



True Jesus Church

Philemon & Hebrews



B I B L E S T U D Y G U I D E

Philemon & Hebrews

TRUE JESUS CHURCH
Department of Literary Ministry
 22932 El Toro Road
 Lake Forest, CA 92630, U.S.A.
www.tjc.org

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Suggestions for Bible Study

Read Carefully

Observation is the most basic step in Bible study. Misinterpretation is often the result of careless reading. Only when we know what the passage says can we interpret what it means. Before each lesson, read the passage closely. Read it a few times until you become familiar with it. Observe words, phrases, paragraph structure, relationships, emphases, as well as anything that seems unusual. In doing so, you will discover things that you could never have if you read it casually.

Use A Pencil

Keep your pen or pencil busy by recording your observations and thoughts as you go through the passage. Mark key words and phrases. Take note of the relationship between words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Jotting your observations down on paper helps you focus your mind on the Bible text and leaves a much deeper impression on your mind. Your notes will also become valuable reference material the next time you come back to the passage.

Study with Prayer

“No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1Cor 2:11). The guidance of the Holy Spirit is key to understanding and being inspired by God’s word. Pray everyday and ask God to reveal to you the truth in His words. Whenever you come across a difficult passage, rely on the Holy Spirit by putting it in your prayer. Through your life of prayer, God will open your inner eyes to know His will and give you the strength to put it into practice.

Let the Word Speak to You

Bible study is not an intellectual exercise. Its aim is to change the reader in his thoughts, behavior, and lifestyle to conform to God’s will. The final goal of every Bible study is to apply God’s word in our lives. God reveals His will to the humble. So always approach the Bible with an attitude to be taught and corrected. When you are willing to let God’s word be a mirror to reflect your shortcomings and are determined to carry out His command, your Bible study will have achieved its intended purpose.

Using This Guide

Hands On Approach

This guide is not meant to be your coffee-table reading. Use it as a tool to make your study or discussion more effective. Make use of the spaces in the lessons to record your thoughts and observations.

Outline

One of the exercises under the section “observation” is to record an outline of the passage. Spend time to work on this important exercise because it helps you get the big picture of the entire passage as well as see the relationship between the parts. It also trains you to read the passage carefully and thoughtfully. Try to write the outline without copying the headings from your Bible. Each entry in the outline should accurately reflect the main idea of the paragraph.

Key Words

Key words are words that give meaning to the text or are related to the main idea. Key words are often repeated to mark emphasis. Key words tell you about who, what, when, where, why, or how. Since there are no right or wrong key words, your list may be different from the one provided at the end of the book.

Length of Lesson

Although the lessons are also designed for group Bible study, sometimes a lesson may be too long for a study session. If this happens, the Bible study leader who began the lesson should inform the next leader of where the passage was left off and the discussion results from the first study.

Thoughts on Questions

The end of this book contains suggested answers that serve as pointers when you need help. Since many of the questions do not have standard answers, use the answers provided only as reference. With these thoughts on questions as a starting point, you should be able to come up with more complete answers on your own.

Preparing for Group Bible Studies

Before leading a group Bible study, you should go through the lesson in advance to get a good understanding of the material. Then select questions based on the amount of time you have for discussion and the group’s size, makeup, level of biblical knowledge, etc. Try to also

design additional application questions that you think would suit the particular needs of the group.

The Inductive Method

The inductive approach is an effective way to study the Bible. It follows 3 basic steps: observation, interpretation, and application.

- 👁️ **Observation**—*What did God say? How did He say it?* This type of questions helps you look at the Bible passage carefully and equips you for a sound interpretation.
- 🔑 **Interpretation**—*What does it mean?* When answering this type of questions, let the Bible interpret itself whenever possible. Look at the immediate context (the surrounding verses) as well as the broader context (the surrounding chapters and the whole Bible) to derive at the intended meaning. Also ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your heart to know the spiritual things that God wants to convey to you.
- 👣 **Application**—*How can I put this into practice?* Application questions encourage you to think about what God is teaching you personally through your study. What are His commands? What shortcomings in you is He pointing out? What message of encouragement does He have for you today? It is in examining your relationship with God and acting out God’s word that the words of the Bible can truly come to life.

Because the order of the questions in this guide generally follows the order of the Bible text, we did not group the questions according to the 3 steps mentioned above. Instead, we have used symbols to identify the type of question. By helping you become acquainted with these 3 basic types of questions, we hope that you will acquire the ability to develop meaningful questions for future personal studies as well as group discussions.

Footnotes

Two numbers follow each quote, e.g. (4/134). The number before the slash refers to the reference source listed at the end of this book. The second number indicates the page where the quote is located in the reference source.

1

Philemon 1-25

Appeal for Forgiveness and Acceptance

Author

Paul was the writer of this epistle, but he also mentioned Timothy in the opening of the letter.

Recipient

Philemon, who lived in or near Colosse (modern-day Turkey), Apphia, Archippus, and the church that met in Philemon's house.

Date

Around 58-61AD.

Place

From prison, possibly in Rome.

Purpose/Occasion

We do not know the exact circumstances that occasioned the writing of this epistle. The epistle itself does not tell us why Onesimus was away from Philemon and how he came into contact with Paul. The traditional belief has been that Onesimus was a runaway slave, and that, according to Roman law, Onesimus' offense was punishable by beatings, chains, or even death. But, with recent investigations on slavery during the Roman era, we have reasons to question these assumptions. Onesimus' departure might not have been for the purpose of escape, and Paul's letter was probably a plea for a sooner manumission rather than for restraint on punishing Onesimus.^{2vol5/307}

Regardless of the larger legal and social context, we know from Paul's letter the following facts about Onesimus:

1. He was Philemon's slave (Phm 16) but has departed from Philemon (15).
2. He has wronged or owed Philemon in some way (11,18,19)
3. He became a believer during his stay with Paul (10).

Paul intends to send Onesimus back to Philemon, but he also feels the need to make an appeal on behalf of Onesimus. Thus Paul writes to Philemon, urging him to forgive and receive Onesimus and consider this former slave a dear brother in the Lord.

Unique Characteristics

1. The letter contains many terms of endearment, more than any other letters of Paul: brother, friend, fellow laborer, sister, fellow soldier, beloved, love, my own heart.
2. The letter is a masterpiece of tactful persuasion. It follows the conventional structure found in the genre of Greek rhetoric: 1) commendation, 2) appeal to reason, and 3) appeal to emotion.

Key Verses

"I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me" (10-11).

"But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account" (1:18).

Themes

1. After reading the epistle several times, record the themes that you have observed in the epistle.
1. Appeal and intercession, conversion, oneness in Christ, forgiveness and reconciliation, repaying debt on another's behalf.

Modern Relevance

The "players" in the letter are themselves a symbol of our unity in Christ. Paul, a Jew in prison, writes a letter to a wealthy Greek believer concerning a slave. For the modern reader, Paul's letter to Philemon continues to serve as an appeal to Christian love. Slavery is no longer around, but we may still judge people by certain criteria and show partiality. We know that in Christ we have all become one body, but do we ever look down on anyone because of their status, appearance, income, or intelligence? Do we consider every believer a dear brother or sister?

Paul's letter also teaches us the spirit of reconciliation. Does anyone owe you anything or have wronged you in some way? What should you do about it? What's the first step? If two members of Christ's body are at odds, how can you be the peacemaker and intercessor between

them? These are questions that we must ask ourselves as we study the epistle and ponder on its relevance to our own lives.

The Basics

Did You Know...?

1. **“Philemon”** means “friendly” or “loving.”
2. **Apphia** (2) was probably Philemon’s wife.
3. **Archipus** (2): This name also appears in Paul’s final greetings in the epistle to the Colossians (Col 4:17).
4. **“Onesimus”** means useful or profitable.
5. **Slavery** (cf. 16): While we may think of slavery as a despicable institution, slavery in the Roman world differed significantly from the slavery practiced in America during 17th to 19th centuries. “Central features that distinguish 1st century slavery from that later practiced in the New World are the following: racial factors played no role; education was greatly encouraged (some slaves were better educated than their owners) and enhanced a slave’s value; many slaves carried out sensitive and highly responsible social functions; slaves could own property (including other slaves!); their religious and cultural traditions were the same as those of the freeborn; no laws prohibited public assembly of slaves; and (perhaps above all) the majority of urban and domestic slaves could legitimately anticipate being emancipated by the age of 30.” ^{2vol6/66}. Although most slaves in NT times were born into slavery, “large numbers of people sold themselves into slavery for various reasons, e.g., to pay debts, to climb socially (Roman citizenship was conventionally bestowed on a slave released by a Roman owner), to obtain special jobs, and above all to enter a life that was more secure and less strenuous than existence as a poor, freeborn person.” ^{2vol6/67}

The Bible neither endorses nor upholds the institution of slavery. But before we question why the Bible does not condemn the institution of slavery, let us keep in mind that any social or economic institution, including, for example, capitalism, can lend itself to great evil because of man’s fallen nature. The Bible does not speak out against social institutions per se. But, through the message of the gospel, the Bible seeks to remove the evil in men’s hearts—the root of any social injustice. For this reason, it

was the teachings of the Bible that paved the way to the final abolition of slavery in America.

6. **Epaphras** (23; cf. Col 4:12) was one of the early workers in the church of Colosse.
7. **Mark** (24) was the cousin of Barnabas (Col 4:10) who had once deserted Paul and Barnabas at Pamphylia on Paul’s first missionary journey (Acts 12:25; 13:13). But Paul later found him to be useful to the ministry (2Tim 4:11). He was believed to be the author of the gospel of Mark.
8. **Aristarchus** (24) was a fellow prisoner with Paul (Col 4:10), a Macedonian of Thessalonica and one of Paul’s travelling companions on Paul’s second missionary journey (Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2).
9. **Demas** (24) was one of Paul’s fellow worker (cf. Col 4:14), but later forsook the the ministry for the love of the world (2Tim 4:10).
10. **Luke** (24) was the author of the gospel of Luke and Acts (compare Lk 1:3 and Acts 1:1), a beloved physician (Col 4:14), and a friend to the end (2Tim 4:11). He was with Paul during Paul’s imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28; Col 4:14)


Observation



Outline

- _____ (1-3)
- _____ (4-7)
- _____ (8-16)
- _____ (17-22)
- _____ (21-25)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. In terms of its organization, which paragraph is the heart of the letter? 

2. Go through the entire epistle and pick out words and phrases that would directly or indirectly persuade Philemon to accept Paul's appeal.  

Segment Analysis

1-3


1a. How does Paul identify himself? 

1b. How does he identify the other believers in the salutation? 

4-7

2. Is Paul speaking to everyone addressed in verse 2, or is he speaking to Philemon? 




3. What is the reason for Paul's thanksgiving? 

4. What does he ask for in his prayer? 






5. Based on Paul's words, what can we learn here about:

5a. Love?

5b. Faith?   

6. How are you sharing your faith in your life? 

7. Read several translations of verse 6 to see its possible meanings. How does the sharing of faith relate to the knowledge of God's goodness?   

8-16



8. Paul has the authority in Christ to command Philemon (8) and expect Philemon's obedience (cf. 21). But he chooses to make an appeal instead.

8a. What is Paul's appeal? 

8b. Why does he rather make an appeal? (9,14)  

8c. Why is an appeal often more effective than a command?  


9. What can we learn from Paul about our relationship with one another in Christ?  

10. What can we learn here about the motive behind our obedience?  



11. Why does Paul mention that he is the aged and a prisoner of Jesus Christ in verse 9? 

12a. How does Paul identify Onesimus in 10 and 12? 

12b. How do these words strengthen Paul’s appeal? 

13. Verse 11 is a wordplay on the name “Onesimus” (see Did You Know...?). The unprofitable Onesimus has now become profitable. What can we learn here about the true meaning of Christian conversion? In your life, how do you show that you have been converted to Christ? 



14a. According to Paul, what may have been the purpose for Onesimus’ departure? 


14b. How did Onesimus’ departure accomplish this purpose?  

15a. Based on verse 16, how has Onesimus become more valuable to Philemon?  

15b. What can we learn here about how we ought to relate to our fellow believers in Christ? 

17-22

16a. Here, Paul restates his appeal. In verse 17, Paul identifies himself with Onesimus. In verse 18, he volunteers to pay for the wrongs and debts of Onesimus. How is Paul’s attitude and action an imitation of our Lord Jesus Christ?  


16b. Are you willing to pay for the wrong of your brother in order to reconcile him to another brother? What would motivate you to do so? 

17. What is Paul reminding Philemon of in verse 19b?  


Philemon 1-25

18. Note how verse 20 echoes verse 7. What quality in Philemon is Paul appealing to?  

21-25

- 19a. What is Paul confident of? 


- 19b. Why is such kind of confidence important in our relationship with our brethren in the Lord? 

20. In fulfilling your duties, do you often do more than you are asked? What makes a person do more than he is asked? 

21. Paul anticipates meeting Philemon and the other brethren in the near future.

- 21a. What would help bring about Paul's release? 

- 21b. What does this expected meeting relate to Paul's present appeal? 

22. How is the benediction and prayer in verse 25 important in light of Paul's appeal to Philemon? 

2

Hold Fast to Jesus Christ

Author

The epistle does not identify the author. Many suggestions have been made, including Paul, Apollos, Barnabas, and Luke. But we simply do not have enough information to be certain who the author was.

Recipient

The epistle also does not identify the recipients. Although the title of the epistle suggests that it was addressed to Hebrew Christians, we do not know whether the title was original. The recipients might have been Christians in Rome (13:24 suggests that the believers who had come from Italy now sent their greetings to those at home).

Date

Between 60 and 95 A.D.

Place

Unknown.

Purpose/Occasion

The epistle is intended to be words of exhortation to a community of believers (13:22). These Christians had undergone great sufferings in the early days of their conversion (10:32-34), and it appears that persecutions have persisted, or perhaps even intensified (12:3-4; 13:3). In addition to facing the external oppositions, these believers are also struggling with spiritual weaknesses. The author points out the stagnancy in their growth. They ought to be teachers, but they still lack spiritual maturity (5:12-14). Some of these believers have also probably become discouraged in their faith as a result of sufferings (12:5,12). Worse yet, some of the believers have become sluggish in their faith and may eventually drift away and forsake the faith (2:1; 3:12-13; 5:11; 6:12; 10:25).

But the author's main aim is not to reprimand the believers, for, in fact, he generally has a positive view of them (e.g. 6:9-10). Neither is he attempting to address specific issues facing the community. Instead, he directs their attention to the Savior and urges them to "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus." (3:1). True knowledge of Jesus Christ is the cure to all spiritual ills and serves as the believers' ultimate source of encouragement in the face of oppositions. Thus Hebrews expounds on the supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ, His priestly role, as well as His suffering and submission. It emphasizes the need to hold fast to the Lord and speaks of the dire consequences of forsaking Him. Then, in its final chapters, the epistle exhorts the believers to be strong in faith and reminds them to be faithful in their Christian walk.

Unique Characteristics

1. It is the only book in the New Testament that discusses at length the doctrine that Jesus Christ is our High Priest.
2. Although it ends in epistolary form, Hebrews lacks the standard opening greetings found in other epistles. Based on its organization and presentation, this epistle resembles a series of sermons.

Central Verse

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession" (4:14).

Survey of Hebrews

1. Read the entire epistle once for general impressions. Then go through each section as listed in chart A and record a heading using a key phrase in that section.
2. Which portion of the epistle concentrates on doctrine? Which portion is mainly exhortations?
2. 1:1-10:18 is mainly doctrines. 10:19-13:25 is mainly exhortations.
3. Identify the five major warning sections in the epistle.
3. 2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:20; 10:26-31; 12:25-29.

Themes

Christ the High Priest

Like the earthly high priests, Christ was appointed by God as the High Priest (5:4,5) to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins (5:3; 8:2,3). Unlike the earthly high priests, Christ was sinless (7:26), became the High Priest in the order of Melchizedek (5:6,10; 6:20; 7:17), was appointed with an oath (7:20-21), offered His own body as a perfect sacrifice once for all (7:27; 10:12), lives forever and sanctifies us forever (7:24,28; 10:14).

Christ has entered the heavenly sanctuary on our behalf, granting us the privilege to draw near to God through His blood (10:19-22). He is a High Priest who is merciful and sympathizes with our weakness (2:17; 4:15). Thus we may "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (4:16).

Above all, He is the source of our eternal salvation (5:9), the author and finisher of our faith (12:2). He continues to intercede for us (7:25) and has perfected forever those who are being sanctified (10:14). Therefore, by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the perfect and ultimate High Priest, we have the assurance of salvation as an anchor for the soul (6:19).

Christ the Exalted Son

Hebrews stresses the divinity of Jesus Christ, that He is the Son of God. He is "the brightness of [God's] glory and the express image of His person" (1:3). In fact, He is the eternal God Himself, Creator of heavens and earth (1:2; 1:10-12), and He upholds all things by the word of His power (1:3). His throne is established forever (1:8-13), He has been crowned with glory and honor (2:9). By divine appointment, Christ was glorified as the High Priest (5:5). When He had offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin, He passed through the heavens and sat down at the right hand of God (1:3; 4:14; 7:26; 8:1; 9:24; 10:12).

Because Christ is the exalted Son, we must hold fast our confession (4:14). Today, God has spoken to us by His Son (1:2); we must heed His word of salvation. The consequences of not obeying the Son or even trampling and crucifying the Son are dreadful (2:3; 6:6; 10:29; 12:25). Christ the Son of God is the builder of the house of God and rules over His own house. We are members of this house only if we persist in our faith in Christ (3:6).

Christ the Suffering Son

Juxtaposed to the glory of the exalted Christ is the humiliation of the suffering Christ. Before the Son of God receives glory and brings many sons into glory, He has to be made perfect through sufferings and to taste death for everyone (2:9-10). By the things He suffered, the Son of God learned obedience, and having perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (5:8-9).

The Son suffered by offering His body as the sinless sacrifice. Through His atonement, He has put away sin once for all (9:26; 10:14), destroyed the devil and the power of death, (2:14), released those in bondage (2:15), and allowed us to enter the Holiest through a new and a living way (10:19-20).

Furthermore, Christ's sufferings enabled Him to sympathize with our weakness and help us when we are tempted (2:18; 4:15). It is because of His sufferings that He can be the perfect High Priest and Intercessor. His endurance has also become our ultimate source of strength in our sufferings (12:2-3), and the author urges us to join Him in His sufferings (13:11-13).

Superiority of Christ and His Salvation

By way of numerous contrasts, Hebrews demonstrates the supremacy of Christ. The author shows that Christ is greater than the prophets (1:1-3), the angels (1:4-14), and Moses (3:1-19). He is greater than the Levitical priests because He became a High Priest in the order of Melchizedek, who was greater than Levi (7:1-19), was appointed with an oath (7:20-21), is not prevented by death (7:22-25), and is able to make the people perfect forever (7:26-28).

Christ has become a surety and Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises (7:22; 8:6). Whereas the earthly priests served in the earthly sanctuary and offered the blood of bulls and goats, Christ went into the heavenly sanctuary and presented the better sacrifice with His own blood (9:23-26)—the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel (12:24). By this better sacrifice, we are given a better hope, through which we draw near to God (7:19). Having been made perfect, we know that we have a better and enduring possession in heaven (10:34), and we look forward to the better, heavenly, country (cf. 11:16, 40).

Faith

The main objective of Hebrews in presenting the suffering and exalted Christ is to strengthen the reader's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Through faith, we have assurance before God, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water (10:22). Faith in Christ means hearing His words (1:2) and pay careful attention to His gospel of salvation (2:1-4).

Faith means trusting God's promises even before their realization, for faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (11:1). Faith is in the abstract but is expressed through acting upon God's promises and living a life pleasing to God. The ancients, including Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and innumerable others, all demonstrated their faith by their lives (11:2-40). They believed in God and lived their lives accordingly, even though they were yet to receive what was promised. Thus, we ought to mix the message we have heard with faith and make every effort to enter God's rest (cf. 3:7-4:13).

Faith must endure to the end. In order to be partakers of Christ, we need to hold fast to our confession (3:6,14; 6:11,12; 4:14; 10:22,23,38,39). Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we must overcome all sluggishness, callousness, sin, and discouragement (12:1-17). We need to imitate the unwavering faith of the saints who suffered for Christ and consider the outcome of the faithful (6:12; 11:33-38; 12:1; 13:7). Our Lord will not fail us, for He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (13:8). If we endure sufferings through faith in Christ, then, when we have done the will of God, we will receive the promise and great reward (10:35-36).

Warning against Apostasy

In connection to the exhortations on faith are the severe warnings against apostasy—the abandonment of faith. We read the author's earnest call to be careful not to drift away, fall short of God's grace, or even reject God (2:1; 3:12,13; 4:1; 12:15). We are reminded of the Israelites who provoked God's wrath and fell in the wilderness (3:7-19). We are to heed the example of Esau, who came to a bitter end because he was godless and forfeited his blessings (12:16-17).

In the warning passages, we learn the dreadful consequences of falling away and the impossibility of restoration for those who have trampled and crucified again the Son of God (6:4-8; 10:26-31). In contrast to God's saving grace is God's judgment on the disobedient. God is a

consuming fire (12:29). He is uncompromising in His judgment and retribution (13:4; 10:30). No one who neglects the gospel of salvation spoken by our Lord shall escape God’s wrath (2:2-3; 12:25). Having few better words to convey the dread of facing God’s vengeance, the author concludes: “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (10:31). Thus, knowing the terrible consequences of turning away from Christ, we must hold on to our share in God’s kingdom and God’s grace, serving God acceptably with reverence and godly fear (12:28).

Key Words/Phrases

Priest, heaven, perfect, eternal/forever, better, faith, partakers, covenant, sacrifice, blood, salvation.

Modern Relevance

The challenges that confronted the first readers of Hebrews are just as relevant for us today. Stagnancy, discouragement, apostasy, are still real threats to our faith. But the exhortations in Hebrews are just as timeless. Believers of all ages must look to Jesus the High Priest, who has gone to heaven and is now interceding for us. Since “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (13:8), He is the ultimate answer to our spiritual needs regardless of the time and age we are in.

The epistle makes it clear that its message holds true for all times: “exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (3:13). As long as it is “today,” we are to heed the message of the epistle. Like the believers back then, we also need to pay careful attention to the gospel of salvation, hold on to our confession in the Lord Jesus, go on to perfection, endure sufferings through faith, and pursue holiness and love. So let us take the words of exhortations as if they are being spoken to us and let us ponder how they apply to our lives as we journey through this book.

1:1-3		Superior Person	Instructions about Christ
1:4-14			
2:1-4			
2:5-18			
3:1-6			
3:7-4:13			
4:14-5:10			
5:11-6:20		Superior Institutions	Exhortations on Christian Living
7:1-28			
8:1-13		Superior Life ¹	
9:1-10:18			
10:19-39			
11:1-40			
12:1-13			
12:14-29			
13:1-19			
13:20-25			

Chart B Survey of Hebrews

1. Irvine Jensen, *Hebrews, A Self Study Guide* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970) p. 12.

3

Hebrews 1:1-2:4

God Has Spoken to Us by His Son

The Basics

Setting

Without a formal epistolary opening, Hebrews begins with a powerful introduction that goes to the heart of its message. It immediately directs our attention to the Son of God, highlights His supremacy, and warns us to heed His divine word. As we continue our studies through the chapters that follow, we will see that the epistle will continue to develop this core message.

Key Verse

“How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” (2:3-4).

Did You Know...?

1. **Express image** (1:3): “Originally [the Greek word] denoted an instrument for engraving and then a mark stamped on that instrument. Hence it came to be used generally of a mark stamped on a thing, the impress of a die.” ^{3/14}
2. **Superior to the angels** (1:4): The Jews revered angels because they were divine messengers and mediators of God’s law (cf. Acts 7:53; Gal 3:19).
3. **Name** (1:4): To Jews a name stood for the full character of a person in all he was and did... ^{4/1859}

Observation


Outline


- _____ (1:1-3)
- _____ (1:4-14)
- _____ (2:1-4)


Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis


1:1-3

1. Verses 1 to 4 consist of a long sentence. What are the main subject and main verb of this sentence? 


2. Based on verse 1 and 2, make a detailed comparison between God’s revelations through the prophets and His revelation through the Son. 

3. Record descriptions about the Son that demonstrate His supremacy. 

4. The Son sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. What do the phrases “sat down” and “right hand” tell us about our Savior? 

5. How has God spoken to you today by His Son? 

1:4-14

6. In what ways is the Son “so much better than” the angels, according to the following verses of this passage? 

6a. 1:4-5



6b. 1:6

6c. 1:7-9

6d. 1:10-12

6e. 1:13

2:1-4


7. What can we know from this paragraph about the purpose of the extensive comparison between the Lord Jesus and the angels found in the previous paragraph?  


8a. What are “the things we have heard”?  

8b. How do we “give the more earnest heed” to the things we have heard?  


9a. What does it mean to “drift away”? 


9b. What is the consequence of drifting away? 

10a. How does the author describe our salvation? 

10b. What does this description mean to you personally and to your daily life? 

11a. How does a person “neglect” salvation?  

11b. Why do we not have any excuse for neglecting the great salvation?   

12. In what ways have you seen or experienced God’s own witness of His salvation? 

4

Jesus Our Redeemer

The Basics

Setting

The author has established the supremacy of Christ and the greatness of His salvation. Now He moves on to Christ’s relationship with us, the heirs of salvation. Hence, this section focuses on Jesus’ role as the Son of Man and emphasizes His humanity, suffering, and atoning death.

Key Verse

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (2:14-15).

Did You Know...?

1. **Propitiation** (2:17) means the putting away of God’s wrath.

Observation

Outline



(2:5-9)

(2:10-13)

(2:14-18)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. This section continues the theme of “so great a salvation” found in 2:1-4. What does this salvation encompass, according to this lesson’s passage?  

Segment Analysis

2:5-9

1a. In what sense is man a little lower than the angels (7)? 


1b. In what sense is man greater than angels?  

2. What does the phrase “not yet” in verse 8 imply? 



3. “But we see Jesus...” is a key statement in this section. Explain why this is so.  



4a. Why was Jesus “made a little lower than the angels”?  


4b. What lesson can you learn from the Lord Jesus? 


5. What was needed for Jesus to be crowned with glory and honor? 

2:10-13

6a. Who is “Him” in verse 10?  

6b. Who is “He” in verse 11?  



7. Why is Jesus called “the captain of [our] salvation”? 


8a. What does it mean that the captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings? 


8b. How was this “fitting” for God to do? 


9. What is the main point of 11-13?  



2:14-18




- 10. How is this paragraph an elaboration of 2:9?  

- 11. How was Jesus like us? How was He different from us? 


- 12. Who are the descendants of Abraham? (Gal 3:7,9,26-29) 

- 13. How has the Lord Jesus overcome the devil and released us from bondage? 

- 14. How is our Lord Jesus the perfect High Priest?  

- 15. How does our High Priest aid us when we are tempted?   

Final Thoughts

- 16. In this lesson, we learned that Jesus became like us and calls us His brethren. He is also our merciful and faithful High Priest. How can this knowledge help you in your daily walk? 

Being Steadfast in Christ

The Basics

Setting

In our last study, we learned that Jesus became our perfect Redeemer and High Priest through His sufferings and death. This lesson follows up on that thought and calls us to act upon what we have learned. The author asks us to “consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,” and he urges us to hold fast our confidence to the end in order to become partakers of Christ.

Key Verse

“For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end” (3:14).

Did You Know...?

1. **Apostle** (3:1) means “one who is sent.”
2. **“So I swore in My wrath...”** (3:11): This is in reference to the historical event recorded in Numbers 14.

Observation




Outline



_____ (3:1-6)
 _____ (3:7-15)
 _____ (3:16-19)


Key Words/Phrases


Segment Analysis


3:1-6


- 1a. What does the author command us to do? Elaborate on the meaning of this command based on this paragraph.   

- 1b. The word “therefore” indicates that the reason(s) for the command is found in the previous passage. What is (are) the reason(s)?  

2. What does the term “partaker of the heavenly calling” mean to you? Do you view yourself as a partaker of the heavenly calling? 



3. What does it mean that Jesus is the Apostle of our confession? 

- 4a. How was Jesus like Moses? 

- 4b. In what two ways was Jesus greater than Moses? 


5a. What does “the house” refer to?  

5b. How is Christ “a Son over His own house” (6)? 

5c. How does the fact that Christ is the Son over His house apply to us? In other words, what is the author’s message to us?  






6a. What is the condition for being the house of God? 

6b. Explain the meaning of this condition.  

3:7-15

7. What are the commands in this paragraph? 

8. What does it mean to test God? How did the Israelites test and try God?  

9a. What was the root of the problem with the Israelites?  

9b. What was their consequence? 

10a. What does it mean to depart from the living God (12)? 

10b. What may make a believer eventually depart from the living God?




10c. How can we prevent ourselves from going down that path? 



11. Why does the author add “while it is called “Today” in verse 13? What does it teach us?  

3:16-19

12a. According to this paragraph, how did the Israelites show their unbelief? 

12b. What does this teach you about what it means to be a believer?



Entering God's Rest

The Basics

Setting

The previous passage began the second warning section in Hebrews. It called believers to guard against an evil heart of unbelief leading to rejection of God. We learned from the example of the Israelites that the outcome of unbelief is failure to enter God's rest. The passage of this lesson expands the thought of entering God's rest and applies this teaching to present-day believers.

Key Verse

"Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience" (4:11).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (4:1-2)
- _____ (4:3-11)
- _____ (4:12-13)



Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

1. Record what this passage has to say about "rest." 



Segment Analysis

4:1-2

1. Why does the author tell us to fear in verse 1? Explain the consequence that we should be careful to avoid.  



- 2a. What is "the gospel" that was preached to us as well as to the Israelites? 



- 2b. Why did the word they heard not profit them?  

3. Did God's promise of rest to the Israelites fail? From the tragic end of the Israelites who fell in the wilderness, what lessons can you learn about receiving God's promised rest?  




4:3-11

4. When did God's rest begin? 

5. How does the author show that the promise of rest still remains?  



6. What is the meaning of “rest”? What does it mean to enter God’s rest and cease from our works?  

7. Who is able to enter God’s rest? Have you entered that rest?  

8a. “Be diligent to enter that rest” (11) and “ceased from his works” (10) seem contradictory. How do we rest from our work but still be diligent? What does it mean to make every effort to enter that rest?   



8b. What does such diligence teach us about the nature of faith? 

4:12-13

9. How is God’s word living and powerful? Explain the effects of God’s word.  

10. How does God’s word relate to His judgment?  

11. Why does the author talk about the word of God in this context? What does it have to do with entering God’s rest (To answer this

question, look at the entire passage of this lesson)? What role does God’s word play in our salvation?  

Jesus Our Great High Priest

The Basics

Setting

Thus far in Hebrews we have seen the constant urging to hold fast to our Lord Jesus. In this passage, he continues his exhortation by elaborating on the priesthood of Christ, a teaching that the author has briefly discussed in 3:17.

Key Verse

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession” (4:14).

Did You Know...?

1. **Melchizedek** (5:6): Read Genesis 14:18-20 for the historical recording about Melchizedek.


Observation

Outline

- _____ (4:14-16)
 _____ (5:1-3)
 _____ (5:4-6)
 _____ (5:7-10)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

- 1a. In what ways was Jesus like the priests from among men? 

- 1b. In what ways was He different? 


Segment Analysis

4:14-16




1. How does this paragraph relate to the penetrating effect of God’s word as discussed in 4:12-13?  



2. Explain why we should hold fast our confession based on 14.  

3. What enables our High Priest to sympathize with us?  

4. According to verse 15, what is unique about our great High Priest? 



5a. What feelings do you get from the term “throne of grace”? 

5b. What can we receive at the throne of grace? How do these relate to the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ?   

5c. How do we come to the throne of grace (16)?  

5d. What attitude does the author encourage us to have when coming to the throne of grace?  

5:1-3

6. How did Jesus fulfill the duty of a High Priest as mentioned in this paragraph?  

5:4-6

7. What is the main point of this paragraph?  

8. What key words here set Jesus apart from other priests? 

5:7-10

9. In what sense was Jesus’ prayer heard? What was He asking? 



10. Why was Jesus heard? Explain your answer.  

11. What can you learn from Jesus about your prayers? 

12a. What does it mean that Jesus learned obedience? 

12b. How did his sufferings enable Him to learn obedience? 

12c. Obedience comes by sufferings. What lessons can you learn from this? 

13. What two aspects of Jesus enabled Him to be the author of eternal salvation (see verse 8)?  

14. Whom is Jesus the Savior of? 

The Basics

Setting

The preceding passage, which centered on Jesus on as the High Priest, ended with the note that Jesus was called by God as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. In this lesson, we see that as the author mentions Melchizedek, his attention is diverted to the readers' dullness of hearing and spiritual immaturity. He goes even further to warn about the impossibility of bringing back believers who fall away.

Key Verse

"Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection..." (6:1).

Observation

Outline

(5:11-14)


(6:1-3)


(6:4-8)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

5:11-14

1a. According to this passage, what characterize spiritual infancy? 

1b. What characterize spiritual maturity? 



2. Define the following terms: 

2a. Dull of hearing

2b. First principles of the oracles of God



2c. Milk and solid food


2d. Word of righteousness

3a. What distinguishes the babes and the mature in terms of how they respond to God's word?  

3b. How can we have "our senses exercised" instead of being "unskilled"?   

6:1-3

4. What does the author mean by "the elementary principles of Christ" and "foundation" (6:1)? List these "elementary principles" and explain why they are so called.  

5. How does the exhortation to leave the elementary principles of Christ apply to you? 


6. What is the teaching of verse 3?

6:4-8

7a. What impossibility is discussed here? 

7b. What kind of people are verses 4 and 5 describing?  

8a. Describe the condition of falling away (Use verses 7-8 to help you).  

8b. What does it mean to “crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame” (6)? 

8c. What is the end for those who fall away?  

Diligence and Assurance

The Basics

Setting

The author has expressed his concern for the readers’ spiritual immaturity and warned them about the consequences of falling away. Nevertheless, he is confident of better things about them. In this passage, he encourages them to be diligent and to put their hope in God, who has given us His promise and confirmed it with an oath.

Key Verse

“And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (6:11-12).

Did You Know...?

1. **“He swore by Himself”** (6:13): This is in reference to Genesis 22:16.
2. **The Presence behind the veil** (6:19): The holy of holies, which represented the presence of God.

Observation

Outline


_____ (6:9-12)


_____ (6:13-20)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis


6:9-12

1a. What makes the author “confident of better things” about the believers he was writing to? 

1b. If the author is confident of better things about them, why does he still need to admonish them in 5:11-12? 

2. What is required in order for us to have full assurance of hope and inherit the promises?  

3. What causes sluggishness?  

4. In what areas should you be particularly more diligent? What are your goals in pursuing maturity? 

6:13-20

5. How does this paragraph continue the thought of verse 12? 




6. What lesson does the author want us to learn from Abraham?  


7. What does an oath add to a promise?  

8a. What are the “two immutable things” (18)?  

8b. What is the author’s point in discussing the immutable?  

9. How have we “fled for refuge”?  

10a. What is the “anchor for the soul” that enters the Presence behind the veil?  

10b. How has your hope in Christ been the anchor of your soul in your doubts, worries, weakness, failures, and sufferings? 

10

Hebrews 7:1-28

Jesus, Surety of A Better Covenant

The Basics

Setting

Having diverted his attention to the present needs of his reader, the author now goes back to the teaching that Jesus is the High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. The name of Melchizedek has appeared briefly in previous passages, but now the author develops this theme. In this lesson, we will learn how Jesus is the superior High Priest in the order of Melchizedek, and what that means to us.

Key Verse

“For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever” (7:28).

Did You Know...?

1. **Melchizedek** (7:1): His meeting with Abraham is recorded in Genesis 14:17-20.
2. **Salem** (7:1) “is a shortened form of ‘Jerusalem’ (see Ps 76:2) and is related to the Hebrew word for ‘peace’”....^{4/27}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (7:1-3)
- _____ (7:4-10)
- _____ (4:11-19)
- _____ (4:20-28)
- _____ (20-22)
- _____ (23-25)
- _____ (26-28)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

7:1-3

1. Why is Jesus Christ, like Melchizedek, the King of righteousness and King of peace?

2. In what ways was Melchizedek a unique priest?

7:4-10

3. How does verse 4 introduce the main point of this paragraph?

4. How does the author show that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham?

5. How does he show that he was greater than the Levitical priests?



Four horizontal lines for writing an answer.

7:11-19

6a. The author argues in 11 that perfection was not through the Levitical priesthood because there was the need for another priest to rise in the order of Melchizedek. On what basis does he claim that there is the need for another priest in the order of Melchizedek?



Two horizontal lines for writing an answer.

6b. What is “perfection” meant here?



Two horizontal lines for writing an answer.

7. Why does the change of priesthood require a change of the law (12)?



Three horizontal lines for writing an answer.

8. What is different about the new priesthood, according to verses 15-17?



Four horizontal lines for writing an answer.

9. Contrast the “before and after” of the new priesthood (18-19).



Two horizontal lines for writing an answer.

Two horizontal lines for writing an answer.

7:20-28

10. What is the significance of the oath, according to 20-22?



Three horizontal lines for writing an answer.

11. What were the limitations of the Levitical priests? How did our Lord Jesus overcome these limitations?



Five horizontal lines for writing an answer.

12. Why is it that only an unchanging priesthood can bring us salvation (23-25)?



Three horizontal lines for writing an answer.

13a. What function of Jesus’ priesthood is emphasized in 25? How does it relate to our salvation?



Three horizontal lines for writing an answer.

13b. How does it help you in your Christian walk to know that Jesus is interceding for you?



Three horizontal lines for writing an answer.

14. What qualities of Jesus the High Priest does 26-28 focus on? 



11

A More Excellent Ministry

The Basics

Setting

In the preceding chapter, the author expounded on the priesthood of Christ in the order of Melchizedek. He demonstrated how Christ is their superior and perfect High Priest. In this chapter, we will study how Jesus' ministry is superior to that of the earthly priests and how He is also Mediator of a better covenant.

Key Verse

“But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises” (8:6).

Did You Know...?

1. **Tabernacle** (8:2): “The Israelite tent sanctuary frequently referred to in the Hebrew Bible. It is also known as the tent of meeting (Heb *’ōhel mō’ēd*) and, occasionally, as the Tabernacle (or tent) of testimony (*miskan ha’ēdūt*). It is the central place of worship, the shrine that houses the ark of the covenant, and frequently it is the location of revelation. It is presented in biblical narrative as the visible sign of Yahweh’s presence among the people of Israel. More verses of the Pentateuch are devoted to it than to any other object. It contains the ark, an incense altar, a table, a seven-light candelabra, an eternal light, Aaron’s staff that miraculously blossomed (Num 17:23–26), the vessels that are used by the priests, possibly a container of manna (Exod 16: 33–34), and a scroll written by Moses (*sēper hattôrâ*).” ^{2vol6/292}
2. **Mediator** (8:6) “is a legal term for one who arbitrates between two parties.” ^{3/76}
3. **Covenant** (8:6) denotes an agreement, which usually includes terms and conditions. This word sometimes also carries the

meaning of a will or a testament (cf. 9:16), in which the testator initiates the agreement and lays down the terms.


Observation

Outline

- _____ (8:1-2)
- _____ (8:3-6)
- _____ (8:7-9)
- _____ (8:10-13)


Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. How does the first paragraph (1-2) serve as a summary and a transition? (To answer this question, you need to look at the larger context.) 



Segment Analysis


8:1-2


1. Where is our High Priest seated? What significance does this have?  

2. What is different about the tabernacle of which our High Priest is a Minister?  

8:3-6

3. What distinguishes Jesus from the earthly high priests in terms of what they offer (cf. 7:27; 9:14; 10:10)?  



4. What contrast is made in verses 4 and 5 between Jesus' ministry and the ministry of the earthly priests? 

5. What does verse 5 imply about the duration of the earthly tabernacle? 

6. What was the better covenant based on (6)? Explain what this means.  

7. How is Christ the Mediator of the better covenant? 

8:7-13

8. What was lacking in the old covenant?  

9a. What promises did God make in the new covenant? 

9b. How are these promises fulfilled in Christ?  

10. Does your relationship with God still reflect some of the characteristics of the old covenant? 

11. How can you participate in the better covenant? 

12

Hebrews 9:1-12

Jesus, High Priest of the True Tabernacle

The Basics

Setting

In this lesson we will continue the theme of Jesus’ more excellent ministry. The author has introduced the subject of the tabernacle in the previous chapter and taught that our great High Priest is the Minister of the true tabernacle. Now he goes into greater detail to show how the priestly ministry on earth is a type of the superior ministry of Christ.

Key Verse

“Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” (9:12).

Did You Know...?

1. **Lampstand** (9:2): “Lampstands as receptacles for light-giving vessels were part of the sacred furniture in the central Israelite shrines or sanctuaries described in the Bible. The light given off by the lamps served to illuminate the interior of the sanctuary, and it also functioned as part of a set of ritual objects or acts, appealing to all the senses, that were part of the established priestly ritual...” ^{2vol4/141}
2. **The table and the showbread** (9:2): “Made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, it stood on the north side of the Holy Place (Ex 40:22). On it were twelve loaves, arranged in two rows of six (Lev 24:5-6).” ^{4/1868}
 “Since the sanctuary is next to the holy of holies, the bread is separated only by a curtain from Yahweh’s immediate presence. In this important location, the loaves symbolize the covenant between God and his people Israel (Lev 24:5-9).” ^{2vol1/780}

3. **Golden censer** (9:4): A container for holding burning coals and fragrant incense, which the high priest offered before the Lord in the Most Holy Place (Lev 16:12).
4. **Ark of the covenant** (9:4): “A chest made of acacia wood, overlaid inside and out with gold (Ex 25:10-16).” ^{4/1868}
5. **Cherubim of glory** (9:5): “Two winged figures made of pure gold, of one piece with the atonement cover, or mercy seat, and standing at either end of it.” ^{4/1868}
6. **Mercy seat/Atonement cover** (9:5): “Fitting exactly over the top of the ark of the covenant, it was a slab of pure gold on which the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled by the high priest on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:14-15).” ^{4/1868}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (9:1-5)
- _____ (9:6-10)
- _____ (9:11-12)

Key Words/Phrases

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

General Analysis

1. In which paragraph does the passage begin to introduce Christ?

- _____

Segment Analysis

9:1-5

Refer to diagram A for the plan of the tabernacle.

- 1. How does verse 1 introduce the verses that follow?

- 2a. What does the sanctuary represent? (Ex 25:8)

- 2b. Why was the sanctuary and the divine service an integral part of God's covenant (1)?

- 3. How many parts (rooms) were in the tabernacle?

- 4a. What separated these two parts?

- 4b. What does this symbolize? What happened to it when Jesus died on the cross (Mt 27:50-51)?

- 5a. What articles were in the outer part?

- 5b. What articles did the inner part have?

- 5c. What were in the ark of the covenant?

- 6. What divine attributes are manifest in the Holiest of All (5)?

9:6-10

- 7. Compare the ministry of the priests and the high priest.

- 8. What is the purpose of entering the Most Holy Place?

- 9. What was lacking in the service of the earthly tabernacle?

9:11-12

- 10. How is Christ superior to the earthly high priest in terms of

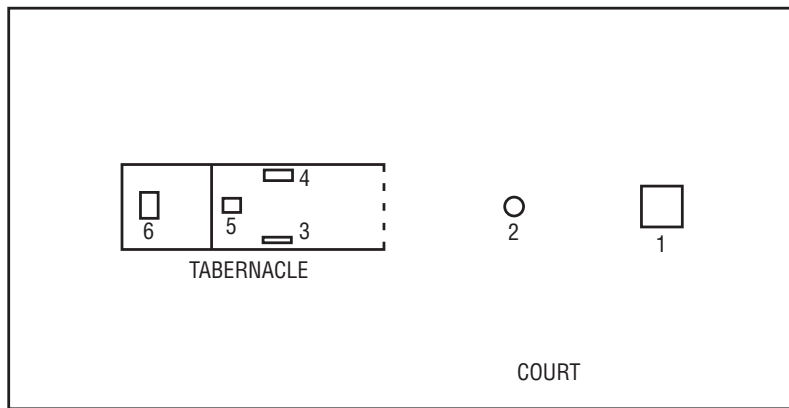
- 10a. The place of service (11)

- 10b. The sacrifice (12)

- 10c. How often the sacrifice is offered (12)

10d. The effect of the sacrifice

11. What is “eternal redemption”? 🔑



- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Bronze Altar | 4 Table and Showbread |
| 2 Laver | 5 Incense Altar |
| 3 Lampstand | 6 Ark of the Covenant |

Diagram A Plan of the Tabernacle

The Better Sacrifice (1)

The Basics

Setting

In our last study we have looked at the tabernacle and divine services under the old covenant. These ordinances were not able to lead us into God’s presence because they could not remove sin. But Christ has come, and has entered the true tabernacle with His own blood. This becomes the source of our eternal redemption. The passage of this lesson will explain in detail why the death of Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of what the old covenant foreshadowed.

Key Verse

“...how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (9:14).

Did You Know...?

1. **Ashes of a heifer...** (9:13): The regulations on cleansing with the ashes of a heifer are recorded in Numbers 19.

Observation

Outline

(9:13-15)

(9:16-22)

(9:23-28)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

9:13-15

- 1. What contrast is made between the blood of Christ and the blood of animals?

- 2. Based on verse 14, explain what kind of life Christians should live.

- 3. What was the price of redemption for our transgressions (15)?

- 4. "For this reason" (15) indicates that the reason is to be found in the previous verses. What qualifies Jesus to be the Mediator of the new covenant? How does His mediation fulfill the terms of the new covenant (cf. 8:10-12)?

- 5. What blessing awaits those who have been redeemed (15)?

9:16-22

- 6. How are verses 16 and 17 an explanation of verse 15?

- 7. What reason does the author give for why Christ's blood is essential to the new covenant?

9:23-28

- 8. Based on verse 24, what has Christ accomplished which the old covenant was not able to do (cf. 9:8)?

- 9. What contrasts are made between the offering of the high priest and the offering of Christ in verses 25 and 26?

- 10. The author establishes a connection between verses 27 and 28. What is the relationship of these two verses?

11. To whom will Christ appear a second time? What kind of life should you live to be one of them? 👁️ 🗨️

The Better Sacrifice (2)

The Basics

Setting

By now, we have reached the climax in the doctrinal section of Hebrews. The author has taught that Jesus has entered the true, heavenly tabernacle to minister before God. He has also shown how Christ has a more excellent priestly ministry by means of His death. The personal sacrifice of Christ has decisively removed the problem of sin once for all. The passage of this lesson will continue to focus on the offering of Jesus Christ and show why it has finally replaced the sacrificial system under the Old Testament.

Key Verse

“For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified” (10:14).

Did You Know...?

1. **“A body You have prepared for Me”** (10:5): “The author takes the quotation from the LXX (Septuagint—A Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures). But the original psalm in Hebrews reads, “My ears You have opened” (Ps 40:6). The reason for this discrepancy is probably that the translators of the LXX was giving a free interpretive translation. As Morris points out, ‘They may wish to express the view that the body is the instrument through which the divine command, received by the ear, is carried out’”^{3/98}

Observation

Outline

(10:1-4)

(10:5-10)

_____ (10:11-14)

_____ (10:15-18)

Key Words/Phrases



General Analysis



1. What is the author’s main point in this passage?  

Segment Analysis

10:1-4

1. Identify the main subject and verb of verse 1. 



2. The sacrifices under the law were offered continually year after year. How does this fact point out the inherent weakness of the sacrifices?  



3. If the sacrifices could not make the worshippers perfect, then why did God still command them in the law? What is the role of the law in relation to Christ?  


10:5-10


4. Who is the “He” in verse 5? 

5. What practical lesson can we learn from the passage in Psalms? 

6. How does the author apply the passage specifically to Christ?  

7. “I have come...to do Your will, O God.” What is the will of God in the context of this paragraph?  

8. What is the function of the parenthetical statement in 8b? (“which are offered according to the law”)? 




9. Who is verse 9b talking about, and what does it mean? (“He takes away the first that He may establish the second”). 

10:11-14


10. What contrasts are made between the priests and Christ? Explain the significance of these contrasts.  

11a. Explain the meaning of verse 13. 

11b. What does the word “waiting” imply? 

12. Look at the tenses in verse 14. What has God done? What is He still doing?   

10:15-18

13. Who is speaking in 15-17? Who is being spoken to? 

14. Why do you think the author introduces the Holy Spirit here? What is the function of the Holy Spirit in this case? (cf. Rom 8:16; 1Jn 5:6; 2Pet 1:21) 

15. What is the meaning of having God’s laws written in our hearts? How are God’s laws in your heart and on your mind?  

16. How do verses 16 and 17 explain the words “perfected forever” in 14? 

17. How does verse 18 sum up the entire passage? 

15

Hebrews 10:19-39

Hold Fast to Our Confidence

The Basics

Setting

We have concluded the doctrinal section of Hebrews, and we now begin to study the section on practical applications. The author has effectively demonstrated that Jesus Christ is our great High Priest who has fulfilled God’s redemptive plan once for all. Now he shows us how we ought to conduct ourselves in view of the great salvation we have received.

Key Verse

“But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul” (10:39).

Observation









Outline

- _____ (10:19-25)
- _____ (10:26-31)
- _____ (10:32-39)


Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis



10:19-25

1. What do we have, according to 19-21? 
- _____
- _____
- _____
2. Record the exhortations that begin with “let us” (22-25). 
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
3. Why is our way to God “new and living”? 
- _____
- _____
- _____
4. How do we draw near to God?   
- _____
- _____
- _____
5. What does it mean to have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water? 
- _____
- _____
- _____
6. Where do the words “faith,” “hope,” and “love” appear? 
- _____

7. Why should we not forsake the assembling of ourselves together?   


8. Have you been slacking in assembling together with fellow believers? How can you motivate yourself? 

10:26-31

9. How do the exhortations in the previous paragraph lead into the warnings in this paragraph?  


10. Who is this warning given to? 

11a. What does it mean to “sin willfully”? 


11b. What are those who sin willfully guilty of? 




11c. What will be the consequence of those who sin willfully? 


10:32-39

12a. What sufferings did the believers endure? 

12b. How did they respond to their sufferings? 

12c. What motivated them to endure in their sufferings? 

13. What may cause a Christian to cast away his confidence?   

14a. What has this paragraph taught you about what it means to have faith? 

14b. What is the reward of faith? 

15. What are the contrasts in verse 39? 👁

16. Recall a time when you endured sufferings for Christ and compare it with your present condition. Have you persisted in your faith or have you begun to draw back? 🐾

16

Examples of Faith (1)

The Basics

Setting

We learned in the last study the necessity of persisting in our faith and the consequences for failing to do so. The passage ended with the contrast between those who draw back to perdition and those who live by faith to salvation. The subject of faith now leads us to the key chapter in the Bible on faith. Through teachings and historical examples, the author shows us why and how faith is central to the lives of believers.

Key Verse

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (11:6).

Observation

Outline

(11:1-3)

(11:4)

(11:5)


(11:6)

(11:7)

_____ (11:8-12)
 _____ (8-10)
 _____ (11-12)
 _____ (11:13-16)

Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis


1. Write down the action verbs in this passage that resulted from faith. 

Segment Analysis

11:1-3

1a. What kind of situations call for faith? 

1b. Many, if not all, of the examples of faith cited in the passage have to do with “things not seen.” Go through the passage and record these. 

2. What can we gain by faith, according to these verses?  

2a. Verse 1


2b. Verse 2

2c. Verse 3



3. How is verse 3 an application and example of faith?  

11:4



4. Why was Abel’s sacrifice more excellent than Cain’s?  



- 5. What did Abel receive through his sacrifice? Relate this to verse 2.  

11:5-6


- 6. Enoch pleased God by faith. What did Enoch do that reflected faith in God (Gen 5:21-24)?  


- 7. What does faith entail (6)? 

- 8. Why is faith so important in our relationship with God?  

- 9. Based on these two verses (5-6), how should you live to show faith in God?  

11:7

- 10. Does your life demonstrate the same godly fear as Noah's did? 

- 11. What is "the righteousness which is according to faith" (7; cf. 10:38; 11:4)? 

11:8-12


- 12. What was remarkable about Abraham's decision to leave his homeland (8)?  

- 13a. What kind of lifestyle did Abraham lead in the promised land? 

- 13b. Why did he choose such a lifestyle? 

- 14. On what basis can you be unwavering, as Abraham was, in the face of the impossible?  

11:13-16

- 15a. What promises were the faithful looking forward to? 

- 15b. How did they show it? 

- 16. In your life, how can you live as strangers and pilgrims? 

17. What does it mean that God was not ashamed to be called their God? Do you make God feel unashamed of you? 🗝️ 🐾

Final Thoughts

18. What makes true faith different from “blind faith”? Suppose someone is convinced that he will be instantly rich through some windfall, is such belief “being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see”? On what basis is faith built? 🐾

17

Examples of Faith (2)

The Basics

Setting

In the opening of this chapter on faith, we learned about the nature of faith. Faith gives us assurance and conviction over things of the future and things we cannot see. We also learned that faith is the only way to please God. The author cited examples of the ancients to illustrate the meaning of faith. In this study, we will consider still more examples of people of faith and ponder what lessons we may draw from them.

Key Verse

“And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us” (11:39-40).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (11:17-19)
- _____ (11:20-21)
- _____ (11:22)
- _____ (11:23)
- _____ (11:24-28)
- _____ (11:29-30)
- _____ (11:31)

_____ (11:32-38)

_____ (33-34)

_____ (35-38)

_____ (11:39-40)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis


11:17-22

1a. How was God’s command to Abraham a test?  

1b. What did Abraham believe when he offered Isaac? 

2. What did Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph believe upon their death? 



3. Why did Joseph specifically instruct his children to bury his bones in Canaan? 


11:23-31

4a. What did faith enable Moses’ parents to do?  

4b. Has your faith enabled you to do the same? 

5a. What choice did Moses face? Compare the options. 

5b. Why did he choose the much more difficult path? 

5c. What strikes you about the words “the reproach of Christ” in this context? 


5d. What was Moses’ view about suffering for Christ?  

6a. Moses “endured as seeing Him who is invisible.” As a believer, how is your eyesight different from unbelievers? 

6b. What should result from this different eyesight? 

7. What can you learn from Moses about your values in life? 


8. How can faith help us forsake the pleasures of sin? 


9a. What did Rahab believe when she received the spies (Josh 2:9-13)? 

9b. What is significant about this particular witness of faith? 

11:32-38


10a. How is the list in 33-35a different from that in 35b-38. 


10b. What lesson on faith do you learn from the first list? 

10c. What lesson on faith do you learn from the second list? 

11:39-40

11a. What did these people of faith receive? 

11b. What did they not receive? Why?  

12. What do the terms “Something better” and “made perfect” refer to (cf. 7:19,22; 8:6; 9:9,11,23; 10:1,14)? What was it that these people of faith did not receive but looked forward to? 

18

Hebrews 12:1-13

Endurance of Faith (1)

The Basics

Setting

One of the challenges facing the Christians to whom Hebrews was written was to hold fast to their faith in Christ in the midst of trials and sufferings. The citing of the examples of faith in the last chapter leads directly into the exhortations that follow. The numerous witnesses that surround us encourage us to run the race before us with endurance. The author urges us to look unto Jesus in order not to become weary. He also reminds us of God’s good purpose in sending us trials in life.

Key Verse

“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (12:2).

Did You Know...?

1. **Cloud** (12:1): “The word ‘cloud’ (*nephos*, only here in the NT) may be used of a mass of clouds in the sky (the more common *nephele* means a single cloud). But it is also used from time to time of a throng of people, when it emphasizes the number. The witnesses are a vast host.” ^{3/133}
2. **Witnesses** (12:1): “The Greek word translated ‘witnesses’ is the origin of the English word ‘martyr’ and means ‘testifiers, witnesses.’” ^{4/1874}
3. **“Consider Him”** (12:3): “The Greek word is *analogizomai*, from which comes “analogy.” This is the only occurrence of the word in the New Testament, and it suggests this translation: ‘Compare yourself with.’” ^{1/127}

Observation

Outline







- _____ (12:1-4)
- _____ (12:5-11)
- _____ (12:12-13)

Key Words/Phrases

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____




Segment Analysis

12:1-4

1. Who are the “cloud of witnesses”? 
- _____
- _____
2. What is required of us who run the heavenly race? 
- _____
- _____
3. How does sin “ensnare” us?  
- _____
- _____
4. What “weights” can possibly hinder us in our race?  
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

5. What does it mean that Jesus is the “author and finisher of faith”? How does this description relate to the exhortation in verse 1?




6. How does looking unto Jesus help us in our race?   


7a. What does verse 4 mean? 


7b. In what ways does a Christian “strive with sin”?  

12:5-11

8. Why does the author discuss the subject of God’s chastening in this context? 

9. In what forms do chastenings come?  

10. “And you have forgotten the exhortation...” (5). What happens when a Christian forgets the exhortation stated in 5b and 6? 

11. According to this paragraph, what are the purposes of divine chastening? 

12. How is God’s chastening better than the chastening of our human fathers?  

13. What is “the peaceable fruit of righteousness”? 


14. Recall an experience in which God chastened you. How did you benefit from the chastening? 

12:12-13

15. What is the meaning of the figurative language in verse 12? 

16. What does it mean to make straight paths for our feet? What is the purpose for doing so? 

Final Thoughts

17. Are you struggling with sin in your life right now? How has this Bible passage encouraged you? 

Endurance of Faith (2)

The Basics

Setting

This passage continues the exhortations concerning Christian living. These exhortations are calls to respond to the grace of God. Because Christ is the author and finisher of faith, we ought to look unto Him as we run the race. Because God chastens us for good, we ought to endure in our sufferings. In this lesson, we will study God’s grace of salvation as the reason and motivation to live godly lives. This passage also contains the final warning of the epistle. While the author reassuringly reminds us of God’s grace, he also earnestly warns us against rejecting this grace.

Key Verse

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (12:28).

Observation



Outline

- _____ (12:14-17)
- _____ (12:18-24)
- _____ (18-21)
- _____ (22-24)
- _____ (12:25-29)


Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

12:14-17

1. In regards to peace, what can you learn from the words “pursue” and “all” (14)?  

2. What reason does the author give for pursuing holiness? 


3a. What are the three things we are to carefully guard against? 


3b. How are these precautions related to the command in verse 14?  

3c. What do the words “looking carefully” teach us?  


4. What does it mean to fall short of the grace of God? (cf. 2Cor 6:1; Gal 5:4; Heb 4:1). 


5. What kind of defilement is meant in verse 15? 


6a. Suppose “fornicator” refers to one who commits sexual immorality in the physical sense, why is this sin listed with being profane? 

6b. Suppose we interpret the fornication in a spiritual sense, how does it relate to the example of Esau? 

7. Read Gen 25:29-34; 27:30-38. How was Esau “a profane person”? 

8a. In what sense could a Christian today sell his birthright “for one morsel of food”? 

8b. Why would anyone make such a foolish exchange? 

9. Why was Esau not able to find ways to change what he had done? 



12:18-24

For the background of verses 18-21, read Exodus 19:7-25.



10a. What different feelings do Mount Sinai and Mount Zion evoke? 


10b. Compare the locations of Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. 

10c. Compare the voices on Mount Sinai and Mount Zion.  



10d. Compare “exceedingly afraid and trembling” (21) and “blood of sprinkling” (24)  


11a. Why are the words “you have come to” (22) significant? 



11b. What made it possible for us to come to Mount Zion?  




12. Where is Mount Zion, city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem? 


12:25-29



13. Based on the warning of this paragraph, what was the point of comparing Mount Sinai and Mount Zion?  

14a. Compare the two “shakings” (26-27). 

14b. What are the things that can be shaken? What cannot be shaken? Which are you pursuing in your life?  

15. What attitude should we have toward God's grace (28)? What kind of life should follow this attitude?   

16. "Our God is a consuming fire." What does this statement teach about God? 

17. What is the difference between the fear at Mount Sinai (18-21) and the fear that we ought to have on Mount Zion (28-29)?  

The Basics

Setting

The epistle of Hebrews centers on Jesus Christ and His finished work of salvation. Following his instructions on the supremacy of Jesus Christ, the author teaches his readers how faith in Jesus Christ should be part of believers' lives. Having cited numerous examples of faith and encouraged the readers to endure in the faith, he now gives us some practical teachings on love and holiness. This final chapter on life applications of faith, followed by some final greetings, brings the epistle to a close.

Key Verse

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (13:8).

Did You Know...?

1. **"Some have unwittingly entertained angels"** (13:2): The author probably had Abraham and Lot in mind when he wrote this (cf. Gen 18:1-8; 19:1-3).
2. **"Remember the prisoners"** (13:3): "In the first century prisoners were not well treated, and they depended—often even for necessities like food—on sympathizers." ^{3/146}
3. **"The bodies of those animals...are burned outside the camp"** (13:11): For the OT regulation regarding burning the bodies of sacrificial animals, see Leviticus 16:27.

Observation

Outline

(13:1-6)

(13:7-9)

- _____ (13:10-16)
- _____ (10-14)
- _____ (15-16)
- _____ (13:17-19)
- _____ (13:20-21)
- _____ (13:22-25)

Key Words/Phrases


General Analysis

- 1. Record each of the commands found in this passage. 



Segment Analysis


13:1-6


- 1. Who are the objects of love in this paragraph?  

- 2a. Who are the “strangers” and “prisoners” in your life? (cf. Mt 25:34-40) 

- 2b. Based on the exhortations in this paragraph, how should you show your love to them?   


- 3. Some people justify sexual sins by saying, “as long as two people truly love each other, what is there to stop them?” What is wrong with such a rationale?  

- 4a. How do the two quotations the author cites in verses 5 and 6 reinforce the admonition against covetousness? 


- 4b. How can the words of these quotations help you personally in other areas of your life? 

13:7-9


- 5. What two types of teachers are contrasted in this paragraph?  

- 6. Explain the exhortation to let “the heart be established by grace, not with foods...”. 


7a. What is the purpose of verse 8? 

7b. How can verse 8 help you in your life right now? 



13:10-16

8. What "altar" do we as believers have (10)? 

9. How does this paragraph follow the command of verse 9? 



10. What comparison is made in verses 11 and 12? 


11. How should you go forth to Jesus outside the camp and bear His reproach?  

12. What sacrifices should Christians offer to God continually through Jesus Christ? How often do you offer these sacrifices?




13:17-19

13. Based on this paragraph, what are our responsibilities toward our spiritual leaders? 

15. What reasons does the author give for obeying and submitting to our leaders? 

13:20-25

16. The doxology and benediction (20-21) encompass some basic truths of the Christian faith, some of which have been discussed earlier in the epistle. Record each of these truths. 

Thoughts on Questions

Lesson 1

Observation

Outline

Salutation (1-3)

Thanksgiving and Praise for Philemon (4-7)

Appeal on Behalf of Onesimus (8-16)

Restating the Appeal and Making A Personal Request (17-22)

Greetings (21-25)

Key Words/Phrases

Beloved, love, refresh, appeal, profitable, heart, slave, brother, in the Lord, owes, repay.

General Analysis

1. The appeal to Philemon in 8-16 makes up the central part of the epistle.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Prisoner of Christ Jesus (1, cf. 9).
- 1b. Beloved friend and fellow laborer (1). Beloved... fellow soldier (2).
2. Although Paul addresses more than one person in his salutation, he uses the singular “you” through the remaining of the letter except in 22 and 25. He also addresses the reader as “brother” at the end of verse 7. Thus, Paul’s commendation and appeal were meant for Philemon.
3. He has heard of Philemon’s love and faith (5).
4. Paul prays for Philemon so that the sharing of Philemon’s faith may become effective (6).
- 5a. We must show our love toward all the saints (5). Our love for the saints will refresh their hearts (7).
- 5b. Our faith is toward the Lord Jesus Christ (5). We ought to share our faith (6). The sharing of our faith is effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in us in Christ Jesus (6). Prayer is an important factor in effective witnessing (4,6).
7. Only when we have come to know God and his goodness, through understanding of God’s word and experiencing God’s grace, can we effectively share this understanding and experience with others.

- 8a. Paul asks Philemon to receive Onesimus (12,17).
- 8b. He makes an appeal “for love’s sake.” Because of Paul’s love for Philemon and vice versa, a command would not be necessary nor appropriate. Paul just needs to make a personal request and he trusts that Philemon will do what he asks. Furthermore, because Philemon is an exemplary believer who loves all the saints, Paul does not need to command him to show the same love to Onesimus. Instead of making Philemon act out of compulsion, Paul wants him to accept Onesimus out of freewill.
- 8c. While a command may temporarily force someone to act superficially and grudgingly, an appeal can touch the heart of a person so that he would gladly do what is right out of his heart. Such approach is most effective when we know that the person has always acted with love and faith and only needs a simple reminder from us to continue to do what is right.
9. As fellow servants of Christ, we sometimes argue about who is right and who should have the final say. We may insist on our views and expect others to obey. But this approach usually results in disunity, and even when others comply to our demands, they are only doing so out of compulsion. We should rather choose the way of love and gently share our views with others, knowing that they will have the wisdom and the heart to do what is best after listening to our appeal.
10. Love must be the motivating force behind all our actions. Like Paul, we ought to encourage others out of love. Like Philemon, we must also do our duty out of love, not by compulsion.
11. In making his appeal to Philemon, Paul relinquishes his apostolic authority and humbles himself with such lowly identities as “aged” and “prisoner.”
- 12a. “My son” (10) and “my own heart” (12).
- 12b. Since Paul considers Onesimus his very own, he hopes that Philemon would receive Onesimus the same way he would receive Paul.
13. The Bible teaches us that the life of a true Christian is like a fruitful tree and is characterized by godly conduct that brings benefit to others and glory to God (Jn 15:8,16; Rom 6:21,22; Gal 5:22,23; Php 1:9-11; Heb 6:7-8; 2Pet 1:5-8). In this sense, we ought to be productive through the bearing of spiritual fruit. If we possess Christian qualities, we will naturally also be productive members of society and make positive contributions to the world.
- 14a. That Philemon might receive Onesimus forever.
- 14b. While Onesimus was away, he became a believer in the Lord. Thus, when he returns to Philemon, he will become “more than a slave—a

beloved brother.” This new relationship will be the basis for receiving Onesimus forever.

- 15a. Formerly, Onesimus was valuable to Philemon for economic reasons. But now, he is valuable to him in a spiritual sense, having become a dear brother. Paul asks Philemon to look beyond Onesimus’ social status and regard his spiritual status as of greater worth. Now, not only has Philemon gained a profitable employee, he has gained a beloved brother in the Lord.
- 15b. Let us not value or judge our brethren by their social or economic status. Instead, we should regard them all as our beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord and love them simply because they are members of Christ’s family. As the Bible states, “for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3:26-28).
- 16a. Our Lord Jesus Christ also identified Himself with us (Heb 2:11-18; 4:15). He took our sins upon Himself and paid for them with His own life (Isa 53:4-6; 1Cor 15:3; 2Cor 5:21; Gal 1:3,4; 1Jn 2:2).
17. Paul points out that Philemon owes him even his own self. By this Paul probably means that Philemon was also Paul’s convert.
Paul has just volunteered to pay any debt owed to Philemon. But he reminds Philemon that, if Paul does not expect repayment from Philemon although he owes Paul his very self, Philemon should likewise forgive Onesimus of the much smaller debt. Paul’s words brings to mind the parable of our Lord in Mt 18:21-35.
18. Paul appeals to Philemon’s love. He urges Philemon to refresh his heart by receiving Onesimus with love just as Philemon’s love has always refreshed the hearts of the saints.
- 19a. He is confident that Philemon would obey and do even more than he is asked.
- 19b. Trust is essential in motivating our fellow believers. Oftentimes, we may be too quick to correct and admonish others without giving them the benefit of the doubt that they are also willing to do the right thing. But if we learn to have more confidence in others, in many cases we will only need to gently encourage rather than immediately resort to sharp rebuke.
20. When we act out of love and willingness, we tend to do more than we are asked because we are doing things out of our hearts. If we serve the Lord out of our love for Him and out of willingness, we will be motivated,

not having to be constantly reminded and prompted by others. We will also gladly carry out the Lord’s work without complaint.

- 21a. The prayers of Philemon and other believers in the church (22).
- 21b. Paul trusts that when he meets Philemon, Philemon will have done what Paul has asked and even more.
22. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we have received God’s generous provision of salvation and heavenly blessings. Through this grace, we are also able to carry out His will in our lives (1Cor 15:10; Eph 2:10; Php 2:13; 4:13; 2Tim 2:1). In the same way, it is by the grace of the Lord that Philemon will be able to continue his deeds of love and do even more than what Paul has asked. Just as Paul usually ends his exhortations with a benediction in his other epistles, the benediction in Philemon is a proper conclusion to Paul’s appeal.

Lesson 3

Observation

Outline

- God Has Spoken by His Son (1:1-3)
- The Son Superior to Angels (1:4-14)
- Warning to Heed the Son (2:1-4)

Key Words/Phrases

God...spoke, Son, appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds, brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power, purged our sins, sat down at the right hand, much better than the angels, more excellent name, firstborn, worship Him, throne, forever and ever, scepter, kingdom, must, the more earnest heed, drift away, how shall we escape, so great a salvation, spoken by the Lord, bearing witness, signs, wonders, miracles, gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Segment Analysis

1. “God” is the main subject. “Has spoken” is the main verb.
2.
 1. “God spoke in time past” vs. “God has spoken in these last days.”
 2. “God spoke to the fathers” vs. “God has spoken to us.”
 3. “God at various times and in various ways spoke” vs. “God has spoken.” There is a sense of finality in the latter. Whereas each of God’s many revelations in the past was partial, God’s word through the Son is the ultimate and complete divine revelation.

3.
 1. appointed heir of all things (2)
 2. through whom also [God] made the worlds (2)
 3. the brightness of [God's] glory (3)
 4. the express image of [God's] person (3)
 5. upholding all things by the word of His power (3)
 6. He had by Himself purged our sins (3)
 7. sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (3)
4. He has accomplished the work of redemption and has been exalted to the position of the highest honor and power.
- 6a. He has obtained the name of "Son," a much more excellent name than the angels. This Father-Son relationship with God is one that no angel could claim.
- 6b. The angels are the worshippers, but He is the one being worshiped.
- 6c. Whereas the angels are the messengers, He reigns on the throne, ruling over His kingdom with a scepter. Unlike the angels, who serve and are sent, He is the one who sends them into service.
- 6d. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and He lives forever.
- 6e. He has been given honor and power which no angels have ever obtained. Whereas angels stand in God's presence (Lk 1:19; Rev 8:2; Dan 7:10), the Son sits down at God's right hand.
7. The word "therefore" indicates that this paragraph is the conclusion to the entire section. The purpose of demonstrating the superiority of the Son is to urge us to heed the word of salvation and convey the seriousness of neglecting the great salvation.
- 8a. The gospel of salvation, which was first spoken by the Lord and was confirmed by His witnesses (3).
- 8b. It means to take the matter seriously. Not only should we pay careful attention to the Lord's words, we must also put them into practice (cf. Lk 6:46).
- 9a. A person drifts away from the Lord and His salvation when his faith in Christ is weakened and eventually lost (cf. Gal 5:4). This can be a gradual process that results from personal negligence (cf. Heb 2:3) and sin's deceitfulness (cf. Heb 3:13).
- 9b. Facing God's just judgement (2).
- 10a. "So great a salvation" (3).
- 11a. Negligence is the opposite of "giving earnest heed" in verse 1. It means not making salvation the first priority and failing to respond to and act upon the word of our Lord.

- 11b.
 1. This salvation was spoken by the Lord (3). If even the messages through angels were binding (2), we would not escape if we do not heed the words of the Son, who is much more superior to angels.
 2. Not only has the Son spoken, His word was confirmed by those who heard Him (3).
 3. God Himself has borne witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit (4). Even though we have not personally heard the preaching of the Lord Jesus, we have personally witnessed and experienced God's working power, which testifies to the message of salvation (cf. Mk 16:20).

Lesson 4

Observation

Outline

Jesus, Man's Hope (2:5-9)

Fellowship of the Savior with the Saved (2:10-13)

Jesus' Atoning Death and Redemption (2:14-18)

Key Words/Phrases

Subjection, angels, "But we see Jesus," suffering, death, glory, salvation, brethren, destroy, release, aid, merciful and faithful High Priest, propitiation, tempted.

General Analysis

1. Future dominion and glory (6-8,10); the atoning death of Jesus by the grace of God (9); sanctification (11); release from fear of death and from bondage (14-15); Jesus' propitiation for our sins (17); help from the merciful and faithful High Priest (16,18).

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Man is lower than the angels in the sense that, being flesh and blood, man has many physical limitations that the angels do not have.
- 1b. He has been crowned with glory and honor, and God has set him over the work of His hands and put all things in subjection under his feet. This is an honor that the angels do not share.
2. Although we have not yet received God's glorious inheritance, we will be crowned with glory and honor. Christ, having subdued all things, will transform our lowly bodies to conform to His glorious body at His coming (Php 3:20-21).

3. This statement strikes a triumphant note in the section. Although man has not yet achieved dominion and has been prevented from doing so because of sin, Jesus has come to bring hope to man. We now have confidence and assurance because we see that Jesus has already accomplished the very things that God has intended for man, and He will help us along on our way to that glorious future.
- 4a. Jesus was made a little lower than the angels so that by God's grace He may suffer death for everyone and be crowned with glory and honor (9). He came to fulfill the plan of God for man which man was unable to achieve.
- 4b. What our Lord did was the greatest act of humility. He left His throne in heaven and emptied Himself to become even lower than the ministering spirits. Furthermore, what He did was the greatest act of love. He humbled Himself and suffered death so that we may share His glory. Thus, we ought to imitate our Lord's humility and sacrificial love.
5. The suffering of death (9).
- 6a. God.
- 6b. Jesus.
7. "Captain" is also translated "author" or "pioneer." Our Lord Jesus makes salvation possible. He has opened the way (10:20) and is bringing us to glory (2:10).
- 8a. The perfection here does not imply that our Lord Jesus was morally imperfect. Rather, Jesus was made perfect in the sense that, because of His sufferings, He became qualified to be our perfect High Priest. See questions and answers on verses 14-18 for further elaborations.
- 8b. The word "fitting" suggests that, to be consistent with His divine nature, it was a necessity for God to put the Lord Jesus through sufferings. The suffering and death of our Lord Jesus manifested God's love while it also fulfilled God's justice.
9. In order to sanctify us, Jesus had to become one of us. That was what He did, as the Scriptures had prophesied. He was not ashamed to identify Himself with us and call us His brethren.
10. This passage explains what it means for Jesus to be made perfect through sufferings. Jesus shared in flesh and blood and was made like us in order to destroy the devil through His death and to help us when we are tempted. His sufferings enabled Him to become a merciful and faithful High Priest. Because He took our sins upon Himself and died in our place, we are released from bondage. Because He has been in our place, He can also relate to our present weakness. In this sense, Jesus was made perfect through sufferings. Without sharing our humanity, He would not have been qualified to be our Redeemer and High Priest.

11. Jesus was like us because He shared in flesh and blood in the same way that we have flesh and blood. He was also bound by many of the physical limitations that we have. He also suffered temptation just as we are tempted. However, Jesus was different from us in the sense that He was without sin and was therefore able to be the perfect sacrifice of atonement (4:15).
12. Those who through faith in Jesus Christ have been baptized into Christ.
13. He overcame temptations and paid for the penalty of our sins. Having been clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, we are no longer under the control of the devil (cf. Rom 8:33-34). Death no longer casts a shadow of fear on us because we know that we have received eternal life.
14. Just as the priest had to offer sacrifices for sin, Jesus has made propitiation for our sins through His blood. Just as the high priest was able to identify himself with the people, Jesus is able to relate to our sufferings in temptation and help us in times of our need. His deity and humanity enables Him to be the perfect mediator between God and man.
15. He sympathizes with us (4:15). He gives us grace (4:16), with which we can overcome the devil and stand (Jas 4:6-7; cf. Eph 6:13). He intercedes for us (Heb 7:25). He is our encouragement in times of weakness (12:2-3).

Lesson 5

Observation

Outline

Jesus Superior to Moses (3:1-6)

Warning against Unbelief (3:7-15)

Israel's Unbelief and Failure to Enter Rest (3:16-19)

Key Words/Phrases

Partakers, heavenly calling, Apostle and High Priest, Christ Jesus, faithful, Moses, house, Son, hold fast, confidence, to the end, today, harden, enter...rest, beware, unbelief, exhort one another daily, deceitfulness of sin, did not obey.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. The author commands us to consider Christ Jesus. The NIV translates "consider" as "fix your thoughts on." This means that we need to pay serious attention to who Jesus is and what He has done. We also need to persist in our faith in Him and never lose sight of Him (cf. Heb 12:2).

- 1b. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God, through whom God has spoken to us. The great salvation spoken by our Lord was confirmed by His witnesses and testified to by God Himself. Jesus Christ has died to release us from bondage. He, having suffered Himself, is our merciful High Priest. For all of these reasons, we ought to consider Christ Jesus.
3. Jesus was sent by the Father to this world for a mission, which was to bring eternal life to those who would believe in Him (Jn 6:38-40; 17:3).
- 4a. Verse 2.
- 4b. He is the Builder of the house, whereas Moses was a member of the house (3). He is the Son over His own house, whereas Moses was a servant in His house (6).
- 5a. The believers in Christ (6), i.e. the household of God, the church.
- 5b. He is the Savior and head of the church (Eph 5:23). He is our Lord who is sovereign over us and who cares for us as His very own.
- 5c. Since Christ is the glorious Lord and Savior, we must put our faith in Him and heed His words.
- 6a. We are God's house if we "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end" (6).
- 6b. Our confidence in our Lord Jesus should persist to the very end, knowing that those who trust in Him will never be put to shame (2Tim 1:12; 4:18; 1Pet 2:6). We cannot falter under trials or be lured away by the love of the world. Instead, we need to "be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord..." (1Cor 15:58).
7. 1. "Do not harden your hearts..." (8,15);
 2. "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" (12);
 3. "...exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today'..." (3:13).
8. The reference of testing God is to the incident at Massah, where the Israelites complained to Moses because there was no water (Ex 17:1-7). The book of Exodus tells us that there they put the Lord to the test: "So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, 'Is the LORD among us or not?'" (Exodus 17:7).
- By grumbling against Moses, the Israelites were testing and trying the Lord. They would not believe that the Lord was among them despite the miraculous deeds they had witnessed.
- Today, if we do not have faith in God and rebel against Him, then we are testing the Lord and trying His patience, just as the Israelites did.

Another example of testing God is demanding God to prove Himself because we do not believe in Him or His words. The devil asked Jesus to put the Lord God to the test by throwing Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple in order to deliberately bring about God's protection (Mt 4:5-7). Similarly, some of the people who had just witnessed how Jesus cast out demons tested Jesus by demanding a sign from heaven (Lk 11:14-16). They would not believe in Jesus although they had just seen His miraculous power.

In conclusion, if we have already experienced God's grace and power but still deliberately fail to keep God's word, then our action of unbelief would constitute testing the Lord.

- 9a. They had hardened their hearts (8) and always went astray in their heart (10). In other words, they refused to believe in the Lord (4:2).
- 9b. They provoked God's wrath and could not enter His rest (11).
- 10a. Departing from the living God means rejecting God and His commands. The rebellion of the Israelites serves as an example.
- 10b. A believer will depart from God if he becomes hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (13). If we do not always draw close to the Lord and examine our faith, the lifestyle of sinful pleasure or material pursuits may become increasingly appealing to us. As a result, we are slowly led away by sin, until "an evil heart of unbelief" takes control in us, causing us to forsake God (12).
- 10c. We ought to "beware" (12), and "exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today'" (13).
11. The word "Today" is taken from the quotation in Psalm 95, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts...." The point is that we need to be quick to respond to God's word. Don't wait until tomorrow, but let God's word bear fruit in our hearts today. Another meaning is that we should continually submit to God's word. Past obedience is not good enough. We must renew our commitment to God everyday.
- 12a. They sinned (17) and disobeyed (18).
- 12b. Being a true believer is not just a confession of our lips, but it involves putting God's command into practice in our daily walk.

Lesson 6

Observation

Outline

Warning against Falling Short (4:1-2)

Designation of Another Day and Exhortation to Enter the Rest (4:3-11)

The Penetrating Effect of God's Word (4:12-13)

Key Words/Phrases

Promise, remains, entering His rest, fear, come short of it, gospel, faith, works, today, diligent, disobedience, word of God, living and powerful, two-edged sword, discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

General Analysis

1. The promise of entering God's rest remains (1). We ought to be careful lest we fall short of it (1). We who have believed do enter that rest (3). God swore in His wrath that the Israelites would not enter His rest (3,5). God rested on the seventh day from all His works (4). Some must enter this rest, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience (6). Joshua did not give the Israelites rest, but there remains a rest for the people of God (8-9). He who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His (10). We need to be diligent to enter that rest lest we fall (11).

Segment Analysis

1. Verse 1 reads, "let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it." The example of the Israelites teaches us that believers today may also fall short of God's promise if they are not careful. This is a real danger, not a hypothetical one. If we become hard-hearted like the Israelites, then we would also miss the grace of God and not be able to enter His rest.
- 2a. The word "gospel" can be understood in its broader meaning, which is "good news." The good news to the Israelites was that they would enter God's rest if they believed in Him and His promise. The good news to us today is that we would enter God's rest if we believe in the Lord and the promise of salvation.
- 2b. The word they heard was not "mixed with faith in those who heard it" (2). In other words, they did not soften the soil of their heart with faith to allow the seed of God's word to grow and bear fruit (cf. Lk 8:15). Although they knew what God had promised, they still rebelled against God. In the same way, if we only know God's word but do not respond

with faith, both in our hearts and in our actions, then God's word would not profit us. In fact, His word will judge us on the last day (Jn 12:47-48).

3. The Israelites fell in the desert, not because God's word failed, but because they did not believe in God and rejected God. Although they were the chosen people, their lack of faith kept them from entering God's rest. Hence, we must not feel complacent, thinking that we have already obtained God's promise. We ought to be careful and continually mix the word we hear with faith, and we must also put the word into practice in our lives.
 4. After the creation, when God rested from His works (3-4)
 5. Although God's rest first took place at the foundation of the world, this rest continued on in history because God spoke of Israel's failure to enter His rest in the Psalms (5). Since it was God's will that some must enter His rest, and Israelites did not enter God's rest because of disobedience, God appointed another day of rest—today (6-8). The fact that God spoke of another day shows that the promise was not claimed by the Israelites but still stands today.
 6. The rest here is God's rest, the rest that God had after the completion of creation, when He saw that everything He had made was very good. It carries a sense of perfection and satisfaction. This divine rest is something we can experience in our souls and be part of through Jesus Christ (Mt 11:28-30). When we submit to Christ and learn from Him, we no longer labor and are no longer heavy laden. Having been reconciled with God, we are at peace with God. We are no longer burdened by sin and sorrow, but have inner peace. Instead of relying on our efforts, we can trust the Lord in everything.
- God's rest will be ours eternally when we die in the Lord. "...Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.'" (Rev 14:13). When we leave this world, we will lay down the toils and pains of this life to be with the Lord forever.
7. Those who believe and are obedient to God enter God's rest (3,6).
 - 8a. Ceasing from our works does not mean being idle or stagnant in our spiritual growth. Rather, it means being freed from sin and sorrow as well as setting aside attempts to reach God through our own works of righteousness. As such, ceasing from our works does not contradict being diligent in Christ.

When Paul spoke of being found to have the righteousness that is through faith, he went on to say, "I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus lay hold of me...I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead" (Php

3:12-13). Our diligence in Christ is possible only because Christ has laid hold of us. All our efforts are based on Christ's saving grace, not apart from it. Peter also spoke of such diligence in Christ, which is based on the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus (2Pet 1:5-8; 3:17-18). We aim to hold fast to Christ lest we fall away from Him. This is what it means to be diligent to enter that rest, and this is consistent with the exhortations and warnings we have seen thus far in Hebrews.

- 8b. Faith is dynamic. True faith is one that moves us closer and closer to Christ. A Christian with true faith is diligent in making spiritual progress according to the word of God.
9. God's word is not just a book of history. It accomplishes God's purpose (Isa 55:11). According to this passage, it has a penetrating effect. It discerns the thoughts and intentions of our hearts and lays them bare before God. It cuts to our hearts and leads us to repentance. Like a mirror, the word of God compels us to come face to face with our sins and inadequacies and to stand bare in God's presence (cf. Jas 1:23-24). Because God's word makes us aware of our deepest feelings and thoughts, it is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness..." (2Tim 3:16-17).
10. Because God's word can discern the thoughts and intents of our hearts, it will be the basis of God's judgment, at which time we will all have to give an account to God (13).
11. How we respond to God's word will determine whether we are true believers. God's word, which penetrates our hearts, judges whether we have faith.

The Israelites heard the word, but the word did not profit them because they did not mix it with faith in their hearts (2). Consequently, they did not enter the rest because they did not keep God's word. On the other hand, those who believe in God's word and obey it are able to enter God's rest.

The word of God plays a vital part in our salvation because it leads us to Christ, for "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17). God's word makes us "wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2Tim 3:15). If we believe the word of God, which centers on Christ, we will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand, rejection of God's word is rejection of Jesus Christ. Thus, we ought to always believe and obey God's word. We ought to let it lay bare our hearts before God and drive us to the grace of Christ. If we are diligent to submit to God's word, we will enter the promised rest.

Lesson 7

Observation

Outline

- We Have A Great High Priest (4:14-16)
- Selection of Earthly Priests (5:1-3)
- Divine Appointment of Eternal High Priest (5:4-6)
- The High Priest Made Perfect (5:7-10)

Key Words/Phrases

Great High Priest, passed through the heavens, Son of God, hold fast our confession, sympathize, weakness, tempted, grace, mercy, compassion, called by God, Melchizedek, learned obedience, suffered, perfected, author of eternal salvation.

General Analysis

- 1a. He can sympathize with our weaknesses (4:15). He was tempted in all points (4:15). He was appointed to represent men pertaining to God [i.e. in matter related to God] (1:3). He offered sacrifice for sins (5:1,3). He can have compassion (5:2). He was appointed (5:4-6).
- 1b. He has passed through the heavens (4:14). He is the Son of God (4:14; 5:5,8). He was without sin (4:15). He is a priest forever (5:6). He is a priest in the order of Melchizedek (5:6).

Segment Analysis

1. God's word reveals and makes us aware of the weaknesses and sins in us. But 4:15 assures us that Christ is a High Priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses, although He Himself was without sin. Therefore, we can come boldly before the throne of grace just as we are to obtain mercy and find grace in time of need.
2. Because Jesus is a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, and because He is the Son of God, our faith in Him is surely not in vain. He is the supreme God and He has conquered sin. We have every reason to put our trust in Him for our salvation, and we should hold on to such a conviction to the end.
3. He was in all points tempted as we are. He has experienced the suffering of temptation when He was in the flesh (2:18). That is why He can understand what we are going through and can be merciful to us.
4. He was without sin.

- 5a. “Throne” represents power and sovereignty. But this throne is not the throne of judgment, which conjures up the feeling of fear. Instead, it is a throne from which grace is granted. We can come to God, who is high above all things but yet loving enough to care for our needs. Thus, the throne of grace gives us a sense of both awe and assurance.
- 5b. We can obtain mercy and find grace at the throne of grace. Mercy relates to Jesus’ humanity, for His mercy is based on the fact that He was also in the flesh just as we are and suffered temptation just as we do. Grace relates to His divinity because, as God Himself, only He has the authority to freely pardon us of our sins and justify us through faith in Him.
- 5c. We can come to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ our great High Priest (cf. 10:19-22). This means putting our faith in the Lord Jesus, confessing our sins, asking for His help, and obeying His word.
- 5d. We are urged to come boldly to the throne of grace. Despite our sins and wretchedness, we can approach God confidently through the blood of Jesus Christ.
6. Just as the earthly priests were required to offer sacrifices for sin, Jesus also offered a sacrifice for sin. But instead of offering bulls and goats, He offered His own body and shed His own blood (10:5-10,19).
7. Jesus did not confer the honor of priesthood upon Himself. He was called by God to be High Priest just as Aaron was. In this sense, He was a true High Priest.
8. “My Son,” “forever,” “according to the order of Melchizedek.”
9. Jesus prayed the Father to take the cup from Him if it was His will, but He asked that the Father’s will be done nevertheless (Mt 26:39; Mk 14:36; Lk 22:42). He was heard because an angel appeared from heaven to strengthen Him (Lk 22:43), and consequently, the Father’s will was fulfilled on the cross.
10. He was heard because of His godly fear. Jesus had committed Himself completely to God and surrendered His own will. His prayers and supplications were all centered on the Father’s will.
11. Jesus’ reverent submission serves as a model for our prayers. Instead of demanding things we desire, we should ask that God’s will be done, even if it may be contrary to our will. We also ought to imitate Jesus’ earnest in prayer. Just as He offered up prayers with vehement cries and tears, we can also pour out our hearts and pray with importunity, asking that God’s will be done through us.
- 12a. This does not mean that Jesus was initially disobedient. Rather, it means that although He was not required to be obedient, being God Himself, He chose to empty Himself, took the form of a servant, and obeyed to

the point of death (Php 2:6-8). He learned obedience in the sense that He actually went through the experience of obedience.

- 12b. In order to endure sufferings, He had to deny Himself and obey the Father’s will. As much as He desire to be delivered from the bitter cup of the cross, He chose the path to Golgotha out of His obedience.
- 12c. Obedience to God is not just in matters that we agree with or like. More often than not, obedience entails sufferings. Only when we are willing to suffer can we be ready to obey in all circumstances.
13. Jesus was the glorious Son of God. He has the power to save. But He was not just a God who was high above us and unfamiliar with our weakness. He was also the obedient Son. It was only after He was perfected through sufferings that He became fit to be the author of eternal salvation.
14. He is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (9).

Lesson 8

Observation

Outline

Admonition against Spiritual Infancy (5:11-14)

Exhortation to Go on to Maturity (6:1-3)

Consequence of Falling Away (6:4-8)

Key Words/Phrases

First principles, milk, solid food, unskilled in the word of righteousness, babe, full age, senses exercised, discern both good and evil, perfection, impossible, fall away, crucify again for themselves the Son of God, put Him to open shame, bears herbs, bears thorns and briers.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Dull of hearing (11); needing to be taught again the first principles of the oracles of God (12); needing milk and not solid food (12); unskilled in the word of righteousness (13).
- 1b. Taking solid food; senses exercised by reason of use; able to discern both good and evil (14).
- 2a. Slow to understand (cf. Mt 13:13-15).
- 2b. The ABC’s of God’s word; the very basics of God’s will.

- 2c. Milk refers to elementary teachings, whereas solid food refers to teachings that only the spiritually perceptive can understand and profit from.
- 2d. The word of God, which shows us what is right before God (cf. “discern good and evil” in 14).
- 3a. The spiritual infant is unskilled in God’s word. In other words, he is not only slow to learn but also hardly practices God’s word. He needs to be taught the basics again and again. On the contrary, the spiritually mature train themselves through constant use of God’s word. Through much experience, they are able to discern what is good and evil. They can stand firm on sound doctrines and reject all false teachings (cf. Eph 4:13-14). They can also abstain from sin and live a life pleasing to God.
- 3b. God’s word can sharpen our spiritual perception if we constantly put it into practice (13). Without constant use, we will be inexperienced with God’s word and slow in our spiritual senses.
4. Repentance from dead works, faith toward God, doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement were teachings that were taught to new converts. While they are important, believers who have been in Christ for a long time should already be well versed in them and able to teach others about them instead of needing to be taught again concerning them.
5. Some questions to ponder are: “Do you still question, doubt, or struggle with the fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith?” “Are you complacent about merely having understood and accepted the basic beliefs?” “Do you have an eager desire to learn as much about God’s word as you possibly can and to constantly practice it in your life?”
6. While we need to be diligent in making progress towards perfection, we also must depend on God to accomplish this goal. We cannot do it alone. Our determination can be effective only if it is built on God’s help.
- 7a. The impossibility of being renewed again to repentance.
- 7b. These are people who have come to understand the gospel of salvation and have experienced the Holy Spirit and the grace of God.
- 8a. A person who falls away is one who “bears thorns and briers.” In other words, his heart has been hardened by sin’s deceitfulness and become an evil heart of unbelief (3:12-13). Like the land that receives rain but bears thorns and briers, God’s word has no effect on his life. Instead of bearing the fruit of the spirit, he is unproductive and leads a worthless, and even sinful life.
- 8b. Historically, those who crucify the Son of God and put Him to an open shame were the unbelievers who rejected Jesus Christ and His saving grace. Therefore, if anyone who has been enlightened by God’s word

and spirit and has tasted God’s grace forsakes Jesus Christ, he is as guilty as those who nailed Him to the cross. Worse still, he would be twice as guilty because he is doing it the second time (the first time being before tasting the grace of God).

- 8c. Destruction (cf. Mt. 13:40-42).

Lesson 9

Observation

Outline

Encouragement to Be Diligent (6:9-12)

Certainty of God’s Promise (6:13-20)

Key Words/Phrases

Confident, salvation, diligence, full assurance of hope, until the end, through faith and patience inherit the promises, swear/oath, immutability of His counsel, consolation, fled for refuge, hope, anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, forerunner.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. He knows from their work and labor of love that they were people of faith rather than unbelievers who have rejected God. He also knows that God, who is faithful, will reward them accordingly. Thus, he is optimistic about their future, and particularly, their salvation.
- 1b. According to the passage, the believers had been active in their faith and love, but they seemed to have become stagnant. Although it is not necessarily an indication that they have fallen away, it is surely a cause for concern, for the possibility of falling away is real, not hypothetical.
2. We must be diligent to the very end.
3. Sluggishness could result from complacency and false security (cf. Rev 3:1,17). It may also be caused by sin’s deceitfulness, which leads to apostasy (Heb 3:12-13). The pleasures of this world may harden our hearts and bring about spiritual stagnancy and even backsliding. Regardless of the cause, sluggishness is an indication of unbelief. A true believer is not unproductive but bears fruit and is useful to the Lord (6:7; cf. 2Pet 1:8-11).
5. Verse 12 teaches us to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. The author here goes on to cite Abraham’s example for our imitation.

6. We ought to imitate Abraham's patient endurance, with which he waited for God's promise (15).
7. It confirms the promise and makes it even more sure, for an oath puts an end to all dispute (16). Whereas human beings would swear by someone greater, who would bring punishment upon the one taking the oath if he fails to keep his word, God swore by Himself since he could swear by no one greater (13). God's oath, which is an oath of the highest order, adds even greater weight to His promise, which is in itself perfectly reliable. Even though God did not need to swear, He did it to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the immutability of God's counsel (17).
- 8a. The promise (or counsel) and the oath.
- 8b. He tells us that God's purpose in providing the immutable is to give us consolation, and he assures us that our hope is sure and steadfast (18-19).
9. We have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust in order to be partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet 1:4). Christ is our refuge, in whom we are sheltered from the snare and bondage of the devil.
- 10a. This anchor is our hope, which is made possible through the atoning work of Jesus Christ (19-20).

Lesson 10

Observation

Outline

- Description of Melchizedek (7:1-3)
- Melchizedek's Greatness (7:4-10)
- The Order of Melchizedek and the Better Hope (4:11-19)
- Jesus the Great High Priest (4:20-28)
 - Became priest by oath (20-22)
 - Permanent ministry (23-25)
 - Perfect sacrifice (26-28)

Key Words/Phrases

Melchizedek, Abraham, made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually, gave a tenth/tithes, great, Levi, bless, perfection, the law of a fleshly commandment, power of an endless life, better hope, draw near to God, oath, surety of a better covenant, continues forever, unchangeable

priesthood, save to the uttermost, always lives to make intercession, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, higher than the heavens, once for all, offered up Himself, perfected forever.

Segment Analysis

1. God's righteousness is revealed in Jesus Christ, through whom we are freely justified by faith (Rom 3:21-26). In Him God's love and justice are fully manifest. Jesus Christ is also the King of peace because through Him we are reconciled with God (Rom 5:1) and with others (Eph 2:14-18). He also grants peace to those who are in Him (Jn 14:27; 16:33).
2. Verse 3.
3. Verse 4 reads, "Now consider how great this man was." The rest of the paragraph proceeds to show his greatness.
 1. Melchizedek received a tenth from Abraham (4).
 2. He blessed Abraham (6-7).
5.
 1. Levitical priests are mortal men. But of Melchizedek it is witnessed that he lives (8; i.e. according to the testimony about him, Melchizedek lives. There is no record in Scripture of his death).
 2. In a sense, Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham (9-10).
- 6a. It is clearly stated in Scripture that God appointed another priest in the order of Melchizedek (17; Ps 110:4).
- 6b. The making whole (justification) of sinners before God so that they may draw near to God (cf. 19).
7. The law required that a high priest must be a descendent of Aaron. If it was necessary for another priest to rise in the order of Melchizedek, then the stipulations of the law would no longer hold true.
8. It is not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. The law of a fleshly commandment means regulations that pertain to the physical, such as ancestry. The new priesthood is not based on Aaronic ancestry, but on the permanence of life. Jesus is the better High Priest because He lives forever.
9. Before Christ came, we were under the weak and unprofitable commandment. It was weak and unprofitable because it could not make us perfect. But after Christ came, we have a better hope, through which we draw near to God. This hope, like an anchor for the soul, enters the holy of holies (6:19). Having been made perfect by the blood of Christ, we have gained access to God.
10. The oath confirms God's covenant and serves as a guarantee of the covenant (22; 6:13-18). Whereas the Levitical priests were made priests

without an oath, Christ became Priest by God's oath. Thus, while the Levitical priesthood could not offer us any guarantees, God's covenant with us is guaranteed through the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

11. 1. The Levitical priests were prevented by death from continuing (23). But Christ continues forever because He lives forever (24).
2. The Levitical priests had to offer sacrifices daily for their own sins and for the sins of the people (27). Christ was sinless, and He offered Himself up once for all (27).
3. The Levitical high priests were men with weaknesses (28). But Christ was the Son who has been perfected forever (28).
12. A priest who is prevented by death from continuing cannot save us because he himself is a sinner, for the wages of sin is death. Only Jesus Christ, who was without sin, who died on our behalf and rose again, and who is the eternal God Himself, has the power to save us. His salvation is eternal because He lives forever.
- 13a. Christ always lives to make intercession for us. Because He has paid for our sins, He is our Advocate before the Father (1 Jn 2:1). If we confess our sins, God will forgive us on the merit of Jesus Christ. Consequently, no one can bring a charge against us or condemn us (Rom 8:33-34).
14. These verses stress the perfection and deity of Jesus Christ. He is sinless and higher than the heavens (26). His sacrifice is once for all (27). He is the Son, who has been made perfect forever (28; cf. 5:8-9)

Lesson 11

Observation

Outline

- We Have Such A High Priest (8:1-2)
- His Superior Ministry (8:3-6)
- The Old Covenant (8:7-9)
- The New Covenant (8:10-13)

Key Words/Phrases

High Priest, Minister, sanctuary, true tabernacle, offer, copy and shadow of the heavenly things, more excellent ministry, Mediator of a better covenant, better promises, covenant, took them by the hand, put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts, know the Lord.

General Analysis

1. Up to this point we have studied the greatness of the High Priest Himself. This is summed up in verse 1. Verse 2 speaks of the greatness of the High Priest's ministry. This will be the theme that chapters 8 to 10 will develop.

Segment Analysis

1. He is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens (1). He is in the place of highest honor (Php 2:9-11) and has received all authority in heaven and on earth (Mt 28:18). He is in the heavens, not on earth. This signifies His perfection, exaltation, and permanent priesthood, all of which make Him superior to the earthly priests.
2. It is the true tabernacle, not a copy of it. It is erected by the Lord, not by man (2). This means that God Himself performs all the things necessary for man to come to God. No human mediator or agent is involved.
3. Whereas the earthly priests offered gifts and sacrifices, Christ offered His body. Whereas the earthly priests had to offer many gifts and sacrifices, Christ offered Himself once for all.
4. The earthly priests ministered on earth in a tabernacle that is only a prefiguration, but Christ ministers in heaven in the true tabernacle.
5. Since the old tabernacle was a prefiguration, it is replaced when the High Priest of the heavenly tabernacle comes.
6. Better promises. God's new covenant with His people offers much more than what the old covenant could accomplish. These better promises are made possible by Christ the Mediator.
7. It is through His personal sacrifice that God's promises in the new covenant are fulfilled (9:13-15).
8. In the old covenant, God took the Israelites by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. But despite God's deliverance and guidance, the Israelites failed to continue in the law of God. Consequently, God forsook them. What was lacking in the old covenant was that the people's relationship with the Lord was passive and temporary. They followed the external regulations without a sincere desire to honor God. They were only led by the hand and did not actively follow God.
- 9a. 1. God will put His laws in their mind and write them on their hearts. God's people will have a change of heart (cf. Ezek 36:26-27). They will worship God in spirit and truth.
2. God will be their God and they will be His people. God will not reject His people again but will be ever closer to them. He will dwell among them and shepherd them (Rev 21:3-4).

3. They will not need to be taught to know the Lord, but each will know God, from the least of them to the greatest of them. Each will build a personal relationship with God.
4. God will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and lawless deeds God will remember no more.
- 9b. Because of Christ's atoning death, God forgives us of all our sins. He does not remember our sins but shows us mercy. Through faith and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, our sins are washed away (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
- Having believed and been baptized into the Lord Jesus, we are children of God (Gal 3:26-29), and the Holy Spirit is a testimony of this (Rom 8:18).
- Through the indwelling and renewal of the promised Holy Spirit, God's word is written on our hearts, setting us free from mere outward observance and transforming us into the Lord's likeness (2Cor 3:3-18).
- In Jesus Christ, we can have an intimate, personal knowledge of God. Because God has manifested Himself through Jesus Christ (Jn 1:18; Col 1:19), we who have believed in Jesus Christ can draw near to God (Jn 14:6). With Christ's word and Spirit in us, we can personally know and experience God (Eph 1:17; cf. 1Jn 2:27).
11. In order to participate in the new covenant, we must put our faith in Jesus Christ, the Mediator and High Priest of the new covenant. We need to enter into a relationship with Christ through the sacraments He instituted, namely baptism (Gal 3:27; Col 2:11-12; Rom 6:3-4), footwashing (Jn 13:8), and Holy Communion (Mt:26:26-28; 1Cor 10:16-17). We must hold fast to our faith in Him (Heb 3:14) and abide in Him by obeying His commands (1Jn 2:6).

Lesson 12

Observation

Outline

- Layout of the Tabernacle (9:1-5)
- Services in the Tabernacle (9:6-10)
- Christ in the True Tabernacle (9:11-12)

Key Words/Phrases

First covenant, ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary, tabernacle, first part, lampstand, table, showbread, sanctuary, veil, Holiest of

All, golden censer, the ark of the covenant, golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, the tablets of the covenant, mercy seat, priests, high priest, blood, perfect in regard to the conscience, the time of reformation, the good things to come, eternal redemption.

General Analysis

1. Verses 11-12.

Segment Analysis

1. Verse 1 introduces the subject matter of the first two paragraphs. Verses 2-5 are about the earthly sanctuary, and 6-10 are about the divine service.
- 2a. It represents God's dwelling among His people.
- 2b. God's covenant defines His relationship with His people. But in order for God to establish a relationship with man, He must provide a means through which sinful man may come to His presence. This is why the tabernacle and the divine services form an integral part of the covenant. The tabernacle represents God's presence among His people and the ordinances of divine services gave people access to God, although such access was an indirect one. Central to the divine services is the atonement for sins, without which sinners cannot come before God. Thus, the tabernacle and divine services were the means through which God entered into a relationship with His people.
3. Two—the Holy Place and the Holiest of All (i.e. Most Holy Place).
- 4a. A veil (3).
- 4b. The veil symbolized God's separation from man and was a prefiguration of the body of Christ (10:20). Sinful man could not come into the presence of the Holy God. But this veil was torn in two from top to bottom when Jesus gave up His spirit. Christ has accomplished the work of salvation and opened a new and living way through His body so that we who believe in Him may now draw near to God (10:19-20)
- 5a. The lampstand, the table, and the showbread (2).
- 5b. The golden censer and the ark of the covenant (4).

Note: "There are problems about the expression translated 'the golden altar of incense.' The word *thymiaterion* denotes something connected with the burning of incense (*thymiama*), and in the LXX it is always used of a censer. Some (e.g., KJV, RV, Snell) favor this meaning here. But the word is also used by Symmachus, Theodotion, and others of the altar on which incense was offered (Exod 30:1-10)..." (Expositor's Bible Commentary. Vol 12. p. 81). For our purpose, we will understand this term to refer to the golden censer, since the censer had an important

part on the Day of Atonement, which the context of this passage focuses on.

The description of the golden censer seems to contradict Exodus 30:6, which tells us that the altar of incense was placed in the Holy Place outside the veil. But we should note that the author of Hebrews does not say that the censer was in the Most Holy Place, but that the Most Holy Place “had” the golden censer. The golden censer was connected to the Most Holy Place because on the Day of Atonement, the high priest would take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar, bring it with the sweet incense into the Most Holy Place, and offer the incense on the fire before the Lord (Lev 16:12-13). Hence, it would be appropriate to consider the golden censer as belonging to the Most Holy Place (cf. Ex 40:5; 1Kgs 6:22).

The connection between the golden censer and the Most Holy Place is even clearer when we take it to a spiritual level. Through the atoning death of Jesus Christ, we may now draw near to God in the Most Holy Place and offer our prayers to Him. There is no longer a veil that separates believers from God. The prayers of the saints rise up directly to the very presence of God (cf. Rev 8:3).

- 5c. The golden pot that had the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant (4).
6. God’s glory and mercy.
7. The priests went into the first part of the tabernacle, but only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place. The priests entered the Holy Place daily, but the high priest entered the Most Holy Place once a year. The priests served in the Holy Place without blood, but the high priest went into the Most Holy Place with blood.
8. Atonement (7).
9. The way into the Holiest of All was not made manifest (8), and the gifts and sacrifices could not make man perfect in regard to the conscience (9). The ceremonial cleansing under the first covenant only purified the external, but it could not remove sins or set free a guilty conscience.
- 10a. The place of service (11)
- 10a. Christ has entered the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands and not of this creation. He has gone into heaven to appear in the presence of God (9:24).
- 10b. Instead of offering the blood of goats, He entered the Most Holy Place with His own blood.
- 10c. Whereas the priests offered sacrifices continually, Christ offered His blood once for all. Because His sacrifice was perfect, He only needed to offer Himself once.

- 10d. The blood that the high priests offered could only purify the flesh, but the blood of Christ brings eternal redemption.
11. Redemption denotes purchasing with a ransom in order to set one free. With His own blood, Christ has paid for our sins once for all.

Lesson 13

Observation

Outline

Cleansing by the Blood of Christ (9:13-15)

Purification and Remission of Sins (9:16-22)

Finality of Christ’s Offering (9:23-28)

Key Words/Phrases

Blood, how much more, cleanse, conscience, Mediator of the new covenant, redemption, eternal inheritance, testament, death, purified, remission, heavens, better sacrifices, presence of God, once, appeared, bear the sins, a second time, salvation.

Segment Analysis

1. The blood of bulls and goats sanctifies externally. But the blood of Christ, offered through the eternal Spirit, sanctifies internally by cleansing the conscience.
2. Having been cleansed from sin, our purpose in life is to serve God. But in order to be true servants of God, our lives need to be free from “dead works”, that is, free from sin and unrighteousness (cf. Rom 6:21-23). Serving God involves more than offering our possessions. More essentially, we must be holy in all that we do. We should no longer offer our bodies to sin as instruments of wickedness, but we must always live in a manner that is pleasing to God (Rom 6:12-19; 12:1-2).
3. The death of Christ.
4. The foremost promise in the new covenant is the forgiveness of sins (8:12). Christ’s death fulfills this promise because His blood cleanses our conscience from sins. Since He has put the new covenant into effect, Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant. Having been cleansed of our sins, we also inherit the other promises in the new covenant, namely, receiving a new heart to obey God’s laws, being God’s people, and having a personal knowledge of God.
5. Eternal inheritance (cf. 1Pet 1:3-4).

6. Verse 15 tells us that Christ was the Mediator of the new covenant by means of death. Verses 16 and 17 explain why death is necessary for the testament (or covenant) to take effect.
7. Even the first covenant was dedicated with blood (18). According to the law, almost all things are purified with blood, and without blood there is no remission (22).
8. While the way into the Most Holy Place was not made manifest in the old covenant, Christ has now appeared before God's presence for us.
9. The high priests entered the Most Holy Place every year, but Christ has appeared at the end of the ages only once.

The high priests offered the blood of another, but Christ offered the sacrifice of Himself.

No word is said about the high priests' offering being able to remove sin, but verse 26 tells us that Christ has appeared to put away sin.

10. The finality of death and judgment is analogous to the finality of Christ's offering and its effect. Just as death is the end of all men and judgment follows death, Christ's offering spells the end of all offerings, and salvation results from this final offering.

While the death of all men functions as an analogy for the offering of Christ, they also stand in sharp contrast at the same time. The death of Christ is contrasted with the death of all men, and the salvation that He brings is contrasted with the judgment that men must face (cf. Rom 5:17-19). The offering of Christ has changed the destiny of men. Because of Christ's death, we who believe in Him will not be condemned at the judgment but will receive salvation.

11. He will appear a second time to those who eagerly wait for Him. Eagerly waiting for the Lord Jesus involves holding onto our faith with patience while living holy and godly lives (Rom 8:23-25; Php 3:17-21; 2Pet 3:11-14; 1Jn 3:2-3)

Lesson 14

Observation

Outline

Nature of the Law (10:1-4)

Jesus' Submission to the Father's Will (10:5-10)

Sacrifice for Sins Once for All (10:11-14)

Nature of the New Covenant (10:15-18)

Key Words/Phrases

Law, shadow of the good things to come, sacrifices, offer continually, consciousness of sins, reminder of sins, body, do Your will, takes away the first, establish the second, will, sanctified, once for all, stands, sat down at the right hand of God, perfected forever, covenant, hearts, minds, remission.

General Analysis

1. The sacrifices under the old covenant, being only a shadow, was ineffective. Now that Christ has come and offered the perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins, the new covenant of God has been put into effect and it has permanently replaced the old covenant.

Segment Analysis

1. The law can never make perfect.
2. Verse 2 points out that if the sacrifices could purify the conscience from sin, then there would be no need to offer them again and again because sin would have been removed once for all. The fact that these sacrifices were repeated shows that they were ineffective.
3.
 1. It served as a shadow of the good things to come (1). The sacrifices prefigured the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
 2. It served as a reminder of sins (3). By making the people aware of their sins and their need for atonement, the sacrifices directed the worshippers' hope to the Savior (cf. Gal 3:21-25).
4. Jesus Christ.
5. God does not take delight in superficial worship. What He looks for is our submission to His will (1Sam 15:22; Isa 58:2-14; Mt 7:21-23; Rom 2:28-29). Our offerings and service would mean nothing to Him if we do not obey Him from our hearts. Therefore, we need to first learn to offer our bodies as living sacrifices and live righteous lives in accord with the Lord's commands. We need to be transformed by the renewing of our mind, making God the first priority in all our choices rather than follow our own desires.
6. God was not pleased with sacrifices and offerings because they were not able to atone for sins. But He prepared a body for Jesus Christ, who came to do the Father's will. Jesus' sacrifice in the body was what truly pleased God because it was able to remove sins once for all. God's will was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, not in the sacrifices and offerings.
7. Sanctification through the forgiveness of sins (10).
8. The author points out that the law in the OT was not the ultimate will of God. Even though God commanded sacrifices and offerings in the law,

God did not desire or had pleasure in them because God had intended these to be only a shadow of the things to come.

9. “He” refers to Christ. “The first” refers to what is stated in verse 8, and “the second” to what is in verse 9. Christ has removed sacrifices and offerings once for all through the offering of His body.

10:11-14

10. 1. The priests ministered *daily* and offered *repeatedly* the same sacrifices (11), but Christ offered *one* sacrifice.
2. Every priest *stands* (11), but Christ *sat down* at the right hand of God (12).

The significance of these contrasts is that while the priests had to continually minister with many sacrifices that were ineffective, Christ accomplished the work of salvation once for all. Furthermore, Christ has received the highest honor and authority because He is now seated at the right hand of God, but the priests were only servants who had to stand to minister.

- 11a. The enemies of Christ are “the principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, and the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12; 1Cor 15:24-25). They are also the ungodly forces of this world that oppose the rule of Christ (cf. Acts 4:25-27; Rev 19:19; 20:7-8). The final enemy is death (1Cor 15:26).
- 11b. The word “waiting” is significant. It shows that Christ has already won the battle. He is not fighting until the enemies are made His footstool, but He is waiting. Victory is certain. In due time, all of Christ’s enemies will be destroyed.
12. Christ has perfected the believers forever. In other words, Christ has become the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (5:9). He has opened the way to God for us through His atoning sacrifice (10:19-20). But while we have been justified freely by faith, we are continually being sanctified in this life through the work of the Holy Spirit (2Thess 2:13). God will keep working in our lives to accomplish His purpose (Php 2:12-13).

Paul’s words in Romans share the same thought: “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Rom 8:1). There is no condemnation because Christ has perfected us forever. But in order to be in Christ, we need to walk according to the Spirit. Justification takes place at one time, but sanctification continues throughout our lives.

Another way to understand the phrase “those who are being sanctified” is that God’s work of sanctification continues to the present. As more

believers put their faith in Christ through the ages, they are added to the number of the sanctified.

10:15-18

13. The Holy Spirit witnesses to us.
14. One of the functions of the Holy Spirit is witnessing with our spirit. He lives in our hearts to enlighten our hearts concerning the Scriptures and to guide us into all truth (Jn 16:13). In the context of this passage, the Holy Spirit confirms with our hearts that God’s promise in the new covenant, as prophesied in the Scriptures, has come true in Christ.
15. Having God’s laws written in our hearts means believing God in our hearts and obeying Him from our hearts instead of merely performing the external requirements of the law. This process involves the transforming power of God’s Spirit (Ezek 36:26-27; 2Cor 3:17). Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we can become a new creation in Christ. Consequently, obedience does not remain on the external, but our hearts and our minds also conform to God’s will.
16. The promises of God’s covenant (spiritual transformation and the forgiveness of sins) are now realized in those who are in Christ. Through Christ, the righteous requirements of God are fully met in us, making us “perfect” (whole) before God (cf. Rom 8:2-3).
17. The whole passage deals with the removal of the old and ushering in of the new (cf. 9). Now that there is remission of sins in Christ, the old covenant, along with its sacrifices and offerings, is no longer necessary.

Lesson 15

Observation

Outline

- Exhortations (10:19-25)
- Warning against Willful Sinning (10:26-31)
- Appeal to Endurance (10:32-39)

Key Words/Phrases

Boldness, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, His flesh, High Priest over the House of God, draw near, true heart in full assurance of faith, hold fast the confession of our hope, consider one another, stir up love and good works, assembling of ourselves together, the Day approaching, sin willfully, fearful, judgment, how much worse punishment, vengeance, repay, endured, sufferings, joyfully accepted, a better and an enduring possession for

yourselves in heaven, confidence, great reward, the just shall live by faith, draws back, perdition, believe, saving of the soul.

Segment Analysis

1. 1. We have boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood and body of Jesus.
2. We have a High Priest over the House of God.
2. 1. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
2. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering.
3. Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.
3. It is new because no one has ever been able to approach God in this manner. It is living because our approach to God is not through external rituals but through a daily, personal relationship with our living Savior.
4. We draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. We need to believe in our hearts that Jesus Christ is our Savior and build a personal relationship with the Lord in our lives. We must do all things for God out of sincerity, not with superficial acts. We also need to trust in the Lord with the full assurance that He will surely save us if we hold fast to Him.
5. This is a reference to baptism, which is an outward washing with an inward cleansing effect (1Pet 3:21). When we are immersed in water, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from our sins (cf. Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1Jn 5:6-8).
6. 22, 23, 24.
7. Assembling ourselves together and exhorting one another is one of the most important and effective ways to stir up love and good works (24). Through constant encouragement, we can build each other up and motivate each other. Through the assemblies of believers, we can also learn to serve each other with love. Furthermore, as we encourage each other with God's word and pray for one another, we are helping one another to prepare for the coming of the Lord (25).
9. Verse 26 begins with the word "for." This suggests that this paragraph reinforces the necessity of the exhortations in the previous paragraph. Failing to act upon the knowledge of Jesus Christ leads to dire consequences. Punishment on the unbelieving will be severe because they have rejected such a great Savior.
10. Those who have received the knowledge of the truth, i.e. those who have known and accepted the gospel of salvation.

- 11a. Based on the context of this passage, to sin willfully means to live contrary to God's commands despite knowledge of the saving grace of Jesus Christ.
- 11b. 1. Trampling the Son of God underfoot.
2. Counting the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing.
3. Insulting the Spirit of grace.
- 11c. Fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries (27); God's vengeance (30); falling into the hands of the living God—which is a fearful thing (31).
- 12a. 1. They were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations (33). Their goods were plundered (34).
2. They became companions of those who were so treated (33), for they had compassion on the author in his chains (34).
- 12b. They endured the sufferings (32) and joyfully accepted them (34).
- 12c. They knew that they had a better and an enduring possession for themselves in heaven (34).
13. 1. The apparent delay of the Lord's return and fulfillment of God's promise (cf. 37), resulting in discouragement and doubt.
2. The deceitfulness of sin (cf. 26; 3:13).
In either case, the loss of faith in Jesus Christ leads to apostasy.
- 14b. Enduring possession in heaven (34); life (38); salvation of our souls (39).
15. "Draw back" vs. "believe." "Perdition" vs. "saving of the soul."

Lesson 16

Observation

Outline

- Description of Faith (11:1-3)
- Faith of Abel (11:4)
- Faith of Enoch (11:5)
- Necessity of Faith (11:6)
- Faith of Noah (11:7)
- Faith of Abraham and Sarah (11:8-12)
 - Promise of Land (8-10)
 - Promise of Descendants (11-12)

A Better Country (11:13-16)

Key Words/Phrases

Faith, substance, hoped for, evidence, not seen, good testimony, understand, Abel, righteous, Enoch, pleased God, believe that He is, He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him, Noah, moved with godly fear, obeyed, promise, city which has foundations, not having received, having seen them afar, strangers and pilgrims on the earth, a better...heavenly country, God is not ashamed to be called their God.

General Analysis

1. Understand (3); offered (4); was taken away (5); pleased God (5); believe (6); prepared (7); obeyed (8); went out (8); dwelt (9); waited (10); received strength (11); judged Him faithful (11); assured (13); embraced (13); confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims (13); desired a better...heavenly country (16).

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Faith is necessary for things hoped for (i.e. things of the future) and things not seen (1).
- 1b. The creation of the world (3). The impending flood (7). Promise of land (8-10). Promise of descendants (11-12).
- 2a. Faith is the “substance” (or “assurance”) and the “evidence” (or “conviction”). In other words, through faith, we have certainty about things of the future and about things we do not see.
- 2b. Through faith we can obtain a good testimony. In other words, if we have faith, God and men will testify about us and give us their commendation and approval.
- 2c. Faith gives us understanding. Faith is not wishful thinking; it is knowledge. Through faith, we can know about the future and about things not seen.
3. Believing that God created the worlds out of nothing is a sign of faith. While people who do not have faith in God may devise many theories about the origin of the universe and find it difficult to understand how the universe could come from nothing, through faith in God’s word, we *know* that the universe came from God’s word.
4. What made Abel’s sacrifice more excellent was not so much what he offered, but his faith in God. By faith, Abel lived a life that conformed to God’s command (cf. Gen 4:7).
5. Abel obtained God’s witness that he was righteous. God spoke well of his offering. As stated in verse 2, by faith he received God’s testimony.

6. Enoch walked with God by faith. He walked in the commands of God and lived out the image of God.
7.
 1. Belief in God’s existence.
 2. Believing that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
8. We cannot see God because He is spirit. Without faith, it is not possible to accept God’s existence or His promises. Faith is what bridges our limited senses to the invisible God.
 Faith is actually an expression that we trust God and His word. Just as loving relationships are built on trust, so is our relationship with God. Through faith, we confirm God’s truthfulness and faithfulness (cf. 11). Anyone who does not have faith in God is making God a liar because he does not trust God’s word.
9. If we believe God, we will walk with God. We will follow His footsteps and be like Him in all we do. If we believe God, we will diligently seek Him by learning His word and being filled with His Spirit, knowing that God will reward us accordingly.
10. Noah’s godly fear was seen in the preparation of the ark in response to the divine warning. Likewise, our fear of God is seen in how we live our lives in preparation for the Lord’s return and the coming judgment (cf. 1Pet 1:13-17).
11. “Righteousness” literally means “that which is right.” Through faith, a person is reckoned by God as right and receives a favorable standing before God. In other words, God is pleased with him and justifies him. This righteousness is credited on account of faith, not on the inherent attributes of the believer or specific actions that he takes (cf. Rom 4:2-5).
12. Abraham set out even without knowing where he was going. His action was based on faith in God’s promise, not on sight.
- 13a. Abraham dwelled in tents, as in a foreign country. Although God had promised that he would inherit the land, he lived as a wanderer in the land, moving from place to place.
- 13b. “for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (10).
14. Our source of strength is God’s faithfulness. Whatever God says will come true, even though it may seem impossible or its fulfillment may seem to have been delayed. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (13:8). We can always depend on Him because His justice and love will never change.
- 15a. The better, heavenly country, the city prepared by God (16).
- 15b. They were assured of the promises, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth (13).

16. If we believe that our inheritance is in heaven, we will not set our minds on accumulating wealth or indulging in the pleasures of this world. Our priority will not be on the temporary, visible, material possessions, and we will live simple lives, as living in tents, in order to give our energy and time to God.
17. God was honored to be called their God. Thus He called Himself “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” The faith of the patriarchs was a living testimony of God’s faithfulness, and such testimony greatly pleased God.
18. Faith is not having self-confidence or wild dreams. Faith must be based on God’s word. We believe that the world was formed out of nothing because God’s word says so. Noah believed that a flood would destroy the world because God told him so. Abraham believed that he would have many descendants and that he would inherit the land because God specifically promised these to him.
- We must be careful not to turn wishful thinking into the basis of our trust. Our confidence should come from God’s promises, not our own desires. Some “believe” that they will get jobs with high income, some “believe” that they will marry someone physically attractive, and others “believe” that they will get into prestigious schools. While all these convictions may seem to be based on trust in God’s power, they are built on things that God has not promised. Conviction based on anything other than God’s word would be “blind faith,” not true faith.

Lesson 17

Observation

Outline

- Faith of Abraham (11:17-19)
- Faith of Isaac and Jacob (11:20-21)
- Faith of Joseph (11:22)
- Faith of Moses’ Parents (11:23)
- Faith of Moses (11:24-28)
- Faith of the Israelites (11:29-30)
- Faith of Rahab (11:31)
- Faith of Other Ancients (11:32-38)
 - Triumph through faith (33-34)
 - Sufferings through faith (35-38)
- Rewards of Faith (11:39-40)

Key Words/Phrases

Faith, Abraham, promises, God was able, Isaac, blessed, things to come, Jacob, worshiped, Joseph, Moses, were not afraid, refused, choosing, suffer affliction, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches, looked to the reward, forsook, seeing Him who is invisible, Rahab, did not perish, of whom the world was not worthy, obtained a good testimony, did not receive the promise, something better, should not be made perfect apart from us.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Abraham had waited for the promise, and he finally received it. But now God tested his faith by asking him to surrender what he had received (17). It is one thing to wait for something you love very much, it is quite another to give it up after you have received it!

God’s test was also designed to see how much Abraham feared God and whether he would obey Him unconditionally (Gen 22:12).
- 1b. He believed that even if Isaac died, God would be able to raise him up from the dead (19).
2. They believed in God’s promises to Abraham concerning having numerous descendants and possessing the land of Canaan.
3. He believed that God would surely fulfill His promise and bring the Israelites out of Egypt back to Canaan (Gen 50:25). Joseph’s instructions are all the more remarkable when we consider the fact that he had spent most of his life living in Egypt.
- 4a. Faith gave them the courage to defy the king’s command at the risk of death, for they trusted in God’s promise that He would preserve and deliver His people. Such courage is something unbelievers cannot possibly have.
- 5a. Being called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter (24) vs. becoming a Hebrew slave; Enjoying the passing pleasures of sin vs. suffering affliction with the people of God (25); Inheriting the treasures of Egypt vs. enduring the reproaches of Christ (26).
- 5b. He looked to the reward (26). He saw Him who is invisible (27).
- 5c. It may surprise us to note that Moses, who lived before Christ, chose to suffer for Christ. But this confirms Christ’s preexistence before He birth into this world. In retrospect, the writers in the New Testament would link the events of the OT directly to Christ, for the salvation history pointed to the Savior and His salvation (cf. 1Cor 10:1-4). In this sense, Moses’ choice to suffer for God was a choice to suffer for Christ.
- 5d. He esteemed it greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. In other words, he placed the highest value on suffering for Christ.

- 6a. As believers God is the most important factor in all our decisions. While the people of this world make choices based only on what can be seen, we base our choices on Him who is invisible, for we walk by faith, not by sight (2Cor 5:7). Through our eyes of faith, we are able to see the reality of God's promises, even though others cannot see it.
- 6b. If, like Moses, we can see Him who is invisible, then we would endure as we wait for God's promises to come true. We would choose what is eternal rather than what is temporary, even if our choice means suffering.
7. Moses had a life that the people of time could only dream of. As an heir of the most powerful king on earth, he had access to the highest education, the greatest treasures, and all forms of pleasures. But by faith he chose to suffer with the people of God because he looked to the reward. If we have faith in God, our goals in life should be different from those of the people of the world. We will consider Jesus Christ our greatest treasure, and we will forsake everything that stands between the Lord and us (Php 3:8). By faith, we will regard the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of this world.
8. Through faith, we know that sin is passing, and that we have to stand before God's judgment seat to give an account for our sins. This knowledge and conviction of the future enables us to make the wiser choice—suffering temporarily for obeying God in order to receive eternal glory rather than enjoying temporarily but reaping eternal condemnation.
- 9a. She believed that the Lord was God in heaven above and on earth beneath, and she knew that the Lord had given the promised land to the Israelites (Josh 2:9,11).
- 9b. She was a gentile and a harlot. Even a sinner and one who had no part in God's covenant like Rahab was saved by faith along with the people of God. This tells us that God does not remember the sins of a repentant sinner who has come to Him in faith. He justifies them freely through faith regardless of their background or past.
- 10a. The first list is about triumph, whereas the second is about persecutions.
- 10b. By faith in God's promises, we can do great things. If God has purposed to carry out something, we know that no obstacle can hinder His will. Faith gives us the strength and courage to face all odds and do the impossible in order to accomplish God's will.
- 10c. Faith in God does not guarantee a favorable outcome. In fact many of the people of faith went through severe trials and even gave up their lives for the faith. Faith can cost us our comfort, popularity, possessions, and even our lives. But that is what true

faith is about—being willing to give up what is seen for what is unseen. Furthermore, faith means trusting God to the end, even through the most severe sufferings. Our faith should not reside in temporary material blessings but in our heavenly inheritance.

- 11a. They obtained a good testimony through faith (39).
- 11b. They did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us (39b-40).
12. As we have seen in previous chapters of Hebrews, “the good things to come” denote the salvation of Jesus Christ and the blessings that it brings, and to be “made perfect” refers to justification which results from the atonement of Jesus Christ. The word “we” or “us” are Christians. What the author is saying here is that the believers of the OT, although they were commended by God for their faith, did not live to see the coming of the Messiah. It is only when Christ had come to fulfill salvation that they received the promise of justification and remission of sins, and they do so with believers in the NT era.

Note: In one sense, some of the people of faith did receive the promises of God (33). But what the author has in mind in 39 is “the promise,” not promises in general. This promise, therefore, is the ultimate promise—the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Lesson 18

Observation

Outline

- Run the Race with Endurance (12:1-4)
- Endure God's Discipline (12:5-11)
- Strengthen and Straighten (12:12-13)

Key Words/Phrases

So great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, sin, ensnares, run with endurance the race, looking unto Jesus, author and finisher of our faith, consider, weary and discouraged, chastening, son, Father, for our profit, partakers of His holiness, peaceable fruit of righteousness, strengthen, make straight, healed.

Segment Analysis

1. These are the people of faith in the past, some of whom were cited in the previous chapter. Their lives have become a testimony of faith to us.

2. We need to lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us. We also need to run with endurance (1).
3. Sin can entangle us, make us stumble, and disqualify us from the race. Sin is deceitful (3:13). People step into the trap of sin because it is attractive and seems harmless. Sin often starts small, but once we give sin an opportunity to work in us, it will grow and overpower us, resulting in spiritual death (Jas 1:14-15).
4. The “weights” refer to anything that distracts us and slows us down in our journey of faith, including ambitions, anxieties, or pleasures (Lk 8:14; 21:34). These things may not necessarily be sinful in themselves, but we should still lay them aside because they can hinder us. Sometimes, we may be so preoccupied with our careers, education, relationships, leisure, etc. that we do not have the time nor the energy to think about the things of God and our faith. We must reset our priorities so that these would not make us lose sight of our Lord Jesus Christ in our lives.
5. Jesus paved the way of faith for us. Today, we can come to God through faith because Christ began and completed the work of salvation. Also, it is through the help of our Lord Jesus that we can complete our journey of faith (cf. Jn 6:39; 2Tim 1:12).
6. Our Lord Jesus is our predecessor. He endured the sufferings of the cross and has been exalted. Because He has been victorious, we who follow His steps can look to Him for strength and encouragement. When we consider Jesus, we are reminded that our sufferings are but light and momentary compared to the sufferings He went through. This thought encourages us to keep on enduring.
- 7a. For the first readers of the epistle as well as most Christians today, we have not suffered to the point of being beaten or killed.
- 7b. The word “bloodshed” implies that the sin here refers to oppositions of some sort. Thus, the words “strive with sin” can be understood as enduring persecutions. However, we do not need to exclude the idea of resisting temptation. While oppositions to our faith today may not involve imprisonment or sword, they can come in more subtle forms, such as peer pressure or prevailing social values. Yielding to these oppositions is yielding to sin. In this sense, resisting temptation can also be considered “striving with sin.”
8. The author is pointing out that our sufferings are not without divine purpose. He reminds us to view our striving with sin as God’s chastening.
9. From the context, we understand that divine chastening includes, but is not limited to, punishment for wrongdoing. Persecutions and trials of faith in general are also means of God’s discipline.
10. When we do not see God’s loving purpose behind our sufferings, it is easy to become discouraged and even resentful. Instead of valuing our sufferings, we may complain about them and grumble against God.
11. God chastens us so that we may live (9); we may be partakers of His holiness (10); we may be trained by the chastening and reap the peaceable fruit of righteousness (11)
12. Our human fathers chastened us “for a few days” (during our childhood and while they are alive), but God’s chastening helps us throughout our lives. Our human fathers chastened us “as seemed best to them.” Sometimes, parents may make mistakes in their discipline and the result may not necessarily benefit the children. But God’s chastenings are always “for our profit,” for God knows what is best for us and He does not make mistakes.
13. Trials in life help us develop God’s righteous character. This righteousness is peaceable because it gives us inner peace with God as well as peace with others. Once we have been trained by our chastening, we will take our sufferings with the right attitude, without grumbings against God or complaints against others.
15. The words, “hands which hang down, and the feeble knees” is describing a condition in which the believer has become discouraged and weary. The author encourages us to become strong in the face of sufferings, for we have Jesus Christ as our example, and we know God’s good purpose behind the sufferings.
16. We need to remove anything that cripples or entangle our feet on our heavenly journey (cf. 1). When we have become sluggish in our spiritual growth, we must take measures to find and remove the cause so that we may be healed of our spiritual ill. When we have become discouraged, we need to correct our attitude and see the divine purpose. This teaching can also apply to the community of believers. We ought to help each other remove obstacles of faith so that our weakness may become strength.

Lesson 19

Observation

Outline

- Godly Living (12:14-17)
- The Heavenly Jerusalem (12:18-24)
- Mount Sinai (18-21)

Mount Zion (22-24)

Warning against Refusing God (12:25-29)

Key Words/Phrases

Pursue peace, holiness, looking carefully, fall short of the grace of God, root of bitterness, fornicator, profane, Esau, rejected, no place for repentance, fire, terrifying, afraid, trembling, Mount Zion, city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, innumerable company of angels, general assembly and church of the firstborn, God the Judge of all, the spirits of just men made perfect, Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel, see that, refuse, did not escape, earth, heaven, shake, have grace, serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, our God is a consuming fire.

Segment Analysis

1. The word “pursue” suggests making every effort to bring about peace (cf. Mt 5:9). Peace does not come without effort. We need to make it happen.
The word “all” teaches us that we cannot be selective as to whom we want to have peace with. We are to pursue peace with all regardless of who they are or how much they have wronged us.
2. Without holiness no one will see the Lord (14). God is holy. Anyone who’s life is contrary to God’s holiness cannot expect to be acceptable to the Lord.
- 3a.
 1. Falling short of the grace of God (15).
 2. Springing up of root of bitterness (15).
 3. Becoming a fornicator or profane person like Esau (16).
- 3b. The warnings in verses 15 and 16, which pertain to peace and holiness, are an expansion on verse 14.
- 3c. We must walk cautiously in our spiritual journey so that we would not be deceived by sin and stumble. We should always examine ourselves against God’s word and ask God’s spirit to search our hearts to see if there are any wickedness in us.
4. Falling short of the grace of God means forsaking God’s grace or failing to respond to God’s grace with a life that is worthy of the gospel.
5. The defilement here refers to the defilement by the sin of malice, which can spread through a whole community (cf. 1Cor 5:6-8; Jas 3:14-16). Just as bitter roots grow and bear bitter fruits, envy and strife also bring much trouble to the community.

- 6a. Being profane means showing no respect for God. Committing fornication would be considered profanity because it is defiance of God’s command.
- 6b. Choosing to obey the desires of the flesh rather than the commands of God constitutes spiritual adultery (Jas 4:4; Jer 3:20; Hos 2:5; 3:1; 9:1).
7. He despised his birthright (Gen 25:34). The birthright was a special privilege for the firstborn son among the Israelites. The firstborn was entitled to a double portion of the father’s inheritance. Esau’s contempt for his birthright was a contempt for the Lord because the blessing of the father originated from the blessings of God (cf. Gen 27:27-28).
- 8a. If we sacrifice our commitment to serve God for the immediate gratification of the fleshly desires, we are making the same mistake as Esau. Although Esau’s choice of having the stew was not immoral in itself, his choice for food at the expense of his birthright showed that he despised God and His promises. In the same way, there may not be anything immoral in seeking higher education, greater wealth, a more comfortable life, etc, the question we must ask ourselves is, “how important is God to me, and do I truly yearn for the heavenly inheritance?” If we value God’s blessings, our choices will reflect that. We will always place God’s command and the work of the Lord over our selfish ambitions and pursuits.
- 8b. Our heavenly inheritance and reward are not visible and are things of the future, but the things of this world can provide immediate gratification. Without faith, a person would choose what is seen rather than what is not seen (cf. 11:1; 2Cor 4:18).
9. Esau knew the importance of the birthright, but he chose to forfeit the blessings of God. Therefore, he had no excuse, though he later regretted his decision. In the same way, if person has known the truth and tasted the grace of God but still has an unbelieving heart, then there will be no chance for repentance (2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31).
- 10a. The descriptions of Mount Sinai evoke the feeling of terror, whereas the descriptions of Mount Zion are reassuring.
- 10b. One is on earth and the other in heaven (18, 22; cf. 25).
- 10c. The voice of words on Mount Sinai were so terrifying that “those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore” (19). But the voice on Mount Zion is the voice of Jesus the Mediator, whose blood speaks better things than that of Abel (24). In other words, Christ intercedes on our behalf, having atoned for our sins with His blood (7:25; 9:14).

- 10d. Associated with Mount Sinai is the fear of judgment, but on Mount Zion our sins have been atoned by the blood of Christ.
- 11a. At the foot of Mount Sinai, the people could only stand at a distance, and they were not able to see God. But we have come to Mount Zion into the very presence of God. The way to God has been opened.
- 11b. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant (24). The mention of Jesus is the climax of the list in 22-24. The blood of Jesus has brought us the blessings of the new covenant, in which God promised us that our sins would be forgiven and that we would be His people.
12. It is not a physical place, but the spiritual assembly of all the believers in Christ. It is the spiritual church in heaven (cf. Gal 4:26; Rev 3:12; 21:2, 10; Eph 2:6; Col 3:3). Believers who are in Christ have come to this heavenly city.
13. The point of the comparison is to show how great a salvation we have received (cf. 2:3) and how great our Lord Jesus Christ is (cf. 8:1). We have not come to behold at a distance the terrifying manifestations of God, but we have come into the heavenly presence of God through the saving works of Jesus Christ. It follows, then, as this paragraph points out, that we must receive this salvation with gratitude and heed the words of our Lord.
- 14a. At Mount Sinai, God's voice shook the earth. But at the Lord's coming, He will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven. It will be a cosmic event (cf. Heb 1:11-12; 2Pet 3:10; Rev 6:12-17; Isa 51:6).
- 14b. The physical existence and the desires of this world will be shaken and removed (1Pet 1:24-25; 1Jn 2:17). But God's kingdom, the new heavens and new earth, cannot be shaken (cf. 2Pet 3:11-13).
15. We ought to be thankful, living a holy life with godly fear. While we give thanks to God for our salvation, we should not be complacent. We need to live godly lives on earth as pilgrims and work out our salvation with fear and trembling (1Pet 1:13-25; Php 2:12).
16. God is just, and His judgment on the unsaved is severe. He will not let the ungodly go unpunished but will consume His enemies with His wrath.
17. The fear at Mount Sinai is a fear of approaching God. It is a fear that is outside the grace and mercy of God. But the fear Christians should have is a fear of someone who stands in the grace of God. It is a fear that comes from a thankful heart towards God's amazing grace. As believers, we do not fear that God would not give us His grace, for He has already given us His grace in Jesus Christ, but we do fear that we may reject God's grace through unbelief.

Lesson 20

Observation

Outline

- Exhortations on Love (13:1-6)
- Exhortations on Persistence of Faith (13:7-9)
- Exhortations on Sacrifice (13:10-16)
 - Going to Jesus outside the camp (10-14)
 - Sacrifices of praise and good deeds (15-16)
- Obedience and Intercession (13:17-19)
- Doxology and Benediction (13:20-21)
- Personal Epilogue (13:22-25)

Key Words/Phrases

Brotherly love, entertain strangers, remember the prisoners, marriage is honorable, God will judge, covetousness, content, remember those who rule over you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome, heart be established by grace, altar, suffered, go forth to Him, bearing His reproach, sacrifice, praise, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks, do good, share, obey, submissive, pray for us, blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete, appeal, grace.

Segment Analysis

1. Brothers (1), strangers (2), prisoners (3), spouse (4), others (5-6; we should love others by not coveting their possessions)
3. True love between a couple must be based on a marriage relationship. A person who is involved in a sexual relationship before marriage is disrespectful to the other person's body and soul, and is depriving his and the other person's future spouse of a pure and undefiled relationship. A person who commits adultery is hurting not only himself and the other person, but he is also destroying his and the other person's spouse and children. Adultery results in hatred, divorce, broken families, and eventually, serious problems in society.

Most importantly, committing sexual immorality is dishonoring the divine marriage institution (4). God established marriage so that we may have wholesome lives and families. Anyone who does not respect the sanctity of marriage shows contempt for God, and God will judge him accordingly.
- 4a. One of the reasons that people covet wealth is to have financial security. But the Bible assures us that God will always be there for us no matter where life takes us. As believers, we have no need to covet because the

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Lord will always provide for us. We just need to be content with what we have.

5. The true teachers, who speak the word of God (7) and the false teachers, who persuade with various and strange doctrines (9).
6. As believers of Jesus Christ, our confidence before God is not based on outward observance of religious regulations, such as ceremonial laws concerning foods. Rather, we are justified freely before God through His grace. We have confidence before God because our conscience has been cleansed by the atoning work of Jesus Christ (9:14; 10:22).
- 7a. In verse 7, the author exhorts us to follow the faith of those who rule over us and consider the outcome of their conduct. From their examples, we can see that our Lord never fails us when we put our trust in Him. Since Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, what He has done for the faithful of the past He will also do for us today. Since Jesus lives forever and He does not change, we can have confidence when we build our faith upon Him.
8. The altar here is not an altar in the physical sense. Rather, it refers to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for us (cf. 12).
9. Verse 9 teaches believers to have their hearts established on grace rather than on foods. Whereas regulations on ceremonial foods might have had their place in the old covenant, they have now been replaced by the grace of God in Jesus Christ. This paragraph continues this thought and teaches us the new meaning of sacrifice under the new covenant. Because Jesus Christ has established a new covenant through His personal sacrifice, the sacrifices believers offer today are not material, but a heart of thanks and a life of good deeds.
10. The sacrifice of animals in the OT and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
11. In the OT, the one who was cursed was brought outside the camp and put to death (Lev 10:1-5; 24:10-23). Thus, being brought outside the camp was a gesture of rejection. Jesus Christ was likewise rejected by His own people, and in that sense, He also suffered outside the gate. Today, if we choose to be a follower of Christ, we will also have to face rejection from unbelievers, including our families, friends, and the society at large.
12.
 1. Praising God with our lips and giving thanks in His name (15).
 2. Doing good and sharing (16).
13. We ought to obey and submit to them (17), and we ought to pray for them (18).

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