrews 7:25, 28; Romans 8:34)? If not, why not?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 11

Page 1

Hebrews 8

Memory Verse: Hebrews 8:6

Memory Verse:

“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises” (Hebrews 8:6).

CHRIST GREATER THAN AARON

Hebrews 8 marks a new division in the epistle. The writer has been describing the person and qualification of our great “High Priest,” our Lord Jesus Christ. Now he emphasizes HIS ATONING WORK. That the purpose of the author was to present the SALVATION WROUGHT BY CHRIST under figures taken from the Jewish priesthood was stated in Hebrews 1:3. He indicated it again when he was COMPARING the MEDIATION OF CHRIST with that of the ANGELS (Hebrews 2:17).

Positive Proof

He has positively proved that Christ was SUPERIOR TO MOSES and all the other leaders of Israel (Hebrews 4:14-16). Our Lord is absolutely sympathetic. He is “TOUCHED with the feeling of our infirmities” (Hebrews 4:15). He is all-powerful; His sacrifice was made but “ONCE, when HE OFFERED UP HIMSELF” (Hebrews 7:25). So chapters 5 through 7 wholly concern themselves with the thought of HIS PRIESTHOOD. Like Aaron and the Levitical priest, Christ was shown to be qualified for PRIESTLY SERVICE by HUMAN SYMPATHY and DIVINE APPOINTMENT (Hebrews 5:1-10). Only through the use of “strong meat” of the gospel (Hebrews 5:14) could they understand His PERSON and WORK. The PRIESTHOOD of Christ is SUPERIOR to that of AARON, because it was after a higher order, “the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 7:1f).

“BETTER”

“Better” is a favorite work of this writer. In this epistle we see a “better hope” (Hebrews 7:19), “a better covenant” (Hebrews 8:6), “a better and enduring substance” (Hebrews 10:34), “a better country” (Hebrews 11:16), “a better resurrection” (Hebrews 11:35). “God having provided some better thing for us” (Hebrews 10:40), “And to Jesus the mediator of the NEW COVENANT, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh BETTER THINGS than that of Abel” (Hebrews 12:24).

I. Christ Is The Minister of The True Tabernacle (Hebrews 8:1-6a)

A. The Chief Point: Priesthood (Hebrews 8:1-2).

“Now... this is the sum.” (Hebrews 8:1) “Now the main point of what we have been saying is this;” That which is chief or principal; the crowning truth.

“We have such an high priest...” Because this is so, His MINISTRY MUST BE SUPERIOR IN ALL ITS DETAILS. Our great “high priest” is NOW “SET ON THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF THE MAJESTY IN THE HEAVENS.” Read also Hebrews 10:11-13. He is our Priest on a THRONE! He is superior in POSITION. He is not on earth. He is in heaven.

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“A minister of the sanctuary...” (Hebrews 8:2) Christ is the “minister” in the heavenly “sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Heaven is the real tabernacle of which the tabernacle built at Mount Sinai was but a type. The exercise of our Lord’s priesthood is solely in heaven. The temple in Jerusalem was still standing. Titus the Roman Emperor destroyed it in 70 AD.

“True tabernacle.” A reference, I believe, to the Church of Christ. The Church sustains the same relation to Heaven that the Holy Place of the Tabernacle and Temple did to the Most Holy Place.

The Holy Place of the Tabernacle had ordinances corresponding to the ordinances of the church.

Tabernacle

Table of Shewbread with 12 loaves
Altar of Incense

Church

Vs. Lord’s Supper (Matt. 26:26-28)
Vs. Prayer (Psalm 141:2; Luke 1:9-10; Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4)

Seven-branched Lampstand Vs. the LIGHT of the Holy Spirit through which the church is made the LIGHT OF THE WORLD (Isaiah 60:1; Matthew 5:14-16; Revelation 1:20).

The Church is compared to a BOOTH or TENT (Acts 15:16-17). It INCLUDES both Jew and Gentile! As Christians we are the “tabernacle of God” today (I Corinthians 3:16; II Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-20; I Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 3:6; 10:21; I Peter 2:5). Hence we believe that the “true tabernacle,” and the Church of Christ cannot be separated: they are CERTAINLY IDENTICAL in whole or in part” (Matthew 16:16-18), “which the Lord pitched, and not man!”

B. The Proof of Priesthood (Hebrews 8:3).

“For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices...” (Hebrews 8:3) “Gifts” would refer to the free-will offerings. “Sacrifices” refers to those specifically commanded to God. There were five kinds of offerings under “the law” of Moses:

1. The Sin offering: to show a desire to rid the life of sin; a means of reconciliation to God (Leviticus 4:3).
2. The Burnt offering: Made as an atonement for sin (Leviticus 1:2-4).
3. The Trespass offering: Made as a means of seeking forgiveness for some specific trespass, such as touching unclean things (Leviticus 5:1-5).
4. The Meal offering: An offering of fruit and grain, a thank-offering for blessings received (Leviticus 2:1f).
5. The Peace offering: A sign of communion with God and worship of Him (Leviticus 3:1f).

These offerings could be said to be for RECONCILIATION, ATONEMENT, FORGIVENESS, THANKSGIVING, and COMMUNION.

The “gift” and “sacrifice” which Christ offered was HIMSELF (Hebrews 9:13-14). This is an allusion to the Lord’s Sacrifice of HIMSELF ON CALVARY – not to anything that He now offers above in Heaven. His position at God’s right hand shows He is not in the posture of one who OFFERS, but rather in that of one who has already accomplished His word of offering (Hebrews 9:28, 13-15).

C. The Sphere of Priesthood (Hebrews 8:4-6a).

“For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest...” (Hebrews 8:4) It would be impossible for Christ to be our “high priest” ON EARTH. There can not be TWO DIFFERENT LINES OF PRIESTHOOD ON EARTH: Aaron was of the tribe of Levi; Jesus was of the tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14).

Our Lord's high priestly work was begun when He offered up HIMSELF: He was the one who OFFERS and the OFFERING. In a sense He was not fully and completely "priest" until He entered "in the heavens"!

"Who serve... example and shadow of heavenly things." (Hebrews 8:5) The service of the priests and of the temple is after the example of, and shadowing forth of heavenly things. Moses had a "pattern" to follow (Exodus 25:40). Hence the "tabernacle" made according to God's plan was "the EXAMPLE and SHADOW of heavenly things." The earthly high priest was a TYPE of the GREAT HIGH PRIEST IN the heavens.

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry..." (Hebrews 8:6) Since Christ is not "on earth" (verse 4), He is exercising a HEAVENLY PRIESTHOOD which is much SUPERIOR to its earthly counterpart. The thought of superiority is threefold: "A BETTER "MINISTRY... BETTER COVENANT... BETTER PROMISES!"

The "ministry" is "BETTER" because it "is heavenly not earthly, spiritual not temporal, reality not shadow, His covenant is "absolute not conditional, spiritual not carnal, universal not local, eternal not temporal, individual not notional, internal not external." The "BETTER PROMISES" are those of the gospel.

II. Christ IS THE MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT (Hebrews 8:6b-13)

A. The New Covenant Needed (Hebrews 8:6b-8a).

"Better covenant... For if that first covenant had been faultless." (Hebrews 8:6b, 7): The old or "first" covenant is described in Exodus 20. The New Covenant is explained in Jeremiah 31:31-34. The BASIS of the "first covenant" was the PROMISES of MEN; "And all the people said, "WE WILL HEAR... ALL THAT THE LORD HATH SAID WILL WE DO, and be obedient" (Exodus 20:18-20; 24:7).

The BASIS of the NEW or "BETTER COVENANT" is the UNCHANGING PROMISE OF GOD; "I will forgive the iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:34). The NEW COVENANT or TESTAMENT is "better" (verse 6) because of the SURETY BY WHOM ITS STABILITY IS GUARANTEED (Hebrews 7:22), and because of "THE MEDIATOR" by whom it was established. When Jeremiah prophesied of this "new covenant" (Jeremiah 31:31-34) he was almost in despair in regard to the life of the nation – Judah and Israel. The Law of Moses could not make men "perfect" or spiritually mature (Hebrews 7:18, 11; Galatians 3:21; Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:11; 2:16). God "found fault with it" – the "first" covenant (verse 8a).

B. The New Covenant Promised (Hebrews 8:8b-9).

"Behold... I will make a NEW COVENANT" (Hebrews 8:8b): This "New Covenant" is foretold in Jeremiah 31:31-34. The word "covenant" commonly denoted an agreement between two parties. Yet in a divine covenant the parties stand in no sense as equal contractors. God, in His grace, makes an arrangement which man RECEIVES. This was true of the OLD COVENANT as well as of the NEW.

Israel and Judah were constantly transgressing the law; it CONDEMNED THEM. It did NOT GIVE THEM POWER TO HELP THEM OBEY IT. They rejected God; He rejected them (verse 9). They broke the "covenant"; God annulled the covenant.

C. The New Covenant Described (Hebrews 8:10-12).

"For this is the covenant that I will make..." (Heb. 8:10) Here God foretells a covenant which will be different from that which God had given on Mount Sinai. The SUPERIORITY of the NEW COVENANT:

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1. "I will put my laws into their mind... hearts" (verse 10) It is written ON THE HEART, and so is INTERNAL rather than EXTERNAL. The gospel must be heard and OBEYED FROM THE HEART to "SAVE" the sinner (Mark 16:15-16, Hebrews 5:9).

2. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." (verse 10) The people are to be possessed by God as His own (Galatians 3:26-29).

3. "And... all shall know me... least to the greatest." (verse 11) In the New Covenant ALL will be taught of God (Isaiah 54:13; John 6:45), whereas under the law only the educated scribe could understand the minutiae of the law (Dods). See Paul's comparison in II Corinthians 3:7-18.

We "know" God only through His Word which BEGETS the SPIRIT LIFE within us (Romans 10:17; John 1:13; James 1:18; II Peter 3:18). This way of love is written in the fleshly tables of the human heart, not in cold, lifeless stone (II Corinthians 3:3)!

4. "For I will be merciful..." (Hebrews 8:12) "In the old covenant there was little room for mercy. It was a matter of voluntary agreement; if one of the covenanting parties failed in the least part, there was no obligation on the other to remain faithful in their mutual agreement" (F. B. Meyer). But in the "NEW COVENANT" there is mercy, kindness, and compassion. The OLD was LAW; the NEW is GRACE, unmerited favor! We may have ENTIRE, FORGIVENESS OF SINS: reverse these four realities in the life of the Christian and they represent four CHIEF BLESSINGS of divine grace:

1. Pardon.
2. Fellowship.
3. Consecration.
4. Obedience.

Man's HIGHEST IDEAL then is to "KNOW GOD," not "Know Thyself." Only Christ can "cleanse" us thoroughly from our sins (Hebrews 10:4; I John 1:7). When we are "washed" in His blood through our obedience to the gospel, God will "remember" our sins against us no more forever (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 8:32-39).

D. The New Covenant Assured (Hebrews 8:13).

"In that he said, A NEW COVENANT..." (Hebrews 8:13) "By saying, 'New', He puts the FIRST out of date. But what is antiquated and obsolete approaches the vanishing point." Even in Jeremiah's day the "old covenant" or "first" one of Mount Sinai proved inadequate; FORGIVENESS was needed.

"Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish." The language implies that the "old covenant" is to pass away. That it has done so is shown in the next chapter. "As a religious institution, it was, as we have seen, abolished when Christ was crucified. He then 'took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross' (Colossians 2:14f). As a civil institution it continued for about seven years after the writing of this epistle. God then took it entirely out of the way, forever abolishing at the same time, the whole Tabernacle service. This was for the purpose of staying more effectually the hand of persecution, and correcting the extreme Judaizing tendencies that were then threatening to corrupt the simplicity of the Gospel, especially throughout Palestine."

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QUESTIONS

1. What is now emphasized in Hebrews chapter 8? Has his purpose been stated previously (Heb. 1:3, 2:17)?
2. How does Paul summarize what he has been saying (Hebrews 8:1)? To whom is Christ SUPERIOR (Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:25)?
3. What are some of the “BETTER” things of the Christian (Heb. 7:19; 8:6; 10:34; 11:16, 35; 10:40; 12:24)?
4. What is significant about Christ’s being “seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” as contrasted with Hebrews 10:11 (Hebrews 8:1; 10:12)?
5. Of what is Christ “A minister” (Hebrews 8:2)?
6. What is every “high priest” ordained to do? Can you distinguish between “gifts” and “sacrifices” (Hebrews 8:3)? What did our Lord have to offer (Ephesians 5:2)?
7. What shows that Christ’s ministry is HEAVENLY, not earthly (Hebrews 8:4)?
8. To what does “True tabernacle” refer (Hebrews 8:2)? Can you show that the Holy Place of the Tabernacle of Moses had ordinances corresponding to the ordinances of the church?
9. Of what were the offerings of the Aaronic priests a “shadow” and “example” (Hebrews 8:5)? What did God admonish Moses to do relative to the tabernacle?
10. Upon what is the “more excellent ministry” of Christ established (Hebrews 8:6-7)?
11. What did God say about a “new covenant” (Hebrews 8:8)? When and by whom was this said (Jeremiah 31:31-34)?
12. When was the “first” covenant established (Hebrews 8:9, Deuteronomy 5:2)? Why was it given (Galatians 3:19)?
13. How did God describe the “new covenant” (Hebrews 8:10-12)?
14. Where did God write His laws under the “old covenant,” and where did He write His laws under the “new covenant” (Hebrews 8:10; Exodus 32:15-19; 34:1)?
15. What, according to Paul, is the HEART OF CHRISTIAN LIVING (Galatians 2:20)?
16. How does the Christian know that God never did intend for the “first” covenant (Old Testament) to be permanent (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Deuteronomy 18:15)?
17. How long did the “first” covenant last (Galatians 3:16, 19; Colossians 2:14)?
18. What wonderful truth applies to ALL who come to God through the Christ (or Messiah) of Israel (Hebrews 8:12; Acts 13:38-39)?
19. Can you name four chief blessings of divine grace?
20. The term “new covenant” indicates what fact about the “old covenant” (Hebrews 8:13)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 12
 Hebrews 9

Page 1
 Memory Verse: Hebrews 9:28

Memory Verse:

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:28).

CHRIST’S OFFERINGS BETTER THAN OLD ONES

In our lesson last week we considered the **SUPERIORITY** of **CHRIST’S PRIESTHOOD** over that of Aaron and the priests of Judaism in respect to the **PLACE OF HIS SERVICE** – He was in heaven instead of on earth. Jesus in His Priesthood gives us a “**BETTER**” of “**New Covenant**” (Hebrews 8:7-13).

The scene in which Christ “ministers” is the sphere of heavenly realities. The “**New Covenant**”, in connection with which He serves, is one of **GRACE**, and not of **LAW WORKS**.

For while Christ is of the “**ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK**,” He **EXERCISES** the office **AFTER THE PATTERN OF AARON**.

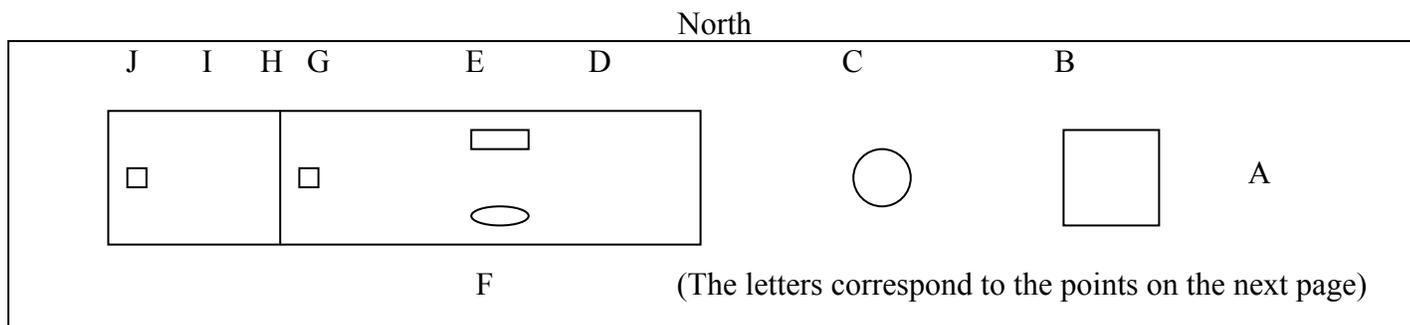
The Passover and the Day of Atonement were the two great ordinances that lay at the foundation of Israel’s national life: Exodus 12 is explained in I Corinthians 5:7 and Leviticus 16 is explained in Hebrews 9.

I. The Old and the New Sanctuary (Hebrews 9:1-10)

A. “The Furniture of the Tabernacle (Hebrews 9:1-5).

“Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service...” (Hebrews 9:1) At this point the entire contents of the Jewish tabernacle are given. It is impossible to deal with each item in detail (Hebrews 9:5), because the writer has one point to emphasize, the thought of **PRIESTHOOD** (Hebrews 8:1). While the Mosaic and the Christian covenants were named in Hebrews 8, they are contrasted in Hebrews 9. The “first covenant” had “its worship regulations and its earthly sanctuary.”

“For there was a tabernacle made...” (Hebrews 9:2) Examine the following diagram prayerfully and carefully. The full description of the Jewish tabernacle is found in Exodus 25-31. The account of the setting up of this building and the arrangement of the furniture are given in Exodus 40:1-38. In these chapters in Exodus we learn that the tabernacle was surrounded by a court, that the building was divided into two rooms, and that the pieces of furniture were placed as in the following diagram:



The Tabernacle Courtyard and the Tabernacle

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“Study...” (II Timothy 2:15) The furniture and the rooms of the Tabernacle are denoted by the letters A to J, locating each article of furniture or area.

The Tabernacle was 150 feet long, from east and west, seventy-five feet wide, north and south. It faced the EAST. The walls were of linen, posts of acacia wood, silver topped, with copper bases, and joined with silver rods.

A. The Court: a Type of the World.

B. Altar of Burnt Offering: Seven and one-half feet square, made of acacia wood, covered with copper, filled with earth. Type of Christian service.

C. Laver: A very large basin where sacrifices were washed and priests purified. It was a type of Christian baptism.

D. The Holy Place: It was thirty (30) feet by fifteen (15) feet and (15) feet high. It was a type of the church. This is the “first” room. It had three pieces of furniture.

F. The Candlestick: Read Exodus 25:31-40. It had SEVEN ARMS. It was a type of the church as God’s means to dispense the LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL (Zechariah 4:1-14; Revelation 1:20). Type of the Word of God (Psalm 119:105, 130).

E. “And the table, and the shewbread...” The table was made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold. It was 36 inches x 18 inches by 27 inches. The priests placed twelve loaves of fresh shewbread here every seventh day. This was a type of the Lord’s Supper. Read Exodus 37:10-16; Leviticus 24:5-9; Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 11:23f.

I. “And after the second veil... Holiest place” (Hebrews 9:3) The first veil was over the door into the Holy Place. The “second veil” (H) separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (I). Only the High Priest entered into the Holy of Holies. It is a type of the “veil” between heaven and us. “Holy place of all”: A type of Heaven.

G. “Which had the golden censer...” (Hebrews 9:4) It was of wood, covered with gold, on which rested a golden bowl filled with coals from the altar of burnt-offering on which incense was poured and from which it ascended constantly as a sweet savor. Type of Christian prayer. This censer belonged in the Holy of Holies into which the High Priest went only on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:12).

J. “The Ark of the Covenant...” (Hebrews 9:4b) So-called because it contained the two tables of the covenant between God and Israel (Exodus 25:10f). It contained the “Golden pot... manna... Aaron’s rod” (Exodus 16:32-34, Numbers 17:1-11). “The ark” was 45 inches long, and 27 inches in height and width. Made of “shittim” or acacia wood, covered inside and out with pure gold. The lid was solid gold, and was called “The Mercy-seat.” On the lid were two cherubim with outspread wings. On the Day of Atonement the High Priest sprinkled blood upon the “mercy-seat.” This was in token of the mediation of Christ.

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“Tables of the covenant.” See Deuteronomy 10:1-5. All but the “tables” were removed before the temple was built (I Kings 8:9). The “Ark” itself disappeared when the temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC.

“And over it the cherubim of glory...” (Hebrews 9:5) Symbolic figures made of gold, hovered over the lid of the ark called the “mercy seat.” Cherubim were angels. It was not the purpose of the writer to give a detailed significance of each item in the tabernacle. The “SUM” or chief thing was the PRIESTHOOD of Christ (Hebrews 8:1).

Exodus 26 Will Give You “Better” Understanding of the Walls and Posts of “The Tabernacle” Made of Acacia Wood.

B. The Ministry in the Tabernacle (Hebrews 9:6-10).

1. It Was Ineffective (Hebrews 9:6-7).

“Now... the priests went always into the first tabernacle” (Hebrews 9:6): The “priests” went every morning and night into the Holy Place to offer incense. Every Sabbath the twelve (12) loaves of “shewbread” were changed. These services were still performed when this epistle was written about 63 A.D. Titus the Roman Emperor from 79-81 destroyed the Temple at Jerusalem in 70 AD.

“But into the second went the high priest alone once every year...” (Hebrews 9:7) On the Day of Atonement the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies to make atonement for “himself... his household, and for all the congregation of Israel” (Leviticus 16:11-15; Exodus 30:10-25).

“Errors of the people”: Sins of ignorance. There was no atonement for willful sin – then or now (Hebrews 10:26).

2. It Was Transitional (Hebrews 9:8).

“The Holy Ghost this signifying...” (Hebrews 9:8): This verse teaches us that the way into the immediate presence of God had NOT at that time been made known. The gospel opened the way into our Holy of Holies – Heaven. Christ opened the “way” for ALL WHO OBEY THE GOSPEL (John 14:6; Acts 5:32). When Jesus on the cross “dismissed His spirit... the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom” (Matthew 27:51). Rejoice as you read Hebrews 4:14-16!

3. It Was Figurative (Hebrews 9:9-10).

“Which was a figure for the time then present...” (Hebrews 9:10) The Jewish rites were not the TRUE and COMPLETE DIVINE SERVICE but only figures, types, or symbols. They could give OUTWARD CEREMONIAL PURITY, BUT NOT INWARD HOLINESS or “render the worshipper’s conscience perfect.” They lasted “until the time of reformation” or the “new covenant!”

“Divers washings”: Immersions of the whole body were often required in the Jewish service (Exodus 29:4; Leviticus 16:4; 17:15; Numbers 19:7).

II. A BETTER MINISTRY (Hebrews 9:11-14)

In the contrast between the OLD and the NEW MINISTRY, that of Christ is SUPERIOR because it is SPIRITUAL. We look away from the TYPES to the REALITIES that they symbolize.

A. A Better Priest (Hebrews 9:11).

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“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come...” (Hebrews 9:11): The Mosaic ordinances of worship bore on the surface the marks of imperfection. They could not “render the worshipper’s conscience perfect” (verse 9).

“Christ... greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands” (Hebrews 9:11): Christ as “A Better Priest” has a “Better Sanctuary,” a description of the presence of God, in which our Lord as High Priest ministers (Hebrews 8:2, 5). The Holy of Holies for the Christian is HEAVEN (Hebrews 9:23-24). Our Holy Place is the Church (Ephesians 2:20-22). We are the “TEMPLE of the Holy Ghost which is in you” (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

B. A Better Sacrifice (Hebrews 9:12).

“Neither by the blood of goats and calves...” (Hebrews 9:12) Christ carried HIS OWN BLOOD when He entered the Holy of Holies above. By it He “OBTAINED ETERNAL REDEMPTION FOR US.” Blood in the Bible always includes the two thoughts of a DEATH SUFFERED and a LIFE OFFERED. Christ’s offering was “ONCE FOR ALL,” a BETTER PRIESTHOOD. The Jewish High Priest on the Day of Atonement entered into the Holy of Holies “WITH” blood (verse 7). Christ entered HEAVEN “THROUGH” (not “with” His blood. It was not necessary for our High Priest to present His blood (nothing so material), but ONLY TO PRESENT HIMSELF (Hebrews 9:12, 24)!

C. A Better Guarantee (Hebrews 9:13-14).

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats...” (Hebrews 9:13): This animal blood was shed for the outward purification of the people on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:1-34).

“The ashes of an heifer.” See Numbers 19:21. The red heifer was burned, the ashes were put in water, and this water was sprinkled on the people for their ceremonial purification.

“How much more shall the blood of Christ...” (Hebrews 9:14) If the “blood” of animals had power to cleanse outwardly (Numbers 19:19), “how much more” shall Christ’s BLOOD REMOVE GUILT AND SIN FROM OUR HEARTS?

“Through the eternal Spirit.” THE DIVINE SPIRIT led Christ. He was dragged to the sacrifice like the victims, but “laid down my life, that I might take it again” (John 10:17-18). This He did as God-Anointed, anointed with the Spirit, acting by His power. He actually CLEANSSES our “consciences from DEAD WORKS to serve the living God”. This is the BETTER BLESSING or RESULT!

“Conscience” is mentioned in Hebrews five times (Hebrews 9:9, 14; 10:2, 22; 13:18). Contrast “dead works” (Hebrews 6:1) and “wicked works” (Colossians 1:21).

Thank God we Christians have ACCEPTANCE (verse 11), ACCESS (verse 12), ACCEPTABILITY (verse 14), and ACTIVITY (verse 14).

III. AN EFFICACIOUS MINISTRY (Hebrews 9:15-22)

A. The Power of the New Ministry (Hebrews 9:15).

“And for this cause he is the mediator of the NEW TESTAMENT...” (Hebrews 9:15) “For this cause” looks back to verse 14 and on to “50 – THAT,” and thus the verse supplies the link between the MINISTRY and the COVENANT. God through the Jewish and Patriarchal ages issued a sort of PROMISSORY NOTE BASED ON THE INFINITE VALUE OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST which He knew would be shed in the fullness of time. By this means God was enabled for the time to meet the claims of Justice and still be Just or righteous (Romans 3:21-26).

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B. The Guarantee of the New Ministry (Hebrews 9:16-17).

“For where a testament is... death of the testator” (Hebrews 9:16) The “New Covenant” is here called “The New Testament.” A Testament is a Will, a bequeathing to HEIRS, only after the “death of the testator.” Christ’s will for us was “effective at death.” It is not in force as “long as the testator lives” (verse 17).

C. The Confirmation of the New from the Old (Hebrews 9:18-22).

“Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood...” (Hebrews 9:18) Every sin under the law required atonement, and NO ATONEMENT COULD BE MADE WITHOUT BLOOD (see Exodus 24:1-8; 40:9-15; Leviticus 8:24; 16:16, 18, 33; Hebrews 9:19-22),

“Without the shedding of blood...” (Hebrews 9:22) The shedding of Christ’s blood was absolutely necessary in order to establish the “New Covenant” or “New Testament!” Note three indispensable things (Hebrews 9:22; 11:6; 12:14).

IV. A COMPLETE MINISTRY (Hebrews 9:23-28)

A. The Sacrificial Work of Christ (Hebrews 9:23).

“It was therefore necessary...” (Hebrews 9:23) The tabernacle and all its service were “shadows.” Blood purified them. The “heavenly things” nobler sacrifice than the “shadows” of the Law, or Christ’s sacrifice (I Peter 1:18-19).

B. The Priestly Work of Christ (Hebrews 9:24-26).

“For Christ is... entered... into heaven itself.” (Hebrews 9:24) Christ entered into God’s presence on our behalf with an eternally atoning sacrifice. HIS BLOOD FORGIVES and “ONCE FOR ALL at the dose of the ages to eliminate sin by His self-sacrifice” (verses 25-26). Check “ONCE” in Hebrews 7:27; 9:12, 26, 27; 10:10; 9:28. Does this allow a “daily blood-less sacrifice of Christ?”

C. The Kingly Work of Christ (Hebrews 9:27-28).

“And at it is appointed unto men once to die...” (Hebrews 9:27) As death is a definite end of man on earth, with nothing afterwards but “the judgment,” so Christ’s death WAS FINAL, and there is nothing further to be done in regard to sin.

This chapter is the best illustration and explanation of Leviticus 16. There the High Priest superintended the offering of the sacrifice outside the tabernacle, then entered the Holy of Holies with the blood, then he presented the blood by sprinkling it on and around the mercy seat, and afterwards he returned out of the tabernacle and blessed the people. These actions may well describe and “symbolize our Lord’s ATONEMENT, ACCESS, APPEAL and ADVENT.” In verse 26 He appears in the PAST for ATONEMENT; in verse 24 His appearance is in the PRESENT as our PRIEST. In verse 28 is the PROMISE of His ADVENT (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4: 16-17).

QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by “ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary” (Hebrews 9:1)?
2. While Christ is of the order of Melchizedek, after the “pattern” of whom does He EXERCISE His office?
3. What were the two main divisions of the “tabernacle” (Hebrews 9:2-3; Exodus 25-31; 40:1-38)?
4. What was in the Holy Place? In the Holy of Holies (Hebrews 9:2-5)? What was typical meaning of each?
5. Since “the golden censer” was used daily by the priests, and only by the High Priest on the “Day of Atonement” (Leviticus 16:12), is this not the probably reason why it is said that the Most Holy Place had the “golden censer” (Hebrews 9:4)?
6. What were “cherubim”? What was their positions (Hebrews 9:5)?
7. Who went into the Holy Place, and why (Hebrews 9:6)? Who went into the Holy of Holies? How often? Why (Hebrews 9:7)?
8. What was the lid of the “ark” called (Hebrews 9:5; Exodus 25:21)? Who is not the believer’s “MERCY SEAT” (Romans 3:24-25)?
9. Can you name three reasons why Christ’s ministry in the “Tabernacle” was SUPERIOR to that of Aaron (Hebrews 9:6-10)? Meaning of “until the time of reformation” (verse 10)?
10. Christ is “High Priest” in what (Hebrews 9:11)? Who built this “tabernacle (Hebrews 8:2; 9:11)?
11. Why whose “blood” did He enter into the “holy place” (Hebrews 9:12)?
12. Where is Christ now (Hebrews 6:19, 20, 24)? What then is the “Most Holy Place” in the “true tabernacle”?
13. The “Holy Place” of the old tabernacle typified what (Hebrews 9:6; Revelation 1:6; I Peter 2:5)?
14. Can you contrast the number of entrances into the “Most Holy Place” (Hebrews 9:7, 12)?
15. Can you contrast the purifying under the two systems (Hebrews 9:13-14)?
16. What did Christ’s death do for those under the “First Testament” (Hebrews 9:15, 22, 10:3-4)? Explain.
17. What was necessary to bring the “New Covenant” into force (Hebrews 9:16-17)?
18. How was the “First Testament” dedicated (Hebrews 9:18-21)? How was the “New Testament” dedicated (Hebrews 9:22-23)? Why?
19. In what places was the blood of Christ offered (Hebrews 9:24), and many times were the sacrifices offered (Hebrews 9:25-26)?
20. How many times is it “appointed unto men” to die (Hebrews 9:27)? For those who do not take Christ as Saviour, what is certain after “death”? How will Christ appear the “second time” (Hebrews 9:28)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VII

First Quarter

Lesson 13

Page 1

Hebrews 10

Memory Verse: Hebrews 10:12,13

Memory Verses:

“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool” (Hebrews 10:12, 13).

CHRIST THE ONE OFFERING FOR PERFECTION

In our lesson today we finish the study of the third division of The Epistle to the Hebrews: “CHRIST, THE PRIEST... His Work” which division extends from Hebrews 4:14 - Hebrews 10:18. We shall begin our study of “CHRIST, THE WAY... HIS LEADERSHIP” (Hebrews 10:19-Hebrews 13:25).

The writer reaches his great climax. He brings to a conclusion his CONTRAST between the Levitical priesthood and the PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST. Our Lord is in the HEAVENLY SPHERE (Hebrews 8:1-6). It was under BETTER CONDITIONS, related to a COVENANT OF GRACE rather than one of WORKS (Hebrews 8:7-13). He then compared the REDEEMING WORK OF CHRIST with the ritual Day of Atonement. On that day the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies ALONE, and only ONCE a year. “Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands... BUT INTO HEAVEN ITSELF, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Hebrews 9:24). Jesus is SUPERIOR TO THE HIGH PRIESTS OF Judaism. Our Lord made ONE PERFECT SACRIFICE of HIMSELF – it will never be repeated (Hebrews 9:25-26).

“ONCE TO DIE”

“And as it is appointed unto men ONCE TO DIE, but after this the judgment; So Christ was ONCE OFFERED TO BEAR THE SINS OF MANY; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the SECOND TIME WITHOUT SIN UNTO SALVATION” (Hebrews 9:27-28).

In Hebrews 10 comes the “beginning of the end of the argument.” The SUFFICIENCY OF OUR SAVIOUR’S ATONEMENT is the general subject. The writer summarizes the truths already stated, and makes significant and important additions.

I. THE FINAL SACRIFICE (Hebrews 10:1-18)

A. The Ineffectiveness of the Old Sacrifices (Hebrews 10:1-4).

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come... “ (Hebrews 10:1): “For” links this subject with Hebrews 9:28, hence the writer resumes the entire subject.

1. The Old Sacrifices Were the “Shadow,” Not the Substance (Hebrews 10:1).

“Shadow... not the very image.” (Hebrews 10:1) The “law” of Moses did “not contain the good things but only a shadow of them, They were typified in the Law but EXIST in the Gospel.” “Shadow” means outline; “image” the true representation of a picture. “Those sacrifices” could not give peace of conscience, or bring the worshipers into an ideal relationship with God.

2. The Old Sacrifices Involved Repetition, not Remission (Hebrews 10:2a).

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“For then would they not have ceased to be offered?” (Hebrews 10:2a): If the sinner could have offered a SUFFICIENT ATONEMENT through his priest and High Priest, he would have no NEED OF MORE SACRIFICES. He would then be FREE, of FEAR and DOUBT. Their very repetition shows that the effect of “those sacrifices” was temporary, and that the people had not been granted a real sense of forgiveness!

“He who is obliged to take a medicine every hour to keep life in him cannot be said to BE CURED” (Govett). If medicine “which is given to a patient HEALS HIM, there is NO NEED TO REPEAT IT” (Albert Barnes).

3. The Old Sacrifices Maintained a Consciousness of Sins, Not a Cleansing from Them (Hebrews 10:2b).

“Because that the worshippers ONCE PURGED...” (Hebrews 10:2b) The fact that every year on the Day of Atonement, confession of sins was RENEWED, shows that the people had not been granted a real sense of forgiveness. A DEBT ONCE fairly and fully paid, is NEVER PAID A SECOND TIME.

4. The Old Sacrifices Meant Remembrance, not Removal of Sins (Hebrews 10:3-4).

“But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made...” (Hebrews 10:3). Besides the individual daily, weekly, and monthly sacrifices, there was a yearly sacrifice on the Day of Atonement for the High Priest himself and then for the whole nation (Leviticus 16:1-34).

“A remembrance again made of sins every year.” “An awakening of mind rather than an external making of remembrance.” It is the same word used of Jesus in instituting the Lord’s Supper: “This DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME” (Luke 22:19). “Remember” Him; He has blotted out our sins and “REMEMBERS” them no more (Hebrews 8:10).

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls... take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4) These old sacrifices of “the blood of bulls and of goats is powerless to take away sins.” They secured “symbolic forgiveness” only. They pointed to the “LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD” (John 1:29; I Peter 1:18-19).

B. The Saving Power of Christ’s Sacrifice (Hebrews 10:5-10).

1. The Source of the Sacrifice Is the Will of God (Hebrews 10:5-7).

“Wherefore when he cometh into the world...” (Hebrews 10:5) The old Levitical sacrifices could not CLEANSE FROM SIN. Christ said so when He affirmed, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). The quotation from Psalm 40:6-8 shows “the sacrifices and offerings of the Jewish altar did not meet God’s will.” At the time of Psalm 40:6-8, God did demand and accept animal sacrifices, but God had NO “PLEASURE” in them for a permanent remission. Psalm 40 referred to this and predicted a time when such sacrifices would be discontinued.

“Lo, I come... to do thy will, O God.” (Hebrews 10:7) The Psalmist represents Christ, who comes simply to DO THE WILL OF GOD, completely surrendered to His will (verse 9a). Christ in obedience to God’s will gave His “body” on the cross; this was our Lord’s “offering for sin” and it was ACCEPTED OF GOD (II Corinthians 5:14-15).

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2. The Character of the Sacrifice Is Obedience to the Will of God (Hebrews 10:8-9).

“Lo, I come to do they will, O God...” (Hebrews 10:9). Instead of animal sacrifices we now have the willing surrender of Christ to the “will of God,” and the former offerings are therefore done away in order that “The Saving Power of Christ’s Sacrifice” might be shared by “every creature” (Mark 16:15-16; Hebrews 10:8). Our Lord’s sacrifice is the **ONLY WAY OF FORGIVENESS AND APPROACH TO GOD** (John 14:5; Acts 4:12; II Corinthians 7:17-21). So God “takes away the first (covenant) in order to establish the second” (covenant) through His Son!

3. The Purpose of the Sacrifice Is Sanctification in the Will of God (Hebrews 10:10).

“By the which will we are sanctified...” (Hebrews 10:10) The basic purpose of God’s Son in taking a humane body was to “sanctify” the obedient believer “by **MEANS OF THE OFFERING UP ONCE FOR ALL OF THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST.**” “Sanctified” means “set apart”; here the idea is that the believer is “set apart” by God for Himself. God does this through our complete obedience to the Gospel (Acts 8:35-39; 2:37-42; 22:16; Galatians 3:26-29).

C. Christ’s Present Exaltation (Hebrews 10:11-14).

“And every priest standeth daily ministering...”(Hebrews 10:11) The priest of the “Old Covenant” **STOOD IN THE TABERNACLE.** There was **NO SEAT IN THE TENT.** His work was **NEVER FINISHED,** because it could not “take away sins,” “strip off our sins” (Berkeley).

“But this man... offered one sacrifice for sins” (Hebrews 10:12): Christ the High Priest of the “New Covenant” is described. His “**ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS... perfected for ever them that are sanctified**” (verses 12-14).

“Sat down on the right hand of God.” Read Hebrews 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2.

“From henceforth expecting...” (Hebrews 10:13) Christ is waiting until every enemy is conquered.

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever...” (Hebrews 10:14) Through Christ we have our consciences free from the guilt of sin. In Him we are “sanctified” (Hebrews 2:10, and our sins are “stripped off” for ever (Hebrews 10:10, 29; I Corinthians 1:2).

“There was One who was willing to die in my stead,
That a soul so unworthy might live,
And the path to the cross He was willing to tread,
All the sins of my life to forgive.”

“They are nailed to the cross,
They are nailed to the cross,
O how much He was willing to bear!
With what anguish and loss,
Jesus went to the cross! But He carried my sins with Him there.”

– Mrs. Frank A. Breck.

D. The Perfect Fulfillment of All Conditions (Hebrews 10:15-18).

1. The Witness of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:15).’

“Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us...” (Hebrews 10:15) With great significance the Holy Ghost or Spirit is mentioned. Not only is He the Author and Source of the message in Hebrews 9:8; II Peter 1:21, but He is shown through the statements of Scripture to be witnessing to the **REALITY** and **POWER** of the “New Covenant.”

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2. The Work of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:16-17).

“This is the covenant that I will make with them...” (Hebrews 10:16) The author now refers to Jeremiah 31:31-34 in which there is a prediction of final pardon (see Hebrews 8:10-12), and here SUMMARIZED and ASSOCIATED with the Holy Spirit. The “law” is put into the heart, and into the mind;

and then the “LOVE OF God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:5; Acts 2;38-42; 5:32). God’s promise: “Their sins and their lawbreakings I will no longer remember!”

3. The Great CONCLUSION (Hebrews 10:18)

“Now where remission of these is... no more offering for sin” (Hebrews 10:18) “Now where sins have been forgiven there are no further offerings for them.” GOD’S WILL WRITTEN ON THE HEART BY THE HOLY SPIRIT is the PROOF of the sufficiency of Christ’s SACRIFICE, and there is NO NEED OF REPETITION. THE WRITER’S CASE IS PROVED. We have the threefold revelation of God in this passage: The WILL of God (verse 9), the WORK of Christ (verse 12), and the WITNESS of the Spirit (verse 15). The old covenant means BONDAGE; the NEW, LIBERTY; the old spoke of FEAR, the NEW of ASSURANCE; the old emphasized DISTANCE, the new, NEARNESS; the old spoke of SEPARATION, the new speaks of FELLOWSHIP!

II. PRIVILEGES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE (Hebrews 10:19-25)

A. Privileges Possessed (Hebrews 10:19-21).

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness...” (Hebrews 10:19) This is our PRESENT APPROACH. Thank God for the “present tenses of the blessed life.” “Brothers” is another indication of the affection of the writer and his readers (Hebrews 3:1, 12; 13:22).

“To enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.” Through the sacrifice of Christ we have PERPETUAL ACCESS to God. Unlike the High Priest who alone could enter the Holy of Holies once each year, we brethren in Christ can COME BOLDLY (Hebrews 3:6; 4:16) AT ALL TIMES to the “throne of grace” I Christ is the “WAY” to God (John 14:6; I Peter 1:18-19). He is our “NEW and LIVING WAY... an HIGH PRIEST OVER THE HOUSE OF GOD” (verses 20-21), the Church (see I Timothy 3:15).

“Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God be saved, to sin no more.”

B. Privileges Used (Hebrews 10:22-25).

1. The Exercise of Faith (Hebrews 10:22).

“Let us draw near with a true heart... faith.” (Hebrews 10:22) It is our duty and privilege to “draw near” for praise, thanksgiving, and – supplication. We do not stand aloof, as was the case under the “Old Covenant” (Numbers 18:22). “Sprinkled” cannot refer to the ACTION OF BAPTISM for the same verse says that something else was done to the body. The term is figurative and means “cleansed or purged,” “and our bodies BATHED with pure water.”

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2. The Exercise of Hope (Hebrews 10:23).

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith...” (Hebrews 10:23) Since God is faithful to perform every promise He has made, we Christians ought to be steadfast, and unwavering in our faithfulness to Him.

3. The Exercise of Love (Hebrews 10:24-25).

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works” (Hebrews 10:24): This is the OUTWARD ATTITUDE. We are to “consider” one another with the special object of stirring our fellow-Christians to love and “beautiful works.” We have been exhorted to “consider him” (Hebrews 3:1), and now “consider one another,” and Paul adds that we are to “consider ourselves” (Hebrews 6:1).

“Provoke...” Is a beautiful paradox. It expresses the Greek word, which is translated in English by “paroxysm,” This is the only “exasperation” which is permissible to the Christian. We cannot have too much of it. Let us incite our brethren to “love and good works.” There is ONE PARTICULAR in which they could do this (verse 25). Christians must not withdraw from fellow-believers. “Union is strength.”

III. WARNING AGAINST WILLFUL SIN (Hebrews 10:26-31)

A. The Possibility (Hebrews 10:26a).

“For if we sin willfully...” (Hebrews 10:26) It is only too possible to have a full knowledge of the truth, and then continue to “sin willfully” (see Hebrews 3:12; 6:7). The evil seems to be the “presumptuous sin” of Numbers 15:30 and Psalm 19:13. It means a sin that deliberately goes against God and right.

B. The Prospect (Hebrews 10:26b-27).

“There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” (Verse 26b) The sin of apostasy, or falling away, results in hopeless ruin for the offender in the approaching “day” of the Lord’s return. To reject Christ is to be rejected by Him (Acts 4:12). “But a certain fearful looking for of judgment...” (Hebrews 10: 27): See John 3:36.

C. The Principle (Hebrews 10:28-29).

“He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy...” (Hebrews 10:28): To fall away from the truth revealed through Moses was punishable by death (Deuteronomy 13:1-15; 17:2-7; Luke 12:47-48). “Two or three witnesses” who are honest, and whose witness agrees can CONVICT A PERSON IN ANY COURT OF LAW for any offense.

“Of how much sorer punishment... trodden under foot the Son of God.” (Hebrews 10:29) This is no ordinary case of backsliding, as in Hebrews 6, but a case of willful and persistent apostasy. To insult and despise the work of the Holy Spirit is to seal one’s doom for time and eternity.

D. The Proof (Hebrews 10:30-31).

“For... Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense.” (Hebrews 10:30) If God’s great way of salvation, this mightiest sacrifice of all is refused, no other sacrifice remains. The work of Jesus is God’s “uttermost” possible for the salvation of man. If this were rejected, by such rejection man deliberately chooses for himself the only possible alternative, which is the vengeance of God. It is “Dreadful to fall into the hands of the living God!” (Verse 31).

IV. THE EXPERIENCE OF FAITH (Hebrews 10:32-39)

A. Reminders (Hebrews 10:32-34)

1. Past Privilege (verse 32a)

“But call to remember... “ (Verse 32a) Keep on reminding your-selves.

2. Past Power (verses 32b-34)

“Ye endured a great fight of afflictions...” (verse 32b): They had “endured” amidst a conflict and persecution. They had been “made a gazing stock by reproaches and afflictions,” and partly it was a matter of Christian fellowship. They became companions of them that were so used (See Acts 8:1; 12:1-3; 19:29; I Corinthians 4:9).

B. Counsels (Hebrews 10:35-39).

1. The Exhortation (verse 35)

“Cast not away therefore your confidence...” (verse 35) They were not to cast away their courage and boldness, Their reward is certain (Hebrews 11:26).

2. The Need (verse 36)

“For ye have need of patience...” (verse 36) Patience is good for the soul. Do your best; then lie calmly in the hands of God and wait for the reward (James 1:3-4; Romans 5:3-4).

3. The Support (verses 37-38)

“For yet a little while... he... come.” (Verse 37) The outlook was inspiring. It would only be a “little while” until their Master would come without fail (verse 7). “Now the just shall live by faith...” (verse 38). The writer quotes Habakkuk 2:3-4 in order to enforce his teaching. The return of Christ should ever be regarded as near. Exercise faith; do not draw back or become an apostate, for God has no pleasure in such.

4. The Challenge (verse 39)

“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition...” (verse 39) We Christians must not “take in sail” (Galatians 2:12) and become becalmed! “Draw near,” not “DRAW BACK!”

QUESTIONS

1. The “law” could not do what (Hebrews 10:1)? How is it described?
2. What do we finish and begin today in our study?
3. What proves that those who offered the old sacrifices were not made “perfect” by them (Hebrews 10:2-3)?
4. Can you explain “remembrance of sins... every year” (Hebrews 10:3; Leviticus 16:28-30)?
5. Why could the “law” not make men perfect (Hebrews 10:4)?
6. What did Christ say? When (Hebrews 10:5-7)? He quoted what (Psalm 40:6-8)?
7. Why did Christ come (Hebrews 10:7)? What did He do (Hebrews 10:8-9)?
8. When was Psalm 40:6-8 fulfilled (Hebrews 10:9; Colossians 2:14)?
9. What about “animal” sacrifice now (Hebrews 10:6, 8; Colossians 2:14-16)? We Christians are “sanctified” by what (Hebrews 10:10; Acts 8:35-39; 2:37-42; 22:16; Galatians 3:36-29)?
10. What shows that the work of the Aaronic priest was NEVER FINISHED (Hebrews 10:11)? What shows that Christ’s sacrificial work is FOREVER FINISHED (Hebrews 10:12, John 19:30)?
11. What did Christ accomplish by His “ONE” offering for sins (Hebrews 10:14)? Since the believer’s sins have been put away forever, what will God never do regarding our sins (Hebrews 10:17)? Where is “remission” of sins, what can there no longer be (Hebrews 10:18)?
12. What gives us access into God’s presence (Hebrews 10:19)? Why is this called “a new and living way” (Hebrews 10:20; Matthew 27:51)? What does the “veil” represent?
13. We have a “High Priest” over what (Hebrews 10:21; I Timothy 3:15)? If one is saved out of the church, he is saved with out what?
14. What is the three-fold exhortation is given to believers (Hebrews 10: 22-24)?
15. What is the “assembling” here mentioned (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 20:7)?
16. What remains for those who “sin willfully” (Hebrews 10:26-27; Numbers 15:30; Psalm 19:13)?
17. What is worse than despising the Law of Moses (Hebrews 10:28-29)? In what office is our Lord presented (Hebrews 10:31-32)?
18. What gave these believers courage and joy in “reproaches and afflictions” (Hebrews 10:32-34)? What has “great recompense of reward” (verse 35)?
19. For what event do all believers need patience to wait (Hebrews 10:36-37)?
20. What two classes of people are presented in Hebrews 10:38-39?