



A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Jesus is Greater



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HORIZON BAPTIST CHURCH
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OUTLINE OF HEBREWS

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HEBREWS 1:1-14

Recipients

- The book of Hebrews is written to a community of Hebrews living somewhere outside of Jerusalem. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 246)
 - The religious situation in Jerusalem was dominated by the temple, to which no explicit reference is made by our author. The author has much to say about the tabernacle, but not about the temple. time. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 252)
 - It differs from most of the New Testament epistles in that, while it ends like a letter, it does not begin like one. It lacks the customary opening salutation containing the names of the writer and of the people addressed. Yet, not only in the personal notes at the end but throughout its length, it is clearly addressed to a particular community in which the writer takes a lively interest. We just don't know who the writer or community is. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 163)
 - The addressees appear to have been a group of Jewish Christians who had never seen or heard Jesus in person, but learned of him from some who had themselves listened to him. They had endured persecution, but not yet martyrdom. They were in danger of turning away from the faith. They were probably reluctant to sever their last ties with a religion which enjoyed the protection of Roman law and face the risks of irrevocable commitment to the Christian way. We may infer from the epistle that they were Hellenists. They knew the Old Testament in the Greek version. It is implied too that their knowledge of the ancient sacrificial ritual of Israel was derived from the reading of the Old Testament and not from firsthand contact with temple services in Jerusalem. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 232)
- 2 ways of addressing the readers
 - As professing believers
 - As those in the local gathering that may or may not have been actually saved
 - As genuine believers
 - As those who were truly saved

Author

- Potential Authors
 - Paul
 - Some church tradition supports
 - Alexandria ascribed its authorship to Paul from the middle of the fourth century. They accounted for the differences in writing styles (similar to Luke; not similar to Paul) by saying that Paul wrote it in Hebrew, but Luke translated it and published it for the Greeks. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 299)

- Tertullian names Barnabas as the author of the epistle as though this were a commonly agreed ascription in his circle. The Muratorian Canon, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Gaius of Rome did not regard the epistle as Pauline. Eusebius remarks that even in his day some among the Romans did not consider it to be the apostle's. It was Jerome and Augustine who swayed opinion in the west toward accepting Hebrews as a Pauline epistle - not that they were convinced that it was so on grounds of literary criticism but rather because they were "moved by the prestige of the Eastern churches which included this epistle too among the canonical writings." From then on the Pauline ascription became traditional in the west as in the east, although commentators of critical judgment continued to speak of Clement of Rome or Luke as translator or editor of the epistle. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 322)
- Writing style is not Pauline
 - Illustration - plagiarized paper (you know the student didn't write it because it differs from their writing style)
 - Calvin - "The manner of teaching and the style sufficiently show that Paul was not the author, and the writer himself confesses in the second chapter that he was one of the disciples of the apostles, which is wholly different from the way in which Paul spoke of himself." (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 338)
- Apollos
 - Luther was the first to suggest that Apollos was the author. The Alexandrian characteristics of the thought, style, and vocabulary of the epistle have been thought to speak in favor of Apollos's authorship. Apollos would suit the part in point of his Jewish Alexandrian origin and training, but it's difficult to think that the Alexandrian church would not have preserved some knowledge of the fact in view of the distinguished role of this son of Alexandria in the world mission, and that Clement would not have mentioned him in writing to the Corinthians in whose history Apollos had played a notable part. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 330)
- Clement of Rome
- Luke
- Ultimate Author
 - Holy Spirit

Dating

- Sacrificial offerings are referred to in the present tense (8:13; 9:6-9; 10:2)
 - Temple was destroyed in AD 70
 - There is no overt reference to the temple in Hebrews. The ritual details which figure in the epistle are mostly taken from the Old Testament account of the tabernacle. Yet in principle the tabernacle and temple were one. The

- ritual of the former was the ritual of the latter. The writer of Hebrews writes as if the ritual were still being enacted. (9:6-9) (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 361)
 - That which is becoming old and aging will soon disappear - 8:13
 - Later, in mentioning the endless repetition of the sacrifices offered under the law, he says that they could never bring the offerers to perfection otherwise they would have ceased to be offered (10:2) (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 370)
 - In short, there are several passages which, while they do not demand a date before AD 70, would have special point of in fact the Jerusalem temple was still standing and the offerings were still going on. There are no passages which suggest that the sanctuary and offerings were at the time of writing things of the past. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 375)
- The persecution of the Hebrews had not yet been to the point of Martyrdom (10:32-34; 12:4)
 - Nero's outbreak of persecution in Rome began in AD 65
 - The view tentatively adopted in this commentary is that the epistle was written before, but not long before, the outbreak of persecution in Rome in AD 65. (12:4; 10:32-34) (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 359)

Type of Writing

- Synagogue Sermon
 - Defined as a word of exhortation in 13:22 (compare with Paul's synagogue sermon in Acts 13:15)
 - Topical
 - Not in the sense of cherry-picking verses
 - Drawn from passages all over the Old Testament
 - In chapter 1, the author cites Psalms 2, 45, 97, 102, 104 and 2 Samuel 7
 - A synagogue homily would be based on one or more biblical texts, drawn by preference from the lessons for the day. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 412)
 - The Old Testament writings are treated by our author as a mystery which awaits its explanation. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 434)
 - We never find in our author the least trace of that allegorical exegesis which was to remain the specialty of the Alexandrian school and which is illustrated so abundantly in the works of Philo (a generation or so earlier than our epistle). This contrast is the more marked because of affinities in thought and language which have otherwise been traced between our author and Philo. But Philo treats the Old Testament characters and incidents as allegories setting forth eternal principles, while our author treats them as types of Christ and the gospel, temporary foreshadowings of the fulfillment which has now taken place once for all. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 438)
 - The framework of much of our author's argument is supplied by quotations from the Psalter. Apart from the quotations from Psalms 2, 97, 104, 45, 102, and 110 in chapter 1, we may think of the use made of Ps. 8:4-6 in ch 2, of 95:7-11 in chs 3 and 4, of Ps 110:4 in 5:6-10, 6:20, 7:24 and of Ps. 40:6-8 in 10:5-10. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 446)

Outline

PART 1 - JESUS > ANGELS (1:1-2:18)

PART 2 - JESUS > MOSES (3:1-4:14)

PART 3 - JESUS > PRIESTS (4:15-10:18)

PART 4 - A CALL TO FAITH IN JESUS (10:19-13:25)

What do all of these have in common?

- The Old Covenant
 - Angels - mediators
 - Moses - author
 - Priests - executors

PART 1 - JESUS > ANGELS (1:1-2:18)

1.) Jesus' Nature > Angels' Nature (1:1-14)

A.) The Greatness of Jesus (1:1-3)

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

- Sundry times and in diverse manners - different authors at different times in differ styles
- By the prophets - A priest is one who speaks to God for man. A prophet is one who speaks to man for God.

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

- The revelation in Jesus is contrasted with that of the revelation of the prophets.

WHAT HE IS NOT

- He is not a prophet
- He is not a good teacher
- He is not a moralistic figure
- He is not a Buddha, Mohammed, Joseph Smith, Moses, Elijah
- Who is he?

(1) He is God's Son

spoken unto us by his Son

Not a son of God or son of the Gods, but the Son of God

John 5:18 - Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Every other religion in the world is man seeking God. Christianity is God bursting into man's world. And how did He do that? Through His son.

(2) He is God's mouthpiece

2a Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.

In the Old Testament, the Jew always saw the last days as the time when all the promises were fulfilled. We see here a contrast between the revelation of the prophets and the revelation of Jesus.

- Divine revelation is progressive (Prophets in the OT, Jesus in the NT)
 - Not from less true to more true
 - Not from less worthy to more worthy
 - Not from less mature to more mature
 - From promise to fulfillment (Jesus is the culmination of Scripture)

There is no need for further revelation (Joseph Smith, modern apostles & prophets)

- It makes no sense to say "God will speak to us through Joseph Smith after the last days"

(3) He is God's heir

2b whom he hath appointed heir of all things.

If Jesus is the Son of God, then He is the heir of all that God possesses

Firstborn & Only Begotten - They are not necessarily chronological terms at all; they are a term of legal right. The firstborn has the right to inheritance.

Psalm 89:27 - 27 Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.

Psalm 2:8 - Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

(4) He is God's creator

by whom also he made the worlds;

- Christ is responsible for creating the very concepts of time, space, force, action, and matter.
- Jesus had the ability to create and that set Him apart from us. If anyone can create, that's God; it has to be. You and I can't create.
- As Creator, he is the originator of everything. He is superior to everything because He has created everything.

(5) He is the radiance of God's glory

3 Who being the brightness of his glory,

- No one can really see God at any time. The only radiance that reaches us from God is mediated to us through Jesus Christ.
- Just as the radiance of the sun reaches this earth, so in Christ the glorious light of God shines into the hearts of men and women.

(6) He is God's exact expression

and the express image of his person.

- Christ was not only God manifest. He was God in substance.
- Express image of his person -> the exact expression of his essence
 - This is the only usage of the Greek word "character in the New Testament". It stood for an engraving tool that would make exact copies of the mould on coins and things like that. The engraving was an exact expression of the mould. They were identical in every way. Jesus is an exact expression of the Father (identical in their nature in every way)

(7) He is God's sustainer of all things

and upholding all things by the word of his power.

- Everything in the universe is sustained right now by Jesus Christ. And scientists who think they're discovering great and fantastic truths are doing nothing but discovering the sustaining laws that Jesus Christ uses to control the world, whenever they discover scientific principle.

(8) He is God's redeemer

when he had by himself purged our sins.

Here we move from Jesus' cosmic functions to His personal relationship with us as both our high priest and perfect sacrifice. In doing so, He has accomplished the greatest feat in the story of the universe (the redemption of humanity).

(9) He is at God's right hand

sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

The location here denotes the exaltation and supremacy of Christ.

The act of sitting denotes that Christ's redemptive work is done and completed.

Jesus is greater! That is my Savior. That is my King. That is my God. That is who we worship today. That is what life is all about.

You think the Old Covenant is great? We have a new covenant and it's better because God's very Son has mediated it to us.

B.) The Comparison of Jesus (1:4-14)

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

- Being made -> having become
- So much better -> so much superior
 - Used 13 times in Hebrews
 - inferring at one time that He had been lower than the angels, and that's exactly what it says in chapter 2, verse 9. (not lower in essence or nature, but lower in position)
- Why is the author comparing Jesus to the angels?
 - Jewish beliefs about angels
 - They were the highest created beings in the universe
 - They acted as mediators between God and men
 - They brought them the old covenant from God
 - And this, above everything else, exalted the angels in the mind of the Jews, the children of Israel. They believed that the angels were the mediators of their covenant with God;

that angels kept the administration running between them and God, all the time, and so they had a lofty view of angels.

- Acts 7:51-53 - 51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. 52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: 53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.
- Galatians 3:19 - 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.
- There were some that engaged in angel worship - Colossians 2:18 - Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels...
- Angels are powerful, and angels did act as mediators, and angels did brings us the old covenant, but we there is one who is more powerful, who is a better mediator, of a better covenant and his name is Jesus.
- The author is going to set out to prove the superiority of the Messiah and his covenant to the angels and their covenant by using guess what? The Old Testament. In these ten verses (4-14), our author provides seven Old Testament passages to support his claim that Jesus > Angels.

(1) His name is greater than the angels

...as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?

(Psalm 2:7 - 7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.)

- - The angels may have been collectively called "the sons of God" but no one of them is ever called the Son of God
 - Begotten - this is a reference to position, to exaltation
 - This is written by David as the ground of his confidence in the face of the plottings of his enemies, but, like much else that was said with regard to the Davidic dynasty in its early days, it was believed in later days that these words would be most fully

realized in the Messiah of David's line who would rise up in the time of fulfillment.

- Philippians 2:9-11 - 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
 - There was a positional exaltation foreordained for the Son that would come to fruition following the humiliation of the cross and the glory of the resurrection. He was crucified as a criminal. He was raised in power and exalted as the Son of God.

And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

(2 Samuel 7:12-14 - 12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:)

- Although David's immediate successor Solomon did build a temple for God, the divine promises made to David regarding his son and heir were not exhausted in Solomon. The later prophets looked forward to a greater son of David.

2.) His worship is greater than the angels

6 And again, [1] when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world (at the incarnation), he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

(Psalm 97:7 - Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.)

- The Hebrew word for gods is elohim which can in certain circumstances be in reference to angels (e.g. Psalm 8:5; Hebrews 2:7)
 - The Psalmist is condemning those who worship false idols, and then in contrast calling on the angels to worship the true God.
- The prior two quotations describe Jesus as the Son of God. This quotation describes Him as worshipped by angels.
- Despite the fact that the Son is positionally lower than the angels in his incarnation, he is still worthy of their worship in his nature.

3.) His nature is greater than the angels

7 And of [2] the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

(Psalm 104:4 - 4 Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:)

- They are "His" created servants
- They're swift, powerful, and invisible like wind as agents of God's will. They're destructive like fire as agents of God's wrath

8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness [3] is the sceptre of thy kingdom. 9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

(Psalm 45:6-7 -

6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. 7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.)

- On one hand you have the created servants, and on the other you have eternal God. He is eternal God that rules in righteousness who has been anointed by the Father with the oil of gladness above the angels.
 - The forty fifth Psalm celebrates a royal wedding. The poet addresses first the bridegroom and then the bride. To Hebrew poets and prophets a prince of the house of David was the viceregent of Israel's God. He belonged to a dynasty to which God had made special promises bound up with the accomplishment of his purpose in the world. Furthermore, what was only partially true of any of the historic rulers of David's line, or even of David himself, would be realized in its fulness when that son of David appeared in whom all the promises and ideals associated with that dynasty would be embodied. Jesus can be addressed as not merely the Son of God, but also as God, for he is both the Messiah of David's line and also the radiance of God's glory and the very expression of His essence.

4.) His eternity is greater than the angels

10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: 11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

(Psalm 102:25-27 - 25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.)

- Creation comes and goes, but the Son has always been and will always be
 - This Psalm is described in its superscription as a prayer of one afflicted when he is faint and pours out his complaint before Yahweh.
- As one man in his lifetime outlives many successive suits of clothes, so God has seen and will yet see many successive material generations, but he himself is eternal and unchanging.
- The angels are created. The Son is eternal.
 - Why is this Psalm applied to the Son by the author?
 - As shown in verse 2, the Son is involved in God's creative work
 - In the Septuagint version of Psalm 102, God is speaking in verses 25 and addresses the Lord involved in creating the universe. Who else could this be referring to other than the Son?

5.) His destiny is greater than the angels

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

(Psalm 110:1 - The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.)

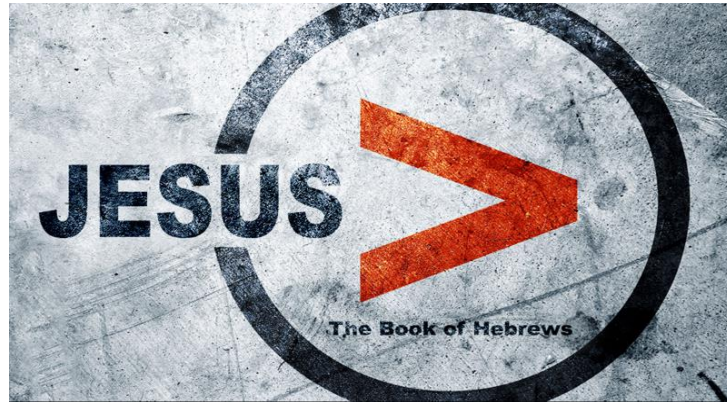
- Jesus' destiny is sitting down exalted positionally at the right hand of the Father. That's the destiny of the Son. The destiny of angels is in verse 14. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Jesus reigns, that's His destiny, they serve, and they'll keep serving forever, those who are the heirs of salvation. That's us. Isn't that great? The angels are going to serve us forever. All of them, the highest angels as well as the lowest are but servants of God that minister to us as believers.
 - This passage was commonly interpreted as a Messianic Psalm in the first century.
 - The words "sit at my right hand" which by common consent were addressed to the Messiah, must be regarded as addressed to Jesus, the apostles claimed, since his death and resurrection had shown that he was the Messiah. Indeed, at His trial, Jesus Himself told His judges that they would see the Son of Man

seated at the right hand of the Almighty. This claim, condemned as blasphemy by the Sanhedrin was held by the apostles to have been vindicated by the subsequent act of God in raising Jesus from the dead.

Your whole life you've been taught and consumed by the Old Covenant. You've lived it. You've loved it. You've studied it....But I'm telling you, there's a new covenant, and it hasn't replaced the Old. It's fulfilled it. And the mediator of that covenant is not a created servant. It's THE Son of God, worshipped by angels, called God by the Father, eternal in nature, at the right hand of the Father. JESUS IS GREATER.

Application (that's my Jesus and that's your Jesus):

- Jesus is greater than the **uncertainty** in your life
- Jesus is greater than the **fears** you tremble at
- Jesus is greater than the **discouragement** you face
- Jesus is greater than the **persecution** you face
- Jesus is greater than the **weakness** of your flesh
- Jesus is greater than the **division** that threatens our unity
- We need to get back to Jesus through prayer and the word



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 1 - HEBREWS 1:1-14

READING	STUDY QUESTION
M Read Hebrews 1:1-3	What are the attributes of Jesus listed in verses 1-3, and how do they affect me personally?
T Read Psalm 2:7, 2 Samuel 7:13-14, Psalm 97:7, Psalm 104:4, Psalm 45:6-7, and Psalm 105:25-27	What do these Old Testament passages say about Messiah, and how does Jesus fit into the Old Testament?
W Read Hebrews 1:4-14	How is Jesus greater than the angels, and how should that affect the way I worship him this week?
T Read Hebrews 2:1-8	What is this passage saying?
F Read Hebrews 2:1-8	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 2:1-8

REVIEW

4 Parts to the Book of Hebrews

- Jesus > Angels
- Jesus > Moses
- Jesus > Priests
- Call to Faith in Jesus

Jesus Nature > Angels Nature (Hebrews 1:1-14)

- The Greatness of Jesus (1:1-3)
 - (1) He is God's Son (1:2)
 - (2) He is God's mouthpiece (1:2)
 - (3) He is God's heir (1:2)
 - (4) He is God's creator (1:2)
 - (5) He is the radiance of God's glory (1:3)
 - (6) He is God's exact expression (1:3)
 - (7) He is God's sustainer (1:3)
 - (8) He is God's redeemer (1:3)
 - (9) He is at God's right hand (1:3)
- The Comparison of Jesus (1:4-14)
 - (1) His name is greater than the angels (1:5)
 - (2) His worship is greater than the angels (1:6)
 - (3) His nature is greater than the angels (1:7-9)
 - (4) His eternity is greater than the angels (1:10-12)
 - (5) His destiny is greater than the angels (1:13-14)

Based on chapter 1's evidence that Jesus' nature > Angels' nature, therefore,

SERMON

1.) Jesus' Message > Angels' Message (2:1-18)

A.) The comparison of the message (2:1-4)

Message of the Old Covenant mediated by angels vs the message of the New Covenant mediated by God's Son

(1) A call to respond (vs. 1)

2 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

- If Jesus as the mediator of the new covenant > Angels who were the mediators of the old covenant, then we ought to pay even greater attention to his message.

- Give the more earnest heed - sometimes used in reference to tying up a ship (anchor yourselves to the truths you've believed)
- Lest at any time we should let them slip - sometimes used in reference to a ship carelessly drifting away from harbor
 - Most men don't dive into the condemnation of Hell. They drift into it over time. Many who hear the gospel don't outright reject it in defiance. They just don't really do anything with it, and they drift into condemnation.
 - If you are here this morning, but you have never made the decision to trust in Christ as your personal Savior, my friend, you're right there. You're in the harbor. Make the decision! Fasten the knot! Don't drift into Hell because you were casual about the message of salvation from Jesus Christ.
- This warning is directed to the group as a whole of which there are many different types of people
 - Illustration - Looking out at the crowd & saying we must recommit ourselves to the faith. Don't abandon the faith
 - Addressing it to everyone, but I'm really speaking to two groups in different ways
 - Believers - an encouragement to continue in faith (something you will do if you're a genuine believer)
 - Intellectually Convinced (religious but unsaved) - warning & a plea to make that commitment
 - I address everyone because I don't know who is who

(2) The consequences of a wrong response (vs. 2-4)

2 For if the word spoken by angels (Old Covenant) was steadfast (sure or certain), and every transgression (sin of commission) and disobedience (sin of omission - man not listening) received a just recompense of reward;

- If the consequences of disregarding the Old Covenant were certain and severe, don't you think the consequences would be even more severe for disregarding the New Covenant?

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

- How shall we escape - If no one got away with breaking the covenant brought by angels, you don't think you're going to get away with breaking the covenant brought by our Lord himself, do you?
 - In the Old Covenant there were many laws with many punishments. In the New Covenant, our chief responsibility is to believe on Jesus Christ as our Lord & Savior. However, the punishment for rejecting that one responsibility is far more severe than the punishment for rejecting the OT Jewish laws.
 - There is no escape. There is no reprieve There is no second chance for those who reject the salvation provided through Christ's death on the cross.
 - Hebrews 9:27

- John 3:36 - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him
- 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9
- At the first began to be spoken by the Lord - Jesus was the initial preacher of the gospel
- Confirmed unto us by them that heard him - These were second generation Christians. They hadn't heard from Jesus himself, but they had been taught the gospel by apostles and missionaries that had heard Him.

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

- The gospel was spoken by Christ, but confirmed by God.
 - Jesus preached and did miracles to back up his message. The greatest miracle that ever occurred was the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That single miracle is the bedrock foundation upon which the why of our faith is built.
 - Those miracles continued through the lives of the apostles in the early church to reconfirm the message they preached.
 - The message was confirmed by miracles and by miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (listed in 1 Cor 12 & Romans 12). Miraculous gifts would include healings, tongues, interpretation of tongues, miracles.
 - The purpose of the miracles was to confirm the revelation of the New Testament. Once the revelation stopped, the miracles stopped as a routine part of the church life. How do you know that?
 - Hebrews 2:3 - message was confirmed (aorist - not being confirmed),
 - Signs, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost are all lumped together and referenced in the past tense as completed actions with no continuance into the future as of the writing of Hebrews (no later than AD 70)
 - The purpose of signs was to confirm the message
 - Acts 2:22 - the message of Jesus was approved among the Jews by miracles and wonders and signs
 - Acts 14:3 - the Lord granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands to give testimony unto their word
 - 2 Corinthians 12:12 - the signs of the apostles were wrought among you
 - Ephesians 2:20 - the apostles and prophets were foundational to the church
 - Miraculous sign gifts are only mentioned in the earlier New Testament books like the gospels and Acts (even in act no reference occurs of it after 19:6). Most of the books, in fact, do not mention it. Paul mentions it only in 1 Corinthians, and James, Peter, John, & Jude make no mention of it at all.

- Augustine (354-430): "In the earliest times, 'the Holy Ghost fell upon them that believed; and they spake with tongues,' which they had not learned, 'as the Spirit gave them utterance' [Acts 2:4]. These were signs adapted to the time. For there behooved to be that betokening of the Holy Spirit in all tongues, to shew that the Gospel of God was to run through all tongues over the whole earth. That thing was done for a betokening, and it passed away" (Homilies on the First Epistle of John 6.10).

What's your point with all of this? Jesus' message was greater than the angel's message, and there is no escape for those who reject it. It was preached by Jesus. It was taught to us by his followers. It was confirmed by God through miracles that Jesus and the early church did.

- Have you accepted that message of salvation by faith? Have you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior? There is no escape from the judgment of God on your sin if you haven't.
- Have you shared that message with anyone this week? This month? Since Covid hit?
 - We've got gospel tracts in the back (we're working on getting some new ones in)
 - You've got a phone
 - You've got messenger

There's no escape. There's no escape.

B.) The comparison of Jesus (2:5-18)

(1) His dominion is greater than the angels (2:5-8)

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

- Angels administrate over the present world, but that will not be the case for the world to come. How do you know that angels administrate over the present world?
 - Daniel 10:20 references an angel battling the angelic "Prince of Persia" and "Prince of Greece" (angels connected with the administration of these nations)
 - Daniel 10:21 & 12:1 references Michael the archangel "The Great Prince" who champions the people of Israel (he administrates over the nation of Israel)
 - Ephesians 6:12 - For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
 - Military terms for rank & file battalions of a spiritual army
 - Ephesians 3:10 - references principalities and powers in heavenly places

- The angels administrate over this fallen world, but they will not do so in the world to come.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?

- All throughout the book of Hebrews, the author never really names an OT author. Why? Because what matters to him and his readers is the ultimate author, which is the Holy Spirit.
- Made in reference to Psalm 8:4-8
 - Psalm 8:4-8

4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

- This is David talking to God. God, what is man that you would be so good to him?
- It is as the true representative of humanity that Christ is viewed as fulfilling the language of the psalm, and as fulfilling therewith the declared purpose of the Creator when he brought the human race into being. As mankind's true representative (the second Adam), accordingly, he shared in the conditions inseparable from the human condition so he could blaze the trail of salvation for mankind and act effectively as his people's high priest in the presence of God (Bruce).

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

- How is man lower than the angels?
 - Temporarily
 - Luke 20:33-36 - 33 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. 34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: 35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: 36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.
 - In our physical, non-glorified nature
- Thou crownedst him with glory and honour - when God made Adam pure and innocent, He gave him honor and glory in his position. He was exalted over the earth. He was created to rule over the earth!

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

- Put all things in subjection under his feet - kings in those days were always elevated above the people, and the people they ruled were always below them, and it was stated as such that the people were under their feet. The king was way up here, and you were always under their feet.
- God's original design was for man to have complete dominion over the earth
 - Genesis 1:27-28 - 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.
- But now we see not yet all things put under him - God's original design for man was for him to rule and reign over the earth in dominion. But then Adam fell, and man lost everything. Prior to the fall, the earth was subjected to man, and the earth supplied all of man's needs without man doing anything. All man had to do was just to accept the earth as it provided his needs. And then man sinned, and now we see not yet all things put under him.
- God's ultimate destiny for mankind is to reign (underneath the direction of the divine Son of Man) in the world to come.
 - Daniel 7:18 - 18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.
 - Daniel 7:27 - And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.
 - Revelation 5:9-10 - 9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.
 - Revelation 20:4 - And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:3 - 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

If man is not in dominion over the earth, and if man is currently lower than the angels, and if man is lost in sin, how can he be restored? How can he one day rule the earth? How can he be redeemed from his fallenness? Look at verse 9.

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

- Jesus

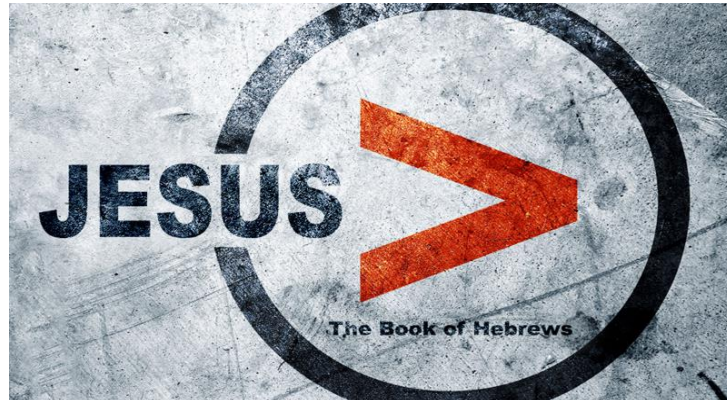
- Jesus is the answer to the problem of man's fallenness.
- Jesus is greater than the angels in his dominion.
- Angels administrate in the present fallen world, but Jesus will rule and reign in the world to come, and through His death on the cross He has purchased redemption for mankind so that those who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior may rule and reign underneath him.

Invitation:

The message of Jesus > greater than the message of the angels. There's no escape.

Have you accepted that message?

What are you doing with that message?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 2 - HEBREWS 2:1-8

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 2:1-4	How should this passage affect my fervency in sharing the gospel, and how can I be a better witness in the weeks to come?
T	Read Psalm 8:4-8	What is the believer's ultimate destiny in the world to come? What happened that caused man to fall from his dominion in the book of Genesis?
W	Read Hebrews 2:5-9	How did Jesus redeem man from his fallenness?
T	Read Hebrews 2:9-18	What is this passage saying?
F	Read Hebrews 2:9-18	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 2:9-18

REVIEW

Part 1 - compares the mediator of the New Covenant with the mediator of the Old Covenant

Chapter 1 - Jesus' Nature > Angels' Nature

Chapter 2 - Jesus' Message > Angels' Message

- Verses 1-4 - compared the message
- Verses 5-18 - comparing Jesus with the angels again
 - Vs 5-8 - his dominion is greater than the angels

There was a mental block that was a problems for Jews with Jesus.

A man being God was a foreign concept to the Jewish mindset.

Illustration - if someone walked in the back of the auditorium and claimed to be God, what would it take for you to believe him?

How can Jesus be greater if as a man he was lower than the angels?

- He was a man
- He died

The author is going to take the remainder of the chapter and show how Jesus was greater in His lowered state.

(2) His lowering is greater than the angels (2:9-18)

1.) He became lower to repossess dominion over the earth

Despite the fact that he was lower than the angels, Jesus did something that no angel could do.

Background

- Man was crowned with glory and honor and given dominion over the earth (vs. 7)
- Man fell in the garden, forfeited that right, and Satan usurped that authority (Genesis 2-3)
- Jesus comes to earth as the second Adam (where Adam failed, Jesus restores)

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man

- The second Adam dies, and through His death, burial, and resurrection, He is crowned with glory and honor. The second Adam receives the dominion that the first Adam lost.

Jesus came down into our humanity and fix a problem that no other man could fix

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

- Bringing many sons unto glory - Through salvation, we are brought unto glory. What does that mean?
 - We are brought into the glory of the presence of God
 - Because Jesus repossessed the dominion over the earth that Adam lost in the garden, in the world to come we will rule and reign underneath Jesus in glory.

Jesus in His lowered state was greater than the angels. Why? Because in His humanity, he did something no angel could do. He restored dominion over the earth to mankind.

- Christ is the pioneer of our salvation. He has blazed the trail of salvation so that God's many sons could be brought to glory. [F. F. Bruce. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Kindle Location 1010). Kindle Edition.]
 - The word always means somebody who does something that somebody else enters into.
 - A man who founds a family and others are born into it
 - A man who founds a city in which others come to live
 - A man who blazed a trail for others to follow (Jesus made a way to God for us to follow)
 - Illustration - unscalable mountain with God at the top. Man is separated. Jesus came down from the top of the mountain and made a way for us to be with God.
- "Perfect through sufferings" - not perfect in nature, but perfectly suited as our representative

2.) He became lower to die for every man

that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

- In tasting death for every man, Christ's death has provided a path to redemption for each and every one of us.
- Death was the reason Jesus became a man! It was no accident. Though it was humiliating, it is also glorious in another way.

Ezekiel 18:20 - the soul that sinneth, it shall die...

Romans 5:12 - Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Why is the punishment so severe?

- The crime is so severe
 - We don't realize how much we sin, because we're neck deep in it
 - Isaiah 64:6
 - Romans 3:10
 - When you live in filth, you get used to filth, and you don't think you're filthy
 - The seriousness of sin is best illustrated by what it cost to redeem us

Christ died so that we would not have to.

Illustration - king's tester drinking before the king and dying in his place

Jesus in His lowered state, was greater than the angels. Why? Because His death was no accident. He did something no angel could do. He came to die for every man.

3.) He became lower to make us brothers

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

- Both the one who makes us holy (Jesus) and the ones who have been made holy (that's us as believers) are of one. - We as believers are all part of the family of God
- This verse refers to Jesus as sort of an older brother. This does not mean that we are equal to Him, but it does mean that we're family with Him.
- When it talks about us being holy and us being the children of God, it's not talking about practice but position.
 - I may not always act holy, but in Christ I am.
 - I may not always like a child of God, but in Christ I am.
 - Who I am in Christ and how I act in Christ don't always align.
 - Spiritual growth in this life is the journey of bringing how I act in Christ (practice) into line with who I am in Christ (position). I am a child of God, but do I act like it? I am holy, but do I live holy?

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

- Psalm 22:22- 22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.
- Here you have a picture of Jesus Christ calling believers brother in the Old Testament.
- Psalm 22 was a well known Messianic Psalm in the first century. In its opening verse we see the opening words "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"...the same words Christ used in his suffering on the cross. In fact, this Psalm is a fantastic prophetic proof text for the crucifixion of Christ.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

- In the first part of Psalm 22, you have the crucifixion of Jesus. In the second half, you have Jesus standing in the midst of the church talking to his brethren and praising God. What happens inbetween? The resurrection.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

- Isaiah 8:17-18

17 And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

- This is Christ talking in the Old Testament. He's saying here that He lives by faith. The path the Jesus as our pioneer forged to God was one of faith.
- In the context of this quotation, Isaiah, finding that his oracles of salvation and judgment meet with no response from either king or people, seals them up and hands them over to his disciples for safekeeping, in order that, when their fulfilment comes, it may be made apparent that what he had spoken was the true word of God. [F. F. Bruce. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Kindle Locations 1041-1043). Kindle Edition.]
- God's hiding of his face from the house of Jacob provides the link with Ps. 22, where his face is hidden from the righteous sufferer who (in the Christian interpretation) is the representative of the whole house of Jacob, enduring the dereliction which was due to them. [F. F. Bruce. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Kindle Locations 1044-1046). Kindle Edition.]
- If Isaiah, one of the prophets through whom God of old time spoke to the fathers, was rejected by those to whom he came, so was the Son in whom God more recently spoke his final word; if Isaiah nonetheless maintained his trust in God and waited for vindication from him, so did the Son of God.

18 Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

- Here once again, this is Christ talking in the Old Testament. The children of God given to Christ would live the same way as Messiah did: by faith. Just as Messiah forged a path to God by faith, so those

who follow his trail and become children of God and brothers of Christ would do so by faith.

- The reason these two verses are separated by "And again" is that two different points are being made.
- The people might pay no heed to Isaiah's oracles, but so long as Isaiah himself went about in Jerusalem, he was an abiding witness to the message of God which had been conveyed through him. [F. F. Bruce. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Kindle Locations 1059-1060). Kindle Edition.]
- That the Son of God's confidence in his Father had been vindicated by his exaltation was not yet a matter of public manifestation; it had been revealed to believers and was proclaimed by them as part of their witness. But the life and witness of these believers-members of the family of Christ-was was a token to the world that it had not seen or heard the last of Jesus of Nazareth. If he represented his people at the right hand of God, they represented him on earth. Isaiah's words about his children might therefore be understood in an extended sense as the words of Christ about his people [F. F. Bruce. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Kindle Locations 1063-1066). Kindle Edition.]
 - The description of Christians as the "children" of Christ is peculiar to this epistle among the New Testament writings; yet Old Testament precedent for it might be found not only in the words of Isa. 8:18 but in a statement about the Suffering Servant in Isa. 53:10: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed. [F. F. Bruce. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Kindle Locations 1067-1069). Kindle Edition.]

Jesus in His lowered state was greater than the angels. Why? Because in His humanity he did something no angel could do, he made a way for us to be part of the family of God.

4.) He became lower to defeat the devil

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

- In order to become like us (as believers), he took on human flesh and blood. And he did so to destroy the devil and his greatest weapon: death.
- How did he defeat Satan? How did he defeat death? He died.

Revelation 1:18 - I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

- Mankind never could have restored dominion to itself over the earth, but Jesus in his humanity could. Mankind never could have defeated death, but Jesus in his humanity could.
- Death is Satan's ultimate weapon. Satan's hold on men was death. Physical death, spiritual death, eternal death, but death, death, death.
- The fear of death is a powerful motivator. It causes the best of men to do things they never would have thought capable of themselves.
 - Yet Christ's death has changed the meaning of death for us. (no longer judgment, but joy)
 - He died and He rose and He lives. If we are a part of the family of God, we too will die and rise and live.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:19-23 - 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.
 - Philippians 1:21 - for to me to live is Christ and to die is gain (promotion)
 - Martyrs would say, "You can't threaten me with heaven."

Jesus in His lowered state was greater than the angels. Why? Because in His humanity, he defeated Satan and destroyed death.

5.) He became lower to be our high priest

16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

- Christ did not come to redeem angels. He came to redeem us, so he became like us.
 - Galatians 3:7 tells us that it is people of faith that are the true children of Abraham. We as believers are the spiritual children of Abraham.
 - To become like us, to redeem us, to be our high priest, Jesus took on himself the same nature that we have: a human nature. He was a physical descendant of Abraham that came to earth to redeem us, the spiritual offspring of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

- Priest - represents man before God
- Jesus became like us in our humanity so that he could:
 - Save us
 - He did for us what we could not do for ourselves

- Because he was like us and without sin, he was perfectly qualified to be our high priest, but he wasn't just the priest. He was the sacrifice as well.
 - Sympathize with us
- Any priest must be one with those whom he represents before God, and this is equally so with Christ as his people's high priest.⁸⁵ In order to serve them in this capacity, he was obliged to become completely like his brothers and sisters—apart from sin, of course, as is pointed out below (4:15). He suffered with them and for them, and through his sufferings was made perfect—qualified in every way to be their high priest. He is merciful because through his own sufferings and trials he can sympathize with theirs; he is faithful because he endured to the end without faltering.⁸⁶ [F. F. Bruce. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Kindle Locations 1113-1116). Kindle Edition.]
- The purpose of his incarnation was that through his death he might "make atonement for the people's sins"—do in effective reality what the sacrificial ritual of Old Testament times could do only in a token form. A high priest who has actually, and not merely in symbolism, removed his people's sins, and therewith the barrier which their sins erected between themselves and God, is a high priest worth having.⁸⁸ [F. F. Bruce. The Epistle to the Hebrews (Kindle Locations 1122-1124). Kindle Edition.]

But He didn't just become like us to save us. He became like us to sympathize with us.

18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

- In the midst of every trial and temptation we ever face, Jesus knows what we are going through and we can come to him for help.
 - Whatever you are going through, Jesus has been through it and come out the other side victorious.
 - He is not only a faithful high priest but a merciful one as well.

Jesus in His lowered state was greater than the angels. Why? Because in His humanity, He did something that no angel could. He became our high priest so that He could save us and sympathize with us.

The lowering of Jesus is an example for us to follow, and it's an indictment on our own vanity and pride when we don't.

Philippians 2:3-8 -

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

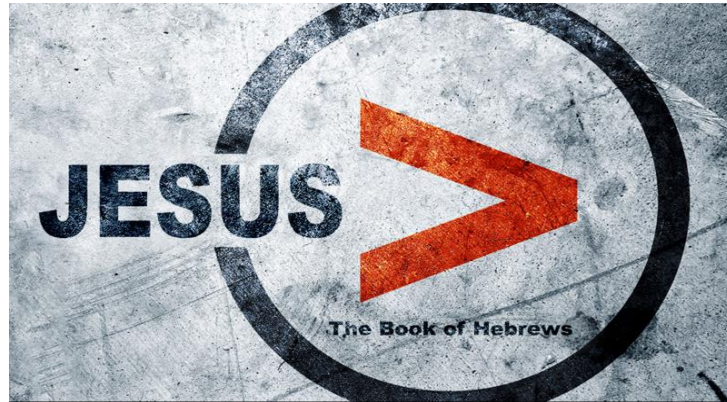
6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Application - are you willing to be humble? Will you treat people with that kind of mentality this week?

If we want God to use us, we need to lower ourselves. Our world right now needs some lowly Christians.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 3 - HEBREWS 2:9-18

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 2:9-10	For what two reasons did Jesus lower Himself in these verses? How does His lowering in these verses affect me personally?
T	Read Hebrews 2:11-13	What does it mean to be a part of the family of God? How can I better align how I act in Christ with who I am in Christ this week?
W	Read Hebrews 2:14-18	What are the final two reasons that Jesus lowered Himself in these verses? Take some time to praise Him for what He did for you.
T	Read Hebrews 3:1-6	What is this passage saying?
F	Read Hebrews 3:1-6	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 3:1-19

Review:

Jesus > Angels (chapters 1-2)

Jesus > Moses (chapters 3-4)

Sermon:

1.) Jesus' Position > Moses' Position (vs. 1-6)

1.) The Connection to Moses (vs. 1-2)

1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

- Wherefore
 - Based on the fact that Jesus is greater than the angels in every conceivable way
- Two designations of believers
 - Holy brothers - part of the family of God
 - Partakers of the heavenly calling - citizen of the abode of God (this world is not my home)
- Two designations of Christ
 - Apostle - messenger/prophet (communicates to man from God)
 - High Priest - communicates to God for man

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

- "who was faithful to him that appointed him"
 - Jesus was faithful in delivering the message of salvation. (Apostle)
 - Jesus was faithful in His perfect sacrifice for sin. (High Priest)
- "as also Moses was faithful in all his house"
 - It's uncommon in the OT for someone to both intercede to God for man and to communicate to man from God. (messenger to man; advocate to God)
 - Messenger to Man
 - Numbers 12:7-8 - 7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. 8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold:
 - God spoke directly to Moses
 - Moses was faithful in his house. His house was God's house (talking about Israel).
 - Advocate to God
 - Illustration - Moses advocates to God for Israel after the golden calf (Exodus 32:11-14, 31)

- Illustration - Moses advocated to God for Israel after the bad report from the spies in Canaan (Numbers 14:13-19)
- The author connects Moses and Jesus before he compares them

Moses

- Escaped death as a child through God's providence
- Adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter
- Raised in the wealth and prominence of the Egyptian palace
- Chose the affliction of God's people over the pleasures of sin
- Conducted the 10 plagues
- Led millions of Jews out of the slavery of Egypt
- Parted the Red Sea
- Wrote the Law (author of the Old Covenant)
- Led Israel through the wilderness on their journey to the Promised Land
- Hits the rock and water comes out
- Splits the earth open to swallow up the rebellious Dathan and Abiram
- Who was greater? Christ or Moses?

2.) The Comparison to Moses

A.) The builder is greater than the house.

3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

- Illustration - Just as the pioneer is worthy of more honor than the trail. Just as the founder of a city is worthy of more honor than the city, so the originator/builder of the house is worthy of more honor than the house.
- Moses was a servant of the household of Israel. He was exalted to a place of leadership within the house because of his faithfulness, but he was still a part of the house.
- Who is the builder of the house?
 - According to this verse it's Jesus.
 - Jesus built the house of Israel.

4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

- Although physical houses and physical households are built by man, God is the ultimate builder of all things.
- Who is the builder of the house?
 - According this verse it's God.
 - How is that possible? Jesus is God.

B.) The Son is greater than the servant.

5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

- Moses was a servant in his house (Israel)

- For a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after - Moses was a servant pointing people to something greater down the road
 - Deuteronomy 18:15- 15 The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;
 - John 5:46 - For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.

6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

- Moses is the servant who labored in his house. Christ rules over his house as the Son. The Son is greater than the servant. The servant was pointing people to the son.
- MAJOR CONCEPT
 - Whose house are we
 - Believers comprise the household of God
 - Ephesians 2:19 - Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;
 - 1 Peter 2:4-5a - To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house,...
 - If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.
 - One of the marks of being a genuine part of the household of God is a faith that endures. Those who leave the faith were never really a part of the family of God
 - 1 John 2:19 - They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.
 - 2 John 9 - Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.
 - This is the lens through which we see the warning passages in Hebrews.
 - The author is addressing a community of Hebrew Christians (some of which are for real believers, some of which are not).
 - He's encouraging them to continue and warning them about falling away.
 - How do you know who is who?
 - Those who were genuine believers heeded the warnings and continued.
 - Those who were never really saved fell away.
 - Illustration - parable of the seed and the sower
 - Wayside - fowls devour it

- Rocky ground - springs up, but withers because of no root
- Thorny ground - springs up, but the thorns choke it
- Good ground - bears fruit
- You shall know them by their fruit. You shall know them by the endurance of their faith.
 - Hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end!

The author is going to give this community of Hebrew Christians a warning by appealing to a familiar Old Testament precedent.

2.) Jesus' Exodus > Moses' Exodus (vs. 7-19)

1.) The Exodus of Israel (vs. 7-11)

There's a typology in the Bible that compares Christ's work on the cross in the New Testament with Israel's exodus in the Old Testament.

- In Luke 9:31, Moses & Elijah are talking with Jesus at His transfiguration and they're discussing Jesus' death (but the Greek word they use for his death is exodus)
- In 1 Cor. 5:7 Christ is called our Passover sacrifice
 - Recall that the Passover preceded Israel's exodus
- In 1 Peter 1:19 Jesus is referred to as the lamb without blemish and without spot
- In 1 Corinthians 10, Israel's passage through the Red Sea is referenced as an allusion to New Testament baptism. Israel's consumption of spiritual meat and drink is compared to the New Testament practice of communion.
- You see this typology explicitly laid out in chapters 3-4 of Hebrews.

Jesus is our Passover sacrifice. Egypt is a picture of sin or the world. Jesus saves us from our sin. He guides us through the wilderness of this life. At the end of this life's journey there is a Promised Land of eternal rest for the believer in heaven.

Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

11 So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

- Psalm 95:7b-11 - ...To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 When your

fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

- The first half of this Psalm is a call to worship God (vs. 1-7a). The second half is a warning against disobeying him, reinforced by a reminder of what happened to Israel in the wilderness for disobedience (vs. 7b-11).
 - David is writing this 1000 years after the Exodus.
- The pinnacle of Israel's rebellion - the spies at Kadesh-barnea (Numbers 13-14)
 - 2 brought back good reports; 10 brought back bad reports
 - They did not believe God could deliver the Promised Land into their hands
 - They wanted to stone Moses & Aaron.
 - They wanted to go back to Egypt.
 - God sentences almost an entire generation to death in the wilderness because of their unbelief and their turning away.

The Israelites who did not enter the Promised Land left Egypt physically, but they didn't leave Egypt spiritually. The mark of those who truly left Egypt was them entering into the Promised Land. The mark of those who did not truly leave Egypt was falling short of the Promised Land in unbelief. The same is true of us believers. The mark of those who have genuinely been saved is that their faith endures through the journey of this life.

Don't quit. Don't turn away. Don't give up.

There will be spiritual casualties of the coronavirus. Don't be one of them.

2.) The comparison to the believer

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

- Examine your own hearts
- The consequence in rejecting Christ is far greater than the consequence in rejecting Moses.
 - Death in the wilderness vs death in hell
 - No entry into the promised land vs no entry into heaven
- An evil heart of unbelief comes when you are so close to accepting Christ and you allow your tender heart to become hard.
 - Hebrews 10:38 - 38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- The mutual encouragement of the church is one of the chief tools we have in combatting sin, discouragement, and unbelief.
 - When someone we know tests positive for Covid - our first reaction ought not to be panic, but prayer.
 - Hebrews 10:25 - Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
 - We should be encouraging one another as believers to continue in the faith, and we should be encouraging those who are almost believers to commit to the faith

Application - every week take one person in the directory and call them to encourage them

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

- We are made - or we have become
- The mark of a genuine believer is perseverance

3.) The consequences of turning away

15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

- The author is once again quoting Psalm 95:7b-8a
 - Any time the Holy Spirit says something twice you better listen.
- While it is said - as it is said

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

- Most of the Israelites rebelled against God in unbelief (with a few exceptions - Joshua & Caleb)

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

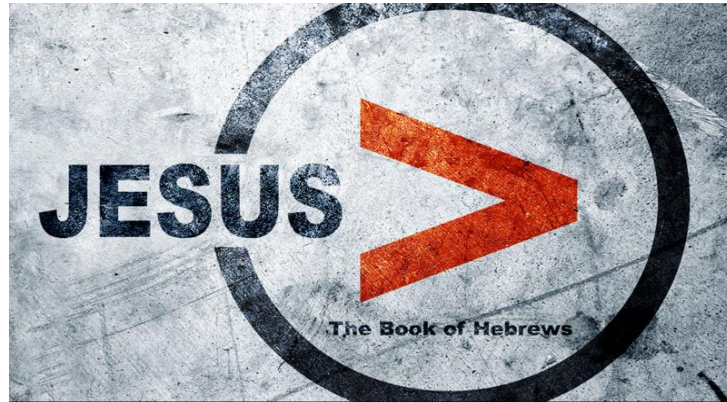
- Who was God grieved with forty years? It was that whole generation that sinned in unbelief.
- Whose carcasses fell in the wilderness
 - Their punishment was death in the wilderness.
 - Our punishment if we rebel in unbelief is death in Hell.
 - God still punishes unbelief.
 - They had physically left Egypt, but they hadn't really left Egypt.
 - Their body was in the wilderness, but their heart was in Egypt.
 - Don't let your body be in the church, but your heart be in the world.

18 And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

- Who did God **swear** would never step foot in the promised land? It was those who sinned in unbelief.
 - Their punishment was a refusal of entry into the Promised Land.
 - God swears today that our punishment if we rebel in unbelief is refusal of entry into heaven.
 - There is no second chance.

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

- They quit on God. They fell in unbelief. They turned away because they thought it would be easy. Canaan's going to be awesome and we'll just waltz right in.
 - The Christian life isn't easy.
 - Following Jesus Christ isn't easy.
 - Covid isn't easy.
 - Don't quit on God because it's not easy.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 4 - HEBREWS 3:1-19

READING	STUDY QUESTION
M Read Hebrews 3:1-6	How is Jesus compared and contrasted with Moses?
T Read Hebrews 3:7-11 and Psalm 95:7-11	How did Israel respond to God in the wilderness? Give examples. How should they have responded?
W Read Hebrews 3:12-19	What warning is here given to Christians? How should believers respond?
T Read Hebrews 4:1-14	What is this passage saying?
F Read Hebrews 4:1-14	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 4:1-13

Review:

Jesus > Moses

- His Position
 - Builder > House
 - Son > Servant
- His Exodus
 - Egypt is a picture of sin. Jesus saves us from our sin. He guides us through the wilderness of this life. There is a Promised Land of eternal rest for the believer in heaven.
 - Their exodus was physical. Our exodus is spiritual.

JESUS' REST > MOSES' REST

The rest of Canaan foreshadows a divine spiritual rest in heaven that comes by faith in Jesus Christ. It's a picture of heaven.

Sermon:

1.) The Qualifications for Rest (vs. 1-5)

1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

- Therefore - based on Israel's short fall in the wilderness
- Fear - be frightened or concerned
- What's the promise?
 - For Israel -> The Promised Land
 - For Believers -> The Promised Land (heaven)
- Any of you should seem to come short of it
 - Israel fell short of the Promised Land
 - It wasn't because they believed and then stopped believing. It was because they never believed in the first place.

- We can fall short of heaven
 - We don't fall short of heaven by believing and then stopping believing. We fall short because we never really believed in the first place.
 - Examine yourself - have you truly put your faith in Jesus?
 - If yes, then great. Continue on. You've got nothing to fear. Why? Because you can't lose your salvation.
 - If not, then you should be afraid. Why? Because you're so close to accepting Christ, but you're in imminent danger of falling short.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

- Gospel - good news
- The hearing of good news does no one any good unless it is received in faith when it is heard
- The qualification for rest is faith.
 - They heard over and over again that God would bring them into the promised land of rest, and time and time again they didn't believe
- Exodus 19:3-6 -

3 And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

 - They didn't believe!

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

- Do enter
 - It is a fact that those who believe, enter in God's rest. It doesn't say might enter.
 - Israel's problem wasn't that they believed and then stopped believing, it's that they never believed
- Psalm 95:11 -

11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

 - Once again, we see the seriousness with which God approaches unbelief. He swears that they will not enter into His rest.
- My rest - it's not merely the rest that God gives, but the rest that God enjoys (Genesis 2:2)
- Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world - God's rest has been available ever since His creative work was finished.
 - His rest continues and we are able to enter into that rest with Him on one condition - faith

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

- Genesis 2:2 - 2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.
- The author is quoting this verse to show that God's rest did not begin with Israel in the Promised Land but extends all the way back to creation

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

- Psalm 95:11 -
11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.
- The author quotes Psalm 95 to connect the heavenly rest of God in Genesis 2 with the warning of David in Psalm 95.
 - Israel rejected God in unbelief in the wilderness, and Israel did not enter the Promised Land of rest.
 - David warns not to make the same mistake again. He implies that they should believe God so that they might enter into God's rest. What was God's rest?
 - It couldn't have been the Promised Land because during David's time they were already in the Promised Land.
 - It must have been a greater rest - a heavenly rest with God. This is what the author of Hebrews is saying.
 - What's the qualification to enter into God's rest? Faith. It's always been faith.

2.) The Characteristics of Rest

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

A.) It is an available rest

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

- It remaineth that some must enter therein - if David was referencing this rest 1000 years after the Exodus, then there must be a greater rest available than the Promised Land...a greater rest that was available then and is available now today.
 - Promised Land - physical rest
 - Heaven - spiritual rest
- And they to who it was first preached...- Israel entered not in because of unbelief

- When Israel rebelled against God in the wilderness in unbelief, they missed out on the rest of the Promised Land, but they also missed out on this greater rest.

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

- Saying in David, Today, after so long a time - The warning against unbelief and the promise of a heavenly rest were still applicable in David's day, and guess what? They're still applicable today.
- However, they won't be available forever.
 - He limiteth a certain day - David doesn't say to respond to God tomorrow or next week or next month. He says to respond to God Today.
 - The rest of God is available today, but none of us are promised tomorrow.

B.) It is a heavenly rest

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

- Jesus is the Greek translation of the name Joshua. It's clear from the context that the author is referring to Joshua from the OT.
 - Joshua is certainly a type of Jesus.
- If Joshua had given Israel God's ultimate rest by bringing them into the Promised Land, then why was David still talking about God's rest 1000 years later when they were in the Promised Land?
 - It's because David was talking about a greater rest than the Promised Land, a heavenly rest.
 - God's ultimate rest is not in this life.
 - Have we had more conversations this year about earthly politics or God's kingdom?

C.) It is a future rest

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

- Joshua's rest was temporal and different from the true rest reserved for the people of God.
- Rest - sabbath keeping
 - And it involves an ultimate sense when we shall cease from all our works, rest completely as God did when He finished His creation. That's our Sabbath rest.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

- When God completed his work of creation, He rested. So His people, having completed their appointed work and life on earth, will enter into His rest.
- What is this rest like?
 - 11:10 - **10** For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

- 11:16 - **16** But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.
- Revelation 14:13 - And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

3.) The Encouragement to Rest

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

- Labor - give diligence
 - With intense purpose and concern enter into that rest
 - It's not the idea that you work your way to salvation, it's the idea that you diligently seek to keep your eyes on Jesus. Keep your eyes on the finish line.
- Examine yourself
 - Have you been saved by faith? Great. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Your salvation is secure. You can rest in that. Just keep your eyes on Jesus.
 - Have you not yet been saved by faith? Don't make the same mistake that Israel did where they saw the works of God and they were so close to responding in faith and entering into the Promised Land, but rebelled in unbelief.

Why should we examine ourselves and make sure of our salvation? Why should we continue on in faith and not turn away like the non believers do?

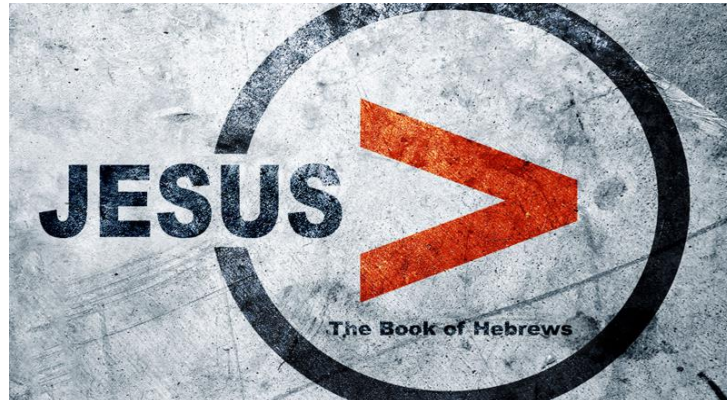
12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- The Word of God is not to be trifled with.
- The same Word that was rejected in unbelief by the Israelites is before us here today.
- It is not like the word of a man.
 - It is alive - it is self fulfilling
 - Isaiah 55:11 - **11** So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.
 - It is powerful.
 - It is sharper than any twoedged sword (cuts both ways, as opposed to a katana which only cuts one way)
 - Pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit

- Pierces to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow
- Discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart
 - One day we will stand before God, and the Word of God will open us up and reveal what we really are on the inside. It's looking for one thing: faith.
 - 1 Corinthians 4:5 - 5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.
- It brings rest to those who receive it in faith. It brings death to those who reject it in unbelief.
 - Illustration - Jews who had a lot to lose in committing to Christ who were on the edge of faith. The Word of God would reveal whether they were believers or not.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

- God knows the real you.
- Illustration - one day God will perform a spiritual autopsy



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 5 - HEBREWS 4:1-13

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<div>M</div> Read Hebrews 4:1-5	What is God's rest? What's the Biblical qualification for entering into it?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 4:6-10	What are the characteristics of God's rest listed in these verses?
<div>W</div> Read Hebrews 4:11-13	What are the characteristics listed of the Word of God? How will the Word of God judge humanity one day?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 4:14-5:10	What is this passage saying?
<div>F</div> Read Hebrews 4:14-5:10	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 4:14-5:10

Review:

Jesus>Angels (mediator)

Jesus>Moses (author)

Jesus>Priests (executor)

We need to understand the Old Testament. A proper understanding of the Old Testament leads to a proper understanding of and belief in the New Testament.

How can you claim that this new covenant supersedes the old and is in every way superior and spells the nullification of the old if you have no high priest?

- Jesus is so superior as our high priest
 - He did in one act what millions of sacrifices by thousands of thousands of priests could never do
 - He made a permanent way from man to God

PART 3 - JESUS > PRIESTS (4:14-10:18)

1.) Jesus' Priesthood ~ Aaron's Priesthood (4:14-5:10)

A.) The Assistance of Our High Priest (4:14-16)

B.) The Qualifications of the High Priest (5:1-4)

(1) He must sympathize with those he represents (5:1-2)

(2) He must offer sacrifice for sin (5:1b, 3)

(3) He must be appointed by God (5:1a, 4)

C.) The Qualification of Jesus as High Priest (5:5-10)

(1) He was appointed by God (5:5-6)

(2) He sympathizes with those He represents (5:7-9a)

(3) He offered sacrifice for sin (5:9b-10)

Sermon:

1.) The Assistance of Our High Priest

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

- Seeing then that we have a great high priest - Man is in sin. God in His holiness is separated from man. Jesus is the high priest that bridges that gap.
- Passed into the heavens - he now sits in the very throne room of God (Eph 4:10) because He has finished the work that His Father gave Him to do (John 17) in His sacrifice for sins and resurrection
- Let us hold fast our profession - continue on in that which you have professed
 - Real faith continues. False faith falls away.
 - Illustration - parable of the seed and the grounds (1/4 that made a profession remained true)

- Wayside - birds eat it up (Satan turns them away)
- Rocky ground - sprouts but doesn't last because of no roots (tribulation turns them away)
- Thorny ground - sprouts but thorns choke them up (world turns them away)
- Good ground - sprouts and brings forth fruit

○ Jesus empowers us to continue on in the faith

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

- For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities - Jesus ability to sympathize/relate with us is not based on his experience of sin, but on his experience of temptation. He secured sympathy but preserved sinlessness.
 - C.F. Hebrews 2:16-18 - **16** For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. **17** Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. **18** For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.
- but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. -
 - Christ was tempted to a degree that none of us could ever experience (because he never gave in).
 - Illustration - our body can only take so much pain before it blacks; I believe the same is true in temptation - there is a degree of temptation that we don't really experience because we succumb long before we get to that point. Jesus never succumbed.
 - You think you feel temptation that God never could...folks you've got it backwards. God felt temptation that you and I will never feel. Why is that important?

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

- Throne of grace - where Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father as his people's high priest. It is the antitype of the "mercy seat" in the earthly sanctuary (9:5)
- That we may obtain mercy... - Thanks to Jesus, the throne of God is a mercy-seat to which we have free access and from which we may receive all the grace and power required "for timely help" in the hour of trial and crisis.

2.) The Qualifications of the High Priest

A. He must sympathize with those he represents.

1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

- for every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God
 - (1) To represent man before God, the high priest must be a man

- God didn't choose angels to be priests. He didn't choose animals to be priests. He chose men who would act on the behalf of men.
- 2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.
 - Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way - He can sympathize with sinners, seeing that he himself is also beset by his own human weakness
 - (2) To represent man before God, the high priest needs to be able to sympathize with those who sin

B. He must offer sacrifice for sin

- 1 ... that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:
- 3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.
 - Gifts and sacrifices for sins -
 - 5 offerings
 - Voluntary
 - Burnt - a voluntary act of worship to express devotion or commitment to God (sacrifice of a bull, a bird, or a ram without blemish) (Leviticus 1)
 - Grain - a voluntary act of thanksgiving in recognition of God's provision (cake or baked bread made of grain, fine flour, oil, and salt) (Leviticus 2)
 - Peace - a voluntary act of thanksgiving and fellowship followed by a shared meal (an unblemished animal from the worshipper's herd and/or various grains or breads) (Leviticus 3)
 - Mandatory
 - Sin - a mandatory sacrifice to atone for sin and cleanse from defilement (a young bull, a goat, a dove/pigeon, or 1/10 ephah of fine flour) (Leviticus 4:1-5:13)
 - Trespass - a mandatory sacrifice to atone for sins often against another person or sometimes against a holy vow to God where reparations were needed (ram) (Leviticus 5:14-6:7)
 - Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)
 - Once a year the high priest would go into the holy of holies and make sacrifice for all the sins of people including the ones that they didn't even realize they had committed
 - And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. -
 - On the Day of Atonement, Aaron had to make a sacrifice for himself first before he could proceed with making sacrifice on the people's behalf

C. He must be appointed by God

- 1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, ...

4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

- Aaron was the high priest by divine appointment (Ex. 28:1, Lev. 8:1, Num. 16:5, Nu. 17:5, Num. 18:1, Ps. 105:26)
 - Exodus 28:1 - And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.
- If our author is to further his claim that Jesus is his people's great high priest, he needs to show that Jesus meets the qualifications of the high priest.

3.) The Qualification of Jesus as High Priest

A. He was appointed by God

5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

- Christ did not assume the high priestly dignity by his own initiative. He was called to it by God.
 - This is the God who called Him His Son in the words of Psalm 2:7 "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."
 - John 8:54 - Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:
- The same God who called Messiah His Son in Psalm 2:7 has also called him a perpetual high priest in Psalm 110:4.

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

- Psalm 110:4 - 4 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.
 - Melchizedek is a type of Messiah (we'll learn more later in Hebrews about Melchizedek)
 - Melchizedek is King of Salem (Jerusalem) and priest of God (Genesis 14:18). He is a king priest.
 - Messiah is a king priest.
 - He is king based on his physical descent from David. How can he be a high priest if he's not a descendant of Aaron? He is priest after the order of Melchizedek.

B. He sympathizes with those he represents

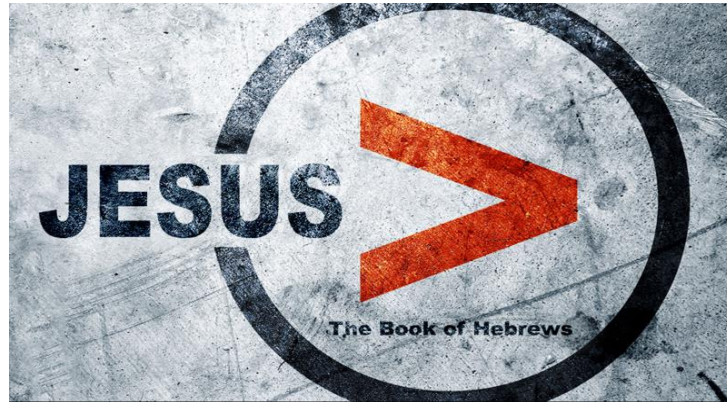
7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

- In the days of his flesh - when he was on earth

- When he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears - The humanity of Jesus is seen in no better place than in the Garden of Gethsemane when He prayed to the Father in tears and anguish
 - Was able to save him from death - out of death. God was able to and did raise Jesus from the dead.
 - Was heard in that he feared - was heard for his godly fear
 - The Lord prayed in submission to the will of the Father, and the Father heard Him.
 - How can Jesus help me in my anguish? He knows what it is like.
- 8** Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;
- Even though Jesus Christ was the divine Son of God, in His humanity He learned experientially by doing.
 - He learned what it meant to obey the will of the Father as a human being.
- 9** And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;
- Being made perfect - it was through sufferings that he was made perfect, fully qualified to be the Saviour and High Priest of his people
 - This takes us beyond omniscience to sympathy
 - Omniscience knows everything
 - Sympathy feels everything

C. He offered sacrifice for sin

- 9** ...he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;
- Author of eternal salvation - originator of salvation. He did what no other priest could do. They offered and offered and offered and offered. Jesus offered once, and authored salvation in the process.
 - Obey him - obey him by faith
 - Romans 6:17 - But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.
 - 2 Thess. 1:8 -In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
- 10** Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 6 - HEBREWS 4:14-5:10

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<div>M</div> Read Hebrews 4:14-16	How does Jesus sympathize with us? How does He help us?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 5:1-4	What were the qualifications of the office of the high priest?
<div>W</div> Read Hebrews 5:5-10	How did Jesus meet the qualifications of the office of the high priest?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 5:11-6:8	What is this passage saying?
<div>F</div> Read Hebrews 5:11-6:8	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 5:10-6:8

Review:

Jesus>Angels

Jesus>Moses

Jesus>Priests

- Jesus' Priesthood is Similar to Aaron's Priesthood
 - He was chosen by God
 - He is able to sympathize with those he represents
 - He made sacrifice for sin

He talks about how Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and he's getting ready to go deeper into that concept, but then he takes a pause for a little sidetrack (a footnote of rebuke).

Sermon:

1.) A Rant of Frustration

10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

- The next step in our author's argument for Jesus as high priest would be to expound on Him being a priest after the order of Melchizedek. He does that in 7:1, but first he pauses to give warning to his readers.
- "I've got some deep things to go over with regards to Jesus and Melchizedek, but you have become slow/sluggish in hearing. So I'm going to sidetrack here for a minute."

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

- For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again - You have heard and been taught, and by this point in time, you ought to be teaching. But instead of being ready to teach, it's like you need to be taught all over again.
 - Illustration - trying to train someone to lead and they just don't get it
 - What did they need to be taught again?
- Which be the first principles of the oracles of God - I believe this is in reference to the Old Covenant. You ought to be teaching others the New Covenant from the Old, but you're not getting it. It's like you need to have the Old Covenant properly explained to you all over again
 - Oracles of God refers to the Old Testament
 - Romans 3:1-2 - Romans 3:1-2 - 1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.
 - First principles of the oracles of God is also called the principles of the doctrine of Messiah in chapter 6 verse 1

- In verses 1 & 2, it goes into detail about these first principles, and it's Old Testament doctrine
 - First principles = Old Covenant/Old Testament
 - These principles of the Old Covenant are foundational, but we are to move on from them into the maturity of the New Covenant
 - And are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat - Here milk and meat are used as illustrations of basic truth and deeper truth. The Old Covenant is milk. The New Covenant is meat. You ought to be teaching the meat of the Word (the New Covenant), but it's like you're not properly comprehending even the milk of the Word (the Old Covenant).
 - Paul uses the illustration of milk and meat in 1 Corinthians, but our author here uses it in a different way than Paul did.
- 13** For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.
- Useth milk - drinks milk
 - Unskilful - without experience
 - Word of righteousness - the doctrine of righteousness
 - For he is a babe - because he is like a baby
 - Those who only understand and are stuck in the Old Covenant are not experienced in the doctrine of righteousness. They are immature, not fully developed, incomplete, like a baby.
- 14** But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.
- Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age - Whereas the Old Covenant is milk for those who are immature like babies, the New Covenant is meat for those that are fully developed, complete like a fully grown adult.
 - Those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil - Those who eat strong meat (New Covenant) are developed and mature. They are experienced in discerning good and evil.

2.) A Call to Embrace the New Covenant

- 1** Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,
- Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ (Messiah) -
 - The principles of the doctrine of Messiah are identical to the principles of the oracles of God in verse 12.
 - These first principles are like milk for the immature. They are contrasted with maturity.
 - How do you know that this isn't referring to the basic principles of Christian faith? How do you know that the author isn't saying to leave behind the basic principles of your Christian faith (gospel, salvation, forgiveness of sins) and grow in maturity?
 - Firstly, We don't ever leave behind those basic tenets of our Christian faith. Paul said that all he preached was Christ crucified. We're to live in daily remembrance of those things. We don't leave the gospel behind as believers. We build on it.

- Secondly, the principles of the doctrine of Messiah are defined in verses 1 & 2, and they're all obvious tenets of the Old Covenant.
 - The principles of the doctrine of Christ is the Old Covenant. We are to leave behind these foundational aspects of the Old Covenant.
- Let us go on unto perfection - This is the same word that's used in verse 14 when it refers to those that are of full age.
 - We need to leave behind the immaturity and incompleteness of the Old Covenant and press forward into the maturity and perfection of the New Covenant.
- Not laying again the foundation - these tenets of the Old Covenant are foundational, but we need to move past them. We shouldn't be reteaching these foundational aspects of the Old Covenant. We need to be going over the deeper aspects of the New Covenant.
- What are these foundational aspects of the Old Covenant?
 - Repentance from dead works
 - Dead works are sinful acts from which the conscience needs to be cleansed (9:14)
 - This is in referencing turning from sin. This is a fundamental aspect of the Old Testament economy. In the New Covenant, we're not saved by just turning from sin. We're saved by turning from sin to Christ. This is in reference to the Old Covenant.
 - Repentance is an important aspect of the Old Covenant
 - Faith toward God
 - Genesis 15:6 - And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.
 - Habakkuk 2:4 - ...the just shall live by his faith
 - Note that this does not say faith in Christ. It says faith toward God. Why? Because once again we're talking about the Old Covenant.
 - Faith in Jehovah is an important aspect of the Old Covenant.

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

- Baptisms
 - "baptisms" - It's not baptism in the singular, but baptism in the plural. This same word is translated washings in other places of Scripture.
 - The Jews had all kinds of ceremonial washings and cleansing and purification rites.
 - Washings were an important aspect of the Old Covenant.
- Laying on of hands
 - In the Old Testament the laying on of hands was a part of commissioning someone for public office, but more importantly, it was an essential part of the sacrificial system.
 - Go back to Leviticus 1 and 16. The sacrifice would be put on the altar, and what would the priest do? He would lay his hands on the sacrifice as a point of identification, identifying with the sacrifice.
 - The sacrificial system was an important aspect of the Old Covenant.
- Resurrection from the dead

- Isaiah 26:19 - Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.
 - Daniel 12:2 - 2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
 - As Jesus pointed out, it was taught implicitly at an earlier stage, when God, who is the God of the living, not of the dead, proclaimed himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 3:6; cf. Mark 12:26f.).
- Eternal judgment
 - Daniel 12:2 - 2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
 - The Jewish belief in resurrection and judgment were an important aspect of the Old Covenant.
 - Daniel 7:9-14 - 9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. 10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. 11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. 12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. 13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.
- We need to leave behind the foundational principles of the Old Covenant and go on into the maturity of the New Covenant.
 - Leave behind the ABCs of repentance from dead works for the New Testament teaching of repentance towards Christ.
 - Leave behind the ABCs of faith toward God for faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as God.
 - Leave behind the ABC of ceremonial washing for the cleansing of the soul by the Word of God.
 - Leave behind the ABCs of laying hands on a sacrifice for by faith laying hold of Jesus Christ the Lamb of God.
 - Leave behind the ABCs of the resurrection of the dead for the full revelation of future life in Jesus Christ.
 - Leave behind the ABCs of eternal judgment for the truth of judgment and reward revealed in Jesus Christ.
 - Leave behind the milk of the Old Covenant for the meat of the New Covenant.

- Leave behind the immaturity of the Old Covenant for the maturity of the New Covenant.

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

- That is what we're going to do. God willing.

3.) A Warning against Turning Back to the Old Covenant

Why are we going to move forward to the maturity and meat of the New Covenant?

Because for those Jews who have tasted the meat of Jesus and go back to the milk of the law, there's no second chance for them. For those who turn back and fall away, they are lost forever. It's like they've crucified Jesus all over again. Does that mean that they lost their salvation? No, it demonstrates that they were never saved in the first place.

4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

- You don't find the word justification, sanctification, new birth, regeneration, born again, made holy, made righteous in this passage of Scripture.
- Enlightened - "having been enlightened" they understood the gospel; head knowledge (Matthew 4:15; John 1:9)
- Tasted of the heavenly gift - what's the heavenly gift?
 - Heavenly gift
 - Eph. 2:8-9 - I don't believe the heavenly gift is talking about salvation
 - John 6:31-33 - Our fathers did eat manna in the desert as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.
 - Manna was a heavenly gift from God for his people, but here Jesus says that the true heavenly gift from God was him. Jesus is the true bread from heaven.
 - What's the heavenly gift? It's Jesus. He is the true bread from heaven.
 - Taste - literally means to taste or eat, figuratively means to experience
 - When do we "taste/eat" of the body of the Lord? Communion. These had partaken of communion in the church.
 - Jesus tasted/experienced death for every man (Heb. 2:9). He tasted death, but did He stay dead? No. His experience of death was temporary. It was a tasting.
 - In the same way, these had figuratively tasted/experienced the heavenly gift of Jesus. They experienced Jesus, but did they continue with Him? No. Their experience of Jesus was temporary. It was a tasting.
- Made partakers of the Holy Ghost
 - Partaker - It does not mean possession. It means association or sharing in certain activities or events.

- Illustration - Liz and I are partakers of one another. We are associated with one another. We share in the lives of one another.
 - In Luke 5:7, this word speaks of fellow fishermen.
 - In Hebrews 1:9, it speaks of Christ and his fellows in reference to Christ and his angels
 - In Hebrews 3:1, it speaks of believers as those that share in a heavenly calling.
- In the same way, these were associates of the Holy Ghost. They shared in the Holy Ghost. How do you share in the Holy Ghost, without Him indwelling you?
- They shared in the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. They saw the miracles. They saw the gifts. They shared in conviction of the Holy Spirit on their hearts, but they were still not believers. The Spirit did not indwell them.

5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

- Tasted the good word of God
 - They had tasted the very utterance of God. They had no doubt heard, read, and studied the Word.
 - Matthew 4:3-4 - 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
- The powers of the world to come
 - They got a taste of the kinds of miracles that are going to come in the kingdom. They experienced it. They saw those apostles do signs and wonders like they're going to be reproduced in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. They saw miracle upon miracle, and this increased their guilt.

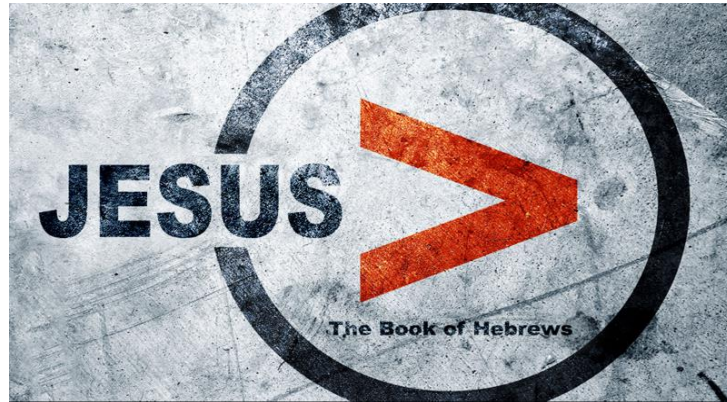
6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

- It is impossible for these Jews who have grown up in the Old Covenant and experienced the New Covenant...
- If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance - For those Jews who come so close to accepting Christ (the New Covenant), they know it's true, they know it's right. The Holy Spirit has brought them right up to the precipice of repentance. And now should they turn away from the faith right in front of them, it would be impossible to bring them back to that original fresh condition when the Gospel was sweet and repentance was natural.
- Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh (again), and put him to an open shame - they came all the way up to the edge of faith. They heard it all; they got all the revelation; they turned, went back to Judaism, which had been guilty of killing Jesus Christ. They took their stand with the crucifiers. They said, "Jesus is deserving of the cross. That's the same verdict that I give." It's as if in their own heart, they've crucified him all over again.
- We see this warning against going back to the Old Covenant.

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

- Illustration - There's good ground and there's bad ground. They both receive the same rain (message). How do you know which is good and which is bad? Good ground brings forth fruit (it continues in the faith; it doesn't turn back), and it's blessed. Bad ground brings forth thorns (it turns back from the faith), and it's burned.
- Don't be the bad ground. Be the good ground. Continue on in the faith because there's nothing left for you back there.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 7 - HEBREWS 5:10-6:8

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<div>M</div> Read Hebrews 5:10-14	Why is the author of Hebrews frustrated?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 6:1-3	What does the author of Hebrews encourage his readers to do? Why does he encourage them to do so (compare with 5:10-14)?
<div>W</div> Read Hebrews 6:4-8	Who is the author talking about in these verses? What is the consequence of them “falling away” from the New Covenant and returning to the Old?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 6:9-20	What is this passage saying?
<div>F</div> Read Hebrews 6:9-20	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 6:9-20

Review:

1.) A Rant of Frustration (5:11-14)

You ought to be teaching the New Covenant from the Old Covenant, but it's like you don't even have a proper understanding of the Old Covenant.

2.) A Call to Embrace the New Covenant (6:1-3)

Leave behind the foundation of the Old Covenant for the maturity of the New Covenant.

3.) A Warning Against Turning Back to the Old Covenant (6:4-8)

For those Jews who have come right up to the edge of the New Covenant and rejected it, there is no way to renew them to that place of repentance they found themselves in.

Sermon:

4.) An Assurance of Blessing to the Genuine Believer (6:9-20)

Hebrews 6:9-20 -

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

A.) Based on Status

How can we have assurance of our salvation? Because of our status as genuine believers.

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

- Beloved - agape loved (he switches gears & is addressing the Christians in the group)
- We are persuaded better things of you - Despite my strong warning, I am convinced that you are genuine and as such you will not fall away. Why is the author persuaded that they won't fall away?
- And things that accompany salvation - He is persuaded because he believes that they are saved, and those who are genuinely saved cannot fall away or lose their salvation.
- Though we thus speak - Is he talking about me??
 - In other words, to the Christians, He says, "Don't take the words to apostates to refer to you. The warning is for them. But I put it in this letter to you all because I know there are some of them in your midst."

These Christians had an assurance of eternal blessing one day. Why? Because of their status. Because they were genuine born again Christians, and Christians cannot lose their salvation.

Why was he persuaded that these were genuine believers? He saw fruit in their lives. Salvation leads to fruit and blessing, not falling away and burning.

B.) Based on Fruit

How can we have assurance of our salvation? The fruit of good works in our lives. It's evidence that we have been saved.

10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

- For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love - God has seen your good works, and you will be rewarded for them. Fruit doesn't only provide evidence of our faith. It also leads to blessing and reward from God one day in heaven.
 - *Matthew 10:42 - And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.*

- Which ye have shewed toward his name - The deeds of kindness done by the people of God are reckoned by God as done to himself, and will surely receive their reward from Him.
 - *Matthew 25:40 - And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*
- In that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister - Their work and labor of love is in reference to their acts of service performed for their fellow Christians.

These Christians had an assurance of eternal blessing one day. Why? Because of their fruit. Their fruit was an evidence of their salvation. Their fruit would one day be rewarded by God.

Illustration - game show with a cash container; for 60 seconds those people would grab as much cash as they possibly could and would reap the benefits after that short time was over.

- This life is like that container. It's not cash that's flying all around us. It's opportunities. Opportunities to share the gospel, to do good deeds, to advance God's kingdom, to love those in the church. How are you doing in that regard?

Application - are you making the most of your opportunities to live like Jesus or are you distracted by lesser things?

C.) Based on Perseverance

How can we have assurance of salvation? The perseverance of our faith. It's evidence that we have been saved.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

- Shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end - Just as you have been diligent in ministering to your Christian brothers and sisters in need, we want you to exhibit the same the diligence in continuing in the faith.

Hebrews 3:6 - 6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Hebrews 3:14 - 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

Another one of the marks of a genuine believer is that their faith continues to the end.

- It continues despite trials.
- It continues despite sin.
- It continues despite persecution.
- It continues despite distractions.

- It continues despite disappointments.
- It continues...

Illustration - how do you tell the difference between cheaply made knockoffs (sunglasses, purses, electronics, etc.) and the real deal? The knockoffs don't last. They break under pressure.

The same is true of believers. How do you tell the difference between knockoffs and the real deal? The knockoffs don't last.

12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

- That ye be not slothful - Don't become sluggish
- But followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises - Follow the examples of those who have gone before, those who are now entering into the enjoyment of things which God promised them long ago, because they believed His word and persevered in hope. (C.F. Hebrews 11)

These believers of old entered into God's promise. Why? Because they were the real deal. They were genuine believers that persevered. Their perseverance provided evidence that they were saved.

Application - follow the example of those Christians who have gone before you. They kept the faith and are enjoying that eternal reward. Let us follow in their footsteps so that one day the same may be said of us.

D.) Based on God's Promises

How can we have assurance of our salvation? Because God's promises are unbreakable.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

- To our author, Abraham is the supreme example of faith and the promises of God. He's going to use him as an example.
- When God made promise to Abraham - God promised Abraham in Genesis 12 a land (the promised land), a seed (great nation), and a blessing (that all of the nations of the earth would be blessed through him)
 - *Genesis 12:1-3 - 1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*
- Because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself - when making an oath, man usually swears by someone greater than himself to underscore the

seriousness of the promise. God had no one greater than Himself by whom to swear so he swore by himself when he made this promise to Abraham.

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

Abraham had been promised by God a land, a seed (a great nation), and a blessing (all the nations of the earth would be blessed through him) in Genesis 12. Yet, at that point in time, Abraham had no children and the older he got the more impossible it became that they would have a child.

Yet, Abraham believed God, and in time, Sarah miraculously gave birth to Isaac in her old age. The promised child was born. On Isaac hung the promises of God to Abraham.

Nevertheless, it was Isaac whom Abraham was commanded to offer up to God in sacrifice. When Abraham's faith and obedience were shown in his readiness to do even this, God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac, and then he reaffirmed the promises he had made to Abraham earlier in Genesis 12.

Genesis 22:16-17 - 16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Application - the fulfillment of God's promises were not based in Isaac, but God. (E.G. - God promises to provide our needs. We receive income from God. We sometimes make the mistake of trusting the money instead of the God who provided it)

He obtained the promise - There was much in God's promise to Abraham whose fulfillment lay in the distant future, but in God's provision for Isaac (the son upon whose survival the promise depended), Abraham did in a very real sense obtain the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

- For men verily swear by the greater - When human beings swear an oath in order to underline the certainty and seriousness of their words, they swear by someone or something greater than themselves ("I swear on my mother's grave")
 - "As surely as Yahweh lives" was the supreme oath in Israel.
 - *Exodus 22:11 - 11 Then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods; and the owner of it shall accept thereof, and he shall not make it good.*

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

- God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath - God's word is secure enough in and of itself, but in order to show how serious he was about his promise, he didn't just say it, He swore it.

Hebrews 11:9 - 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

Romans 11:29 - For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

18a That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation,

- Two immutable things - (1) The promise of God (2) The oath by which His word is confirmed
- We might have a strong consolation - we might have a strong encouragement

Why would the surety of the promises of God be a strong encouragement to us as believers? Because if God has kept his promises in the past, and God's promises are unbreakable, then we can be sure that God will keep his promise of salvation to us.

How can we have assurance of our salvation? Because God's promises are unbreakable.

E.) Based on Jesus' Exaltation

How can we have assurance of our salvation? Because Jesus is our hope, and he's already in heaven waiting for us.

18b who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

- Who have fled for refuge - We are refugees from the sinking ship of this present world (so soon to disappear)
- To lay hold upon the hope set before us - Jesus is our hope (1 Timothy 1:1). Salvation is our hope (Colossians 1:5, 23, 27).

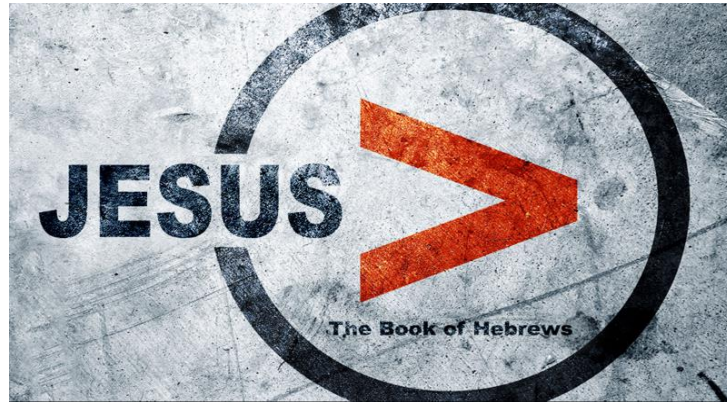
19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

- Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul - Our hope in Jesus, based on his promises, is our spiritual anchor.
- Both sure and steadfast - It is certain and immovable

- Which entereth into that within the veil - Jesus our hope is also our great high priest entered into the heavenly Holy of Holies. He performed the perfect sacrifice. And then he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high because his work was finished (1:3).
 - Hebrews 1:3 - *...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

- Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus - He is there in heaven as our forerunner,
 - Forerunner - a person running ahead to reach the destination before others – i.e. someone who arrives safely in advance for the benefit of others who also need to get there.
 - Illustration - someone who leaves the car at a restaurant to get in line and save a spot for those who come after
 - Abraham rested his hope in the promise of God to him. Where do we put our hope? We put it in Jesus. He is our anchor. He is our high priest. He is our forerunner in heaven where He is seated at the right hand of God, exalted above everything, waiting for us.
- Made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec - With these words our author comes back to the point from which he left on in 5:10. His footnote of rebuke is over, and he will go on to discuss the deeper things of Christ and Melchizedek.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 8 - HEBREWS 6:9-20

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 6:9-12	According to these verses, how can a believer have the assurance of heaven and the blessings that it brings?
T	Read Hebrews 6:13-18	Who does the author use as an illustration of God making a promise? Why is it important to understand that we can count on God's promises?
W	Read Hebrews 6:18-20	What does it mean that Jesus is our forerunner? Why is that important to me personally?
T	Read Hebrews 7:1-10	What is this passage saying?
F	Read Hebrews 7:1-10	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 7:1-10

Review

Jesus' Priesthood ~ Aaron's Priesthood (4:14-5:10)

- Chosen by God
- Made sacrifice for sin
- Able to sympathize with those he represents

A Footnote of Rebuke (5:11-6:20)

Jesus' Priesthood > Aaron's Priesthood (7:1-10:18)

There are many pictures in the Old Testament of Christ. We call these types, and Christ is the antitype or the fulfillment of that type.

Illustration - Types are like pictures. What is greater? The Grand Canyon or the picture of the Grand Canyon. The Grand Canyon. What is greater? Your wife or a picture of your wife. Your wife.

Types of Jesus are pictures of Him in the Old Testament that serve as illustrations of who He is.

EXAMPLES OF TYPES

- Sacrificial Lamb => Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world
- Moses lifting up the brass serpent => Jesus Christ being lifted up
- Abraham Sacrificing Isaac => The Father Sacrificing the Son

Keep in mind that types are imperfect representations at best.

Just like a picture is no match for the real deal, in the same way these types of Jesus are no comparison to the actual Jesus. They're merely meant to give us insight as illustrations.

This is important to understand because in Hebrews 7, our author presents Melchizedek as a type of Jesus. He's a picture/illustration of Christ. He's not the same as Christ. Not everything that is true of Melchizedek is true of Christ, but he is a good picture of Christ...and he's an important part of the author's argument that Jesus' priesthood is greater than Aaron's priesthood.

Moreover, recall one of the larger objection to Jesus' priesthood was that he was not a descendant of Levi. He was of the tribe of Judah, a descendant of David. How can Jesus be a priest if he's not a Levite?

Do you remember how our author answered that question? With Scripture. He went back to Psalm 110:4 where David writes that Messiah would be a priest, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek...who was a king and a priest outside the line of Levi. So we have these two priestly orders/lines. You have the order of Aaron through the tribe of Levi and you have the order of Melchizedek. The question that our author is going

to tackle today in chapter 7 is, "Which of those two orders is better?" We know that they're different. We know that they both exist, but is Jesus' priesthood really better than Aarons?

Sermon:

1.) The Superiority of Melchizedek

A.) His Description

Do you know how many verses Melchizedek is mentioned in in the Old Testament? 4. There's the one verse in Psalm 110, and then there's a three verse encounter he has with Abraham in Genesis 14 where he receives tithes from Abraham and then blesses him. That's it. That's all there is.

Nevertheless, based on how Hebrews talks about him, there's all kinds of conjecture about who Melchizedek is.

Option 1 - Angel

- Problem 1 - Hebrews 5:1 - every high priest has to be a human man

Option 2 - Jesus Christ

- Problem 1 - Hebrews 7:3 - Melchizedek is made like the Son of God (as a type/picture); does not say that he is the Son of God
- Problem 2 - There is no indication of this in the Old Testament passages about Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4 & Gen. 14:18-20). Our author is not inserting new information into Old Testament passages (eisegesis) . He's drawing out the clear meaning of those passages and explaining them (exegesis).

Option 3 - Great King Priest that is a Picture of Jesus

- This is what I believe.

1.) He had an encounter with Abraham

1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

He's going to develop this argument that Melchizedek's priesthood and consequently Jesus' priesthood is greater than Aaron's priesthood. And where does he go to do that? The Scripture. He goes to the only other reference to Melchizedek in the Scripture other than Psalm 110.

Genesis 14:18-20 - 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

- Chedorlaomer, an Elamite king, with three other rulers raided and defeated the city-states around Jordan including Sodom -and carried off a large number of captives, including Lot, Abraham's nephew. When news of this came to Abraham at Mamre, near Hebron, he enlisted the aid of his neighbors, and set off in pursuit of the invaders. He overtook them near Damascus, launched a surprise attack on them, beat them, and recovered the captives and the spoils. On his homeward progress he was met by the grateful king of Sodom, who proposed that Abraham should return the captives to him but retain the material plunder as his proper spoils of war. Abraham declined to retain anything because of an oath he had just sworn to "God Most High, maker of heaven and earth." (c.f. Gen. 14:18-20).
- Now, immediately before Abraham ran into the king of Sodom, he met this man, Melchizedek, who was the king of another little area called Salem (Jerusalem). He was king and a priest of the most high God. And when he met Abraham, he blessed him. And then Abraham took of the spoils and gave 10% of it to Melchizedek. And then he fades away, and that's all we ever hear.
- This is all that the Genesis narrative has to say about Melchizedek. He had an encounter with Abraham.

2.) He was a picture of Christ

The author of Hebrews is going to examine the encounter of Melchizedek and Abraham in Genesis 14 and show from that text how Melchizedek is a type/picture of Christ.

1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

A.) A king (not subject to kings)

- King of Salem - Salem-Jerusalem. Israel's priests were never king and priest. No priest was royal, and yet Melchizedek was.
 - Zech 6:13 - Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.
 - Messiah would be both a priest and a king. There's only one priest in Scripture who was both a king and a priest. It was Melchizedek. He was a picture of Jesus who would be a king and a priest as well.

B.) A universal priest (not merely a national one)

- Priest of the Most High God - the highest God, the most high God, He is above all else (el elyon in Hebrew)
 - Melchizedek was a priest of the God of the universe even though he was not of the house of Israel
 - Whereas Jehovah was the Jewish name for God that Israel strictly used, the Most High is a name for God Scripture often uses to describe His relation to all of humanity, Jew and Gentile.
 - Deut 32:8-9 - 8 When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. 9 For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.
 - The Most High God deals with the nations, but Jehovah's portion is Israel. You see? Jehovah is a covenant name for God dealing with Israel.
 - Daniel 4:34 - And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:
 - Israel's priests all ministered in a national sense. Melchizedek ministered in a universal sense to all men. That's a picture of Jesus. His priesthood is not just available to the Jews. It's available to all men who call on His name.

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; C.) Characterized by righteousness and peace

- "First being by interpretation King of righteousness" – and that's a translation of Melchizedek; that's what his name means: King of righteousness – "and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace" – Salem, from Shalom, which means peace. His name is righteousness; his city is peace. He is a perfect combination of righteousness and peace.
- Every priest wanted to make a man righteous that he might be at peace with God, but they couldn't do it. The blood of bulls and goats didn't do it; they had to do it over and over, and it only lasted as long as a man didn't sin. But here He says Melchizedek's very name was righteousness, and his city was peace, emphasizing that his was a kingdom and his was a priesthood of righteousness and peace. His name was righteousness and his city was peace. He was a picture of Jesus, the only one who can truly make us righteous and restore us to peace with God.

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

D.) His priesthood was not based on blood lines

- Without father, without mother, without descent - without descent - without genealogy
- You look at the way Melchizedek is presented in Genesis 14, and guess what isn't mentioned? His mom, his dad, his genealogy. This doesn't mean that God just made him up in heaven and dropped him in the middle of the earth.
- It means in the record of Genesis, there is no indication of his genealogy. That is totally foreign to any Jewish king, totally foreign to any Jewish priest who all base their rights on their genealogy.
 - In Ezra 2, if you couldn't verify the genealogy of yourself and your wife, you got shoved out of the priesthood.
 - Melchizedek has no genealogy in Scriptures, and he appears thus as a perfect type/picture of Jesus Christ. How so? Melchizedek was not chosen to be a priest because of his blood lines, but because of his what? His quality.
 - And I say to you the same thing is true of Jesus Christ. He was not a descendant of Levi. He was not a descendant of Aaron. He was not chosen to be a priest because of his blood lines, but because of His quality.

E.) Without beginning or end

- Having neither beginning of days nor end of life...abide the a priest forever continually - once again this is looking at how Melchizedek is presented in Genesis 14 and showing how it's a picture of Christ. Just as Genesis 14 doesn't include Melchizedek's mom or dad or genealogy line, you know what else it doesn't include? His birthday...or his death day. It doesn't mention them.
- Does that mean that Melchizedek somehow was never born and lived forever? No. It means to say that there appears in the text no beginning and end to his life or priesthood. In the pages of Scripture, he just appears as alive. That's by design. Why? Because it's a picture of Christ...who truly had no beginning, who has no end, and whose priesthood is eternal.
- Now, the Jewish priest would begin at the time when he was 25. And for five years, he would serve the other priests. Then, when he hit 30, he could operate on his own. He would minister till he was 50, according to Numbers 8:25, and then it was over. But no such restriction is placed on Melchizedek. There is no record of his death. And incidentally, in Numbers 20:22 and following, there's a very detailed record of Aaron's death. There is no record of Melchizedek's death. And so, Melchizedek appears as one who doesn't need to follow the patterns of the Aaronic priesthood. He stands apart and is chosen by God purely on the basis of his quality.
- Made like unto the Son of God - Melchizedek was made to be a type/picture of Jesus
 - Just as a picture is made to be like the object it portrays, so Melchizedek was made to be like Jesus.

- He was not the Son of God. Jesus Christ was the original; Melchizedek was only the picture. And so we see how the author presented Melchizedek as a picture of Christ.

How good of a picture of Jesus are you? Can people see Jesus in your life? If you were the only representation of the Lord that someone ever got would they be more drawn or less drawn to Him?

B.) His Superiority

How do we know that Melchizedek was superior to Aaron and Levi? The author used Psalm 110 to show that his priesthood was different than Aaron's. Now he's going to use Genesis 14 to show that Melchizedek's priesthood is better than Aaron's.

Why is Melchizedek superior?

1.) He received tithes from Abraham

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

- Now consider how great this man was - As great as Abraham is, in his interaction with the king priest Melchizedek, it appears that Melchizedek is the greater of the two.
 - If Melchizedek was greater than Abraham, his priesthood must be greater than the priesthood of Abraham's descendants.
 - Illustration - Jesus > Melchizedek > Abraham > Aaron
 - The superior greatness of Melchizedek is seen in two important respects: he accepted tithes from Abraham and he blessed Abraham.
- Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils - Abraham gave 1/10th out of the best of the spoils/increase from the war to God via Melchizedek
 - Spoils - literally means the heap on the top.
 - Of all the stuff he had, he gave Melchizedek the top stuff. He gave him the best. Abraham gave him the top 10%. The Greeks, after a victory, had a custom. They'd bring all the spoils that they'd won in the battle, and they'd dump them in a big pile, and the best was taken out of it and given to the gods. And that's exactly what Abraham does. He didn't give God the leftovers. He gave Him first dibs.
 - Giving Principle 1 - We should not give God our left overs. We should give Him the top of the heap. First dibs.
 - Prov. 3:9 - Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:
 - What does it mean to give God first dibs, the top of the heap? I mean when the month comes, and the check is there, and you start to write your checks, what comes first? What comes top of the heap?

- Giving Principle 2 - We should give joyfully and of our own free will as an expression of worship to God.
 - There was no law requiring Abraham to give the first 10% of his increase to God. The law wouldn't come till Moses way down the road.
 - Why did Abraham tithe? Why did Jacob tithe? As an act of worship to God.
 - People get so caught up in, "Do we still have to tithe because the law is no longer in operation?" That's the wrong question to ask. Do you think Abraham was asking himself, "How little can I give to God and get away with it?" No. The right question to ask is not "How little can I give to God and get away with it?" but rather "How much more can I give to God in worship?".
- Abraham gave tithes to God through Melchizedek. The fact that Abraham gave to Melchizedek magnifies Melchizedek's greatness, for Abraham was the great father of Israel, the first patriarch. Consider how great Melchizedek must have been.

5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

- Under the law (Numbers 18:21, 26), the priests of the tribe of Levi would take up tithes from their fellow Jews. This one line of descendants of Abraham (priests of the tribe of Levi) would receive tithes from all the other descendants of Abraham.
- In Israel agricultural produce was tithed year by year and the tithe was allocated to the tribe of Levi "for an inheritance" (Numbers 18:21) and one tenth of that tithe was further earmarked for the priesthood (Numbers 18:26).
- Have a commandment to take tithes - this commandment is given in Numbers 18:21
- In Nehemiah's time the Levites received the tithes under the supervision of the priests and brought the "tithe of the tithes" to the temple to be handed over to the priests (Neh. 10:38).
- By the first century AD however, there is reason to think that the administration of the tithes was carried out by the priests. It may have been knowledge of the actual practice at that time that led our author to say that it was "the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood" who tithed the people in accordance with the commandment.
 - Although in general his description of the laws relating to the priesthood and sanctuary is based on the Pentateuch and not on contemporary custom
- That is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham - the members of the tribe of Levi received tithes from their fellow Israelites, who were children of Abraham like themselves

Numbers 18:21, 26 - 21 And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation... 26 Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe.

- Not all the sons of Levi received it, only the ones who were lined up with Aaron. But they were allowed by law a commandment to take tithes. It was a commandment type of a deal. But in the case of Abraham, there wasn't even a commandment. I mean he just did it. It was a tribute to the greatness of Melchizedek. You see, if it had been a result of Melchizedek saying, "You'll give me the top of the heap," then we might say, "That guy's not great; he's selfish." He says nothing. Abraham simply acknowledges his greatness and gives him the top of the heap.

6a But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham,

- But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham - Abraham's one line of descendants received tithes of all of his other descendants, but who did Abraham tithe to? Did he tithe to himself? No, Abraham was the father of all Israel gave tithes to Melchizedek and thus recognized his superiority.
- If Melchizedek > Abraham, then the priesthood of Melchizedek's order is > the priesthood of Abraham's order (Levitical priesthood). And if that's the case, then Jesus' priesthood is better than the Old Testament priesthood.

8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

- Of whom it is witnessed that he liveth - The tithe prescribed by Israelite law is paid to mortal men. The tithe which Abraham gave Melchizedek was received by one who, as far as the Biblical record goes, we never of him otherwise than as a living man.

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

- As I may so say - one might also say

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

- Levi was Abraham's great grandson, and wasn't born yet when Abraham met Melchizedek. But an ancestor is regarded in Biblical thought as containing within himself all his descendants. When Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, it was as if Levi himself had paid tithes to Melchizedek as well.
 - It's as if Levi himself recognized the superiority of Melchizedek's priesthood to his own.

Jesus > Melchizedek > Abraham > Aaron

2.) He blessed Abraham

6b and blessed him that had the promises.

- And blessed him that had the promises - As great as Abraham's privileges were by virtue of the promises which he received from God, he recognized the superiority of Melchizedek by accepting a blessing from him.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

- Just as the greater receives tithes from the lesser, so the greater gives blessing to the lesser.
 - We see this all throughout the Old Testament.
 - Isaac blesses his sons.
 - Jacob blesses his sons.
 - Joseph blesses his sons.
- And don't you see what we're seeing here? If this man was greater than Abraham, then he was greater than anything that came from Abraham.

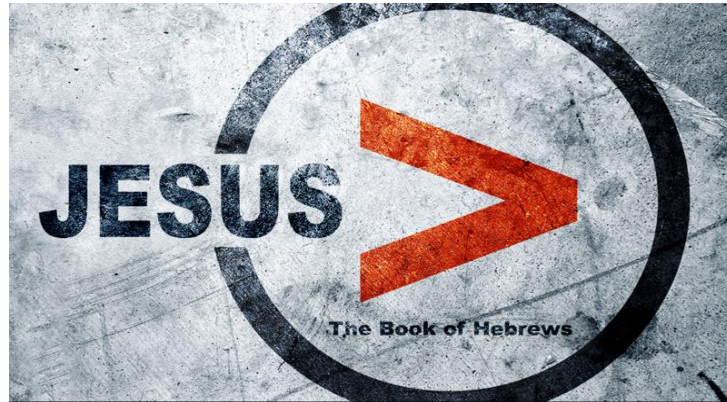
Jesus > Melchizedek > Abraham > Aaron

And if that's the case. Jesus' priesthood is greater than Aaron's priesthood.

Invitation

Are you a good picture of Jesus?

Does God have first dibs in your life, or does He just get the leftovers? Do you give joyfully in worship, or do you give begrudgingly?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 9 - HEBREWS 7:1-10

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 7:1-3	How is Melchizedek a picture of Jesus?
T	Read Genesis 14:18-20 & Hebrews 7:4	What are some characteristics of Abraham's giving? How should we give today?
W	Read Hebrews 7:4-10	In what ways was Melchizedek greater than Abraham? If Melchizedek is greater than Abraham, then who does that mean that Jesus is greater than by extension?
T	Read Hebrews 7:11-20	What is this passage saying?
F	Read Hebrews 7:11-20	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 7:11-19

Review:

Jesus > Angels (mediators of the Old Covenant)

Jesus > Moses (author of the Old Covenant)

Jesus > Priests (executor of the Old Covenant)

- Jesus meets the qualification of the high priest
 - He sympathizes
 - He was chosen by God
 - He makes sacrifice for sin
- Melchizedek & Jesus by extension are greater than Aaron
- Jesus' priesthood is > old priesthood

If Jesus' priesthood is greater, then His covenant is as well.

Now just because we are under the New Covenant does not mean that the Old Testament Scriptures are null and void. Far from it. The Old Testament is just as much the Word of God as the New Testament. However, it does mean that the sacrificial system and Jewish ceremonial laws are no longer applicable to us today...and we're actually going to see that in our text.

Hebrews 7:19 - For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

Christianity is all about drawing nigh to God. Jesus is the door to God.

The keeping of the law could not save from sin.

The sacrificial system could not save from sin.

...But Jesus can.

The fact that the sacrificial system couldn't do this is a testament to the insufficiency of the old system.

Now, this was not an easy thing for the Jews to understand. For them to understand that the sacrificial system was temporary and inadequate and defective and unable to bring perfection was an unbelievable thing for a pious Jew to handle. All their lives they had been taught that the Levitical system was perfect, that it was instituted by God, that it was sufficient, and that it was permanent.

How do you know that the old priesthood is insufficient? How do you know that Jesus' priesthood is better? How do you know that his priesthood has replaced the old priesthood?

Sermon:

THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS' PRIESTHOOD

Hebrews 7:11-19

1.) The Insufficiency of the Old Priesthood Explained

A.) The Old Priesthood Was Not Perfect

11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

- Perfection - ultimate forgiveness of sins that results in full access to God
 - Hebrews 6:1 - Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection
 - Ultimate forgiveness of sins & complete access to God cannot be found in the Old Covenant. It can only be found in Jesus Christ & the New Covenant he brings.
 - Hebrews 10:1 - For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.
 - The sacrifices that the law prescribed could not bring about ultimate forgiveness of sins for those who offered them.
 - Hebrews 7:19 - For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.
- What further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek? - If the old priesthood were permanent and perfect (could bring about full access to God & forgiveness of sins), then why did David prophesy of a day in which Messiah would minister as part of another priesthood (Psalm 110:4)? It's because the old priesthood wasn't perfect, and it was never meant to be permanent.
 - This prophecy in Psalm 110 demonstrates that all along God had designed to set aside Aaron's priesthood.
 - If the Levitical priesthood could have brought access to God and salvation in the fullest sense, then why would God have predicted another priesthood?
 - Psalm 110:4 - The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.
- Illustration - Iphone models are not perfect or permanent. How do you know that? Because they keep advertising the newer model. Things that are not meant to be permanent always have a newer model. The same is true of the Levitical priesthood.
 - If the old priesthood were meant to be perfect and permanent, then why did David prophesy a newer model?...that Messiah would be a priest after Melchizedek's order.
- For under it the people received the law - the ceremonial law and the old priesthood were joined at the hip. What affects one would affect the other.

B.) The Ceremonial Law Was Not Permanent

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

- The law - when you see the word "law" in any kind of context related to the Old Testament, be sure that you understand it can mean several things
 - The whole Old Testament
 - The ten commandments
 - The ceremonial rituals of Israel
 - I believe this is what he is referring to here.
- If the old priesthood is to be changed, then there must be a changing of the Jewish ceremonial law that accompanied the priesthood
 - This does NOT mean that the Old Testament is null and void.
 - This does NOT mean that God's moral law is null and void. This never changes.
 - Romans 7 - the law is holy, just, and good
 - But the ceremonial law & the OT system of sacrifices are null and void.
- Illustration - phone case & phone are designed for one another; when you get a new phone, you have to get a new case.
 - The old priesthood and the ceremonial laws were designed for one another. If one is changed, then the other is changed too.
 - Since Messiah's priesthood was different than Aaron's, the old priesthood was done away with and so were the ceremonial laws.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

- According to Jewish ceremonial law, no member of the tribe of Judah was appointed to officiate at the altar. Yet Messiah was a member of the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:8-12; Isaiah 11:1-2), and Messiah would be a priest (according to Psalm 110:4).
 - Messiah's priesthood (outside of the line of Aaron) and the ceremonial laws are in opposition to one another. Why? Because it was against the law for someone from the tribe of Judah to be a priest. What does that mean? Messiah's priesthood ended the Jewish ceremonial laws (which were temporary). He was not in violation of those laws because those laws were never meant to be permanent.
 - Illustration - Temporary rules - driving down the highway. The speed limit is temporary. The Jewish ceremonial laws were temporary. When Messiah's priesthood began outside of the line of Aaron (in contradiction to the ceremonial laws), it did not mean that the ceremonial laws were wrong. It meant that they were over.

Genesis 49:8-12 - 8 Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. 11 Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: 12 His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

- Judah will be the dominant tribe in Israel (vs. 8)
- Judah will be lion-like in courage and strength (vs. 9)
- The Messiah will come from the tribe of Judah (vs. 10)
- His coming brings peace, joy, and prosperity (vs. 11-12)

Isaiah 11:1-2 - 1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

So we see the insufficiency of the old priesthood.

- It was not perfect, because the Old Testament prophesied Messiah would bring another priesthood.
- It was not permanent, because Messiah's priesthood signaled the end of the old priesthood and the Jewish ceremonial laws that were attached to it.

2.) The Superiority of the New Priesthood Explained

A.) The prophecy is fulfilled

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

- It is yet far more evident - the evidence is overwhelming that the old priesthood is obsolete. Why?
- For that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest - Jesus is that greater priest that was prophesied by David in Psalm 110. The prophecy has been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. What the Scripture says would happen (there's coming another priest) has happened in the person of Jesus Christ.
 - Another - another of a different kind
 - Illustration - trading in an iPhone 10 for an iPhone 11 vs trading in an iPhone for an Android.

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

- Law of a carnal commandment - under the old priesthood, the Jewish ceremonial law determined who would be the priests. It had nothing to do with your character, your morals. It had everything to do with what family you were a part of and physical qualifications.
 - Illustration - monarchy governments

- The priests were designated based on physical characteristics laid out in temporary ceremonial laws.
- But after the power of an endless life - whereas under the old priesthood, priests were designed based on physical characteristics, Jesus' priesthood is based on his internal characteristics (specifically his eternity). It's not external characteristics. It's internal characteristics.
 - Not only that but temporary nature of the old priesthood stands in contrast to the eternal nature of Jesus' priesthood.
 - Remember, we said that the old priesthood and the ceremonial laws were temporary. When Jesus' priesthood began it did not mean that they were wrong, but that they were over.
 - What about Jesus' priesthood? Would his be temporary too? No. How do you know that? Look at verse 17.

17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

- Christ's priesthood and priestly ministry is forever according to the prophecy in Psalm 110:4.

B.) The old priesthood is annulled

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

- The fulfillment of the prophecy "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" thus announces the annulment of the ceremonial law, the sacrificial system, the old priesthood.
- Disannulling - has to do with the doing away of something that is established (annulling a treaty, a law, etc.); cancelled
 - Illustration - established tv show gets cancelled
 - Why was the commandment canceled?
- Weakness and unprofitableness thereof - why was the ceremonial law weak and unprofitable? Look at verse 19.

C.) Complete access to God is available

19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

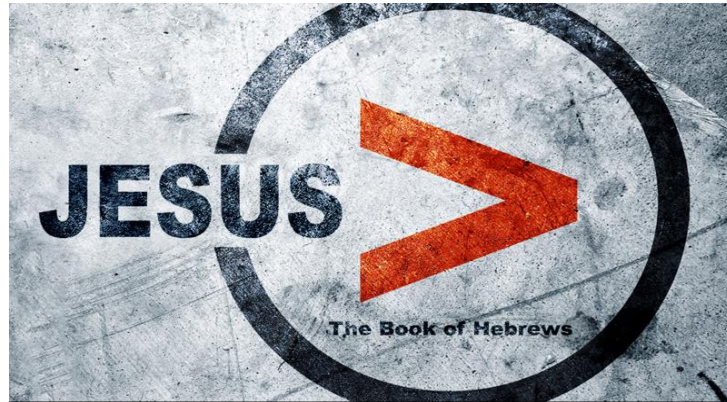
- For the law made nothing perfect - the ceremonial laws, the sacrificial system, the old priesthood could not bring about ultimate forgiveness of sins. It could not bring about complete access to God.
- But the bringing in of a better hope did by which we draw nigh unto God - what the law could not do, Jesus has done. He has provided ultimate forgiveness of sins and complete access to God.

Old Covenant - looking forward by faith to a debt that will be paid

New Covenant - looking back in faith to a debt that has been paid

Illustration - having the promise of someone buying the house versus when the house was actually sold and payment was made. It's like this incredible burden has been lifted.

That's the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, the sacrificial system and the ceremonial laws were all looking forward to a time when the ultimate payment would be made. But under the New Covenant, that ultimate payment has finally been paid and we can look back and celebrate. That's what communion is all about. I'm excited to celebrate and remember that day that my debt was paid.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 10 - HEBREWS 7:11-19

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 7:11-14 & Psalm 110:4	Why was the old Levitical priesthood insufficient?
T	Read Hebrews 7:15-19	Why is Jesus' priesthood superior?
W	Read Hebrews 7:19	What is the better hope that we have as believers? What does it mean that we can now draw nigh to God through that better hope?
T	Read Hebrews 7:20-28	What is this passage saying?
F	Read Hebrews 7:20-28	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 7:20-28

Review

1.) The Insufficiency of the Old Priesthood Explained - couldn't provide ultimate forgiveness of sins and complete access to God

- The priesthood & Jewish ceremonial law were never designed to be perfect or permanent (newest model of the Iphone) - Psalm 110:4

2.) The Superiority of the New Priesthood Explained - could provide ultimate forgiveness of sins and complete access to God

- The prophecy is fulfilled
- The old priesthood is cancelled
- Complete access to God is available

Sermon

3.) The Superiority of the New Priesthood Defended

As we conclude chapter 7 this morning, we will finish up our discussion on Jesus & Melchizedek, and we will continue to see how the priesthood of Jesus is greater than the old priesthood.

Hebrews 7:20-28

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:

21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

This morning we're going to see three reasons why the new priesthood (Jesus' priesthood) is superior to the old priesthood.

A.) Because of God's Promise to Jesus

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:
21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)
22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

Why is Jesus' priesthood better?

God never promised the old priesthood would continue forever.
God did promise Jesus' priesthood would continue forever.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:
21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)
22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

Why is Jesus' priesthood better?

God never promised the old priesthood would continue forever.
God did promise Jesus' priesthood would continue forever.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:

- Not without an oath he was made priest - double negative; When God made Jesus our priest, He didn't do it without a promise.
 - Psalm 110:4 - God the Father talking to Messiah
 - The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.
- What's the big deal between a promise and no promise?
 - NATURE OF A PROMISE
 - When we make promises, it shows how important the other person is. We make promises to people who are more important.
 - Illustration - recruiters making promises to potential employees that they really want
 - Why did God make a promise to Jesus and not the Levitical priests? Point blank, Jesus was more important.
 - CONTENT OF A PROMISE
 - What did God promise Jesus that he didn't promise the Levitical priests?

21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

What was the promise? Your priesthood is forever. That's very significant.

- But this with an oath by him that said unto him... - It's a greater promise for a greater priesthood. It's a promise he never made to the Levitical priests.
 - Illustration - promising myself forever to my wife in marriage
 - I've never made that promise to another woman
 - She is special. She is unique. My relationship with her is greater than my relationship woman on the planet.
 - I've promised myself to her forever
 - God never promised the Levite's a forever priesthood. But he did promise Messiah one.
 - His priesthood is special. His priesthood is unique. His priesthood is greater than any other.

22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

- By so much was Jesus made as surety of a better testament
- Surety - guarantee
 - He's the guarantee of a better covenant because he's a better priest
 - New priesthood -> new covenant
 - Better priesthood -> better covenant
 - Everlasting priesthood -> everlasting covenant
 - This doesn't mean that the Old Covenant was bad. It just means that it was temporary and not final.
- Testament - The word testament means covenant
 - This is the first usage of the word "testament" or "covenant" in the book, but it's important because this is where the author is going with his argument.
 - In the next couple chapters he's going to make the argument that if
 - New & better priesthood -> New & better covenant

B.) Because Jesus is Alive & Everlasting

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

The old priesthood was dying and temporary.

Jesus' priesthood is alive and everlasting.

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

- They truly were many priests - The Aaronic line of priests was not just one man. It was descendant after descendant after descendant. Why?

- Because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death - They had this problem. They kept dying. Death prevented them from continuing in their office. Death was this unbeatable obstacle that kept each of the priests from ministering forever.
 - Aaron - the first of his line of high priests
 - Moses, Aaron & his son Eleazer go up on Mount Hor
 - Moses takes Aaron's garments and puts them on Eleazer
 - Aaron dies on the mount
 - Moses & Eleazer come down (Num. 20:28)
 - Time passes; Eleazer dies (Josh. 24:33)
 - His son, Phinehas succeeded him
 - So on and so forth
 - This happened generation after generation
 - From Aaron to the fall of the temple in AD 70 there were 83 high priests
 - Death disqualified them from their priestly duties (because they could no longer carry them out). The Levitical priesthood was a dying, temporary priesthood. You never knew what you were getting in the new high priest.
 - Illustration - pastoral transitions
 - When the high priest died, there's no priest committee
 - It's the guy's descendant (next in line)
 - You can't leave the church (you gonna leave Israel?)
 - The old priesthood was constantly dying, temporary, and imperfect.

24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

- But this man - in reference to Jesus
- Because he continueth ever -because he lives forever (his priesthood is a living, eternal priesthood)
 - Imagine having a priest that's perfect & eternal
- Unchangeable - his priesthood never changes. There's no need to worry about transitions because he never dies.
- Hath an unchangeable priesthood - his priesthood is unsupersedable. It is final in nature. There is no other priesthood to follow (by extension, there's no other covenant to follow; there's no need for Mohammed or Joseph Smith).
 - Under the old priesthood, when a high priest passed away, he was succeeded by someone who may be better or worse high priest depending on his character traits.
 - However, with Christ's priesthood, He would never have to hand it over to someone less well qualified. Because he is everlasting. His priesthood is permanently secure.

25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

- Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him -

- Wherefore - Because his priesthood is everlasting, perfect, and unchanging
He is able to save us to the uttermost
- Able - Jesus was both willing and able to save us
 - Illustration - wanting to fix a problem, but not being able to (NFL - Jaguars)
 - Aaron was willing, but not able
 - Jesus is both willing and able to save us
- Save - Saved from the penalty of sin, power of sin (present), and the presence of sin (future). How does he save?
- To the uttermost - ultimate forgiveness of sins. He save to the uttermost. Who does he save?
- Them that come unto God by him - there is no other way to God but through faith in Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). How can we be sure of that?
- Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them - Every time someone sinned, they would come to the priest for a sacrifice.
- Jesus has saved me from all my sin, but what if I sin tomorrow? What about next week? Next year? Am I still saved? Absolutely.
 - Because your priest is not dead. He's not here one day and gone the next. He's alive, and He ever lives to make intercession for us.
 - "He sinned this week? Put in on my account. He's accepted my sacrifice by faith. I died for that sin."
 - Romans 8:34 - ...it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.
 - 1 John 2:1 - My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

C.) Because Jesus is Sinless

26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

The old priesthood was officiated by sinful men.

Jesus' priesthood is officiated by sinless God.

26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

- For such an high priest became us - Such an high priest is fitting for us. Why? Because, despite the fact that He lived in humanity among us, he is...
 - Holy - He is holy, pious, beloved of God
 - Harmless - innocent, free from desire to inflict harm

- Undefiled - unstained, untinted
- Separate from sinners - although he came to earth in the likeness of human flesh, lived among sinners, received sinners, ate with sinners, and was a friend of sinners, yet he is in a different class from sinful men..and is now
- Made higher than the heavens - exalted above all the heavens to share the throne of God.

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

- Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins, and then for the people's - on the day of Atonement, the high priest would make a sacrifice for himself before he did so for others, but then we see in Lev. 4:3, that on a regular basis, whenever he sinned, he had to bring a sacrifice for himself (just like the people) before he could make sacrifice for others.
- Day after day, the priests made sacrifices for themselves and then for the people, but not Jesus.
- For this he did once, when he offered up himself - Jesus had no need to present a daily sacrifice, a monthly sacrifice, or a yearly sacrifice for his people's sin.
 - He presented a permanently valid sin offering on their behalf when he offered up his own life - an offering so perfect that it needs no repetition.
 - Further, he had no need to present such a sacrifice for Himself seeing that He is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.
 - Isaiah 53:10 - Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,...

28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

- For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity - under the Jewish ceremonial law, frail sinful men are appointed to the office of the high priest based on heredity
- But the word of oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son - But God's promise in Psalm 110:4 appointed holy, sinless Jesus to the office of the high priest based on his internal character.
- Who is consecrated for evermore - he is forever perfect and complete

The old priesthood was never promised to be forever.

The old priesthood was temporary and dying.

The old priesthood was officiated by sinful men.

Jesus' priesthood was promised to be forever.

Jesus' priesthood is alive and everlasting.

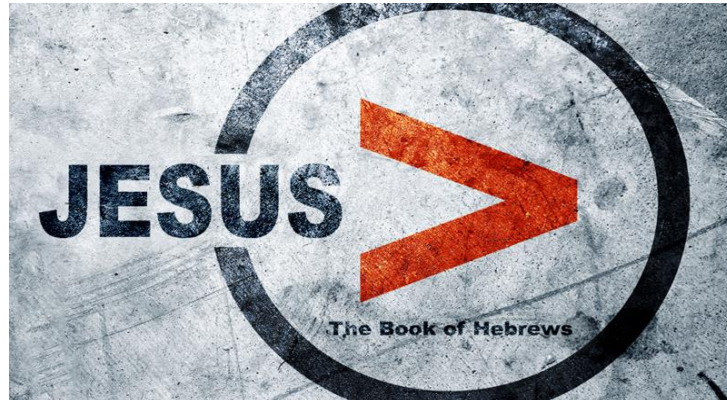
Jesus' priesthood is officiated by sinless God.

He's a better priest. He's a wonderful Saviour.

Application:

If you've never accepted Christ as your Saviour, I'd love to share with you how you can make that decision.

For those of who are believers, when is the last time you confessed your sin to God?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 11 - HEBREWS 7:20-28

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 7:20-22 & Psalm 110:4	What did God promise about Jesus' priesthood that he didn't promise about the Levitical priesthood? Why is that important?
T	Read Hebrews 7:23-25	In what way was the Levitical priesthood dying and temporary whereas Jesus' priesthood is alive and everlasting? Why is that important?
W	Read Hebrews 7:26-28	In what way was the nature of the Levitical priests different than the nature of Jesus? Why is that important?
T	Read Hebrews 8:1-13	What is this passage saying?
F	Read Hebrews 8:1-13	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 8:1-13

Review:

Superiority of Jesus' Priesthood -> Superiority of Jesus' Covenant

A better priesthood meant a better covenant because the priesthood was an integral part of the Mosaic covenant/Old covenant that God made with Israel.

Better Priest -> Better Sanctuary -> Better Covenant

Sermon:

1.) A BETTER PRIEST

1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

- Set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens - as a priest Jesus is seated at the right hand of God because his sacrificial work is done
 - a. This is in stark contrast to the Levitical priests who were always standing and making sacrifices
 - b. Heb. 10:11-12 - And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;
 - c. Illustration - sitting down after a hard day's work
 - d. Imagine a final sacrifice, a finished work, so perfect that a High Priest sat down.

We have a better priest! But not only that. He ministers in a ...

2.) A BETTER SANCTUARY

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

- He doesn't minister in a skin tent like the tabernacle, nor does he minister in a physical building on earth. The temples were destroyed long ago. His temple is in heaven. He ministers in the real Holy of Holies.
- Minister - one who works for the sake of the people
 - a. His redemptive work is done, but He still ministers to us. He still helps us. He still intercedes on our behalf.
 - b. Even now, He still serves.
 - c. Look at where he serves.

- The Sanctuary and of the true tabernacle -
 - a. Sanctuary - the holies
 - b. God's true holy place is heaven.
 - c. Psalm 102:19 - For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth;
 - d. The earthly tabernacle is just an imperfect representation of God's true dwelling place in heaven.
 - e. Heaven is the original. The tabernacle was just a copy.

Hebrews 9:11 - 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, **by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building**

Hebrews 9:24 - 24 **For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands... but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:**

3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

- For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices - Going back to chapter 5, this was one of the qualifications of the high priest: offering gifts and sacrifices
- It is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer - as a high priest, Jesus must have something to offer. He did when he offered Himself, his blood as the sacrifice for our sins.
- Well if he's a priest, then why is He ministering up in heaven and not down here on earth in the tabernacle or the temple?

4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

- For if he were on earth he should not be a priest - Jesus was never meant to be a priest here in the earthly tabernacle/temple. Why?
- Seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law - The earthly tabernacle/temple was designed for the Levitical priesthood according to the Jewish ceremonial law. Jesus was not a Levite. He was not a priest after the order of Aaron. He was a priest of a different kind. His priesthood was new, different, and better. If he was not a Levitical priest, then why would He minister in the Levitical tabernacle?
- Well then if Jesus is a better priest, then where does He minister?
 - a. Not in the earthly tabernacle, but in the heavenly tabernacle
 - b. Not in the copies, but in the original
 - c. He ministers in the legitimate dwelling place of God

5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

- Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things - The Levitical priests ministered in a copy of God's true dwelling place in heaven. It was a shadow of the real deal.
 - a. How do you know that?
- As Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle - remember when God gave Moses the law. Remember when God gave Moses the instructions for building the tabernacle. What did God say to Moses?
- See...that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount - 4 times in the Old Testament (Ex. 25:40; 26:30; 27:8; Num. 8:4), God reminds Moses to make the tabernacle just like what He showed him in the mount.
 - a. Acts 7:44 - Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen.
 - b. In some way, God showed Moses the original when he instructed him to make the copy. The tabernacle was intended to serve as a dwelling place for God in the midst of His people on earth, and what we see from this passage is that it was a replica of God's true dwelling place in heaven.
 - c. As a better priest, Jesus does not minister in the copy. He ministers in the original.
- He's a better priest in a better sanctuary, and He established a better covenant. Exodus 25:40 - And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.

Exodus 26:30 - And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.

Exodus 27:8 - Hollow with boards shalt thou make it: as it was shewed thee in the mount, so shall they make it.

Numbers 8:4 - And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the Lord had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.

3.) A BETTER COVENANT

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

- But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry - Jesus' priestly ministry in heaven is far superior to any priest's ministry on earth.
- Mediator - one who stands in the middle between two and brings them together
- By how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant -because his priesthood is better, then his covenant is as well
 - a. A new priesthood meant a new covenant
 - b. A better priesthood meant a better covenant

- Which was established upon better promises - What are the better promises?
We're going to see those promises in a minute from Jeremiah 31:31-34.
 - a. The Old (Mosaic) Covenant promises were conditional.
 - Obey and I'll bless you.
 - b. The New Covenant promises are unconditional.
 - A regenerated heart and forgiveness of sins
- A Jew might respond by saying, "What's wrong with the Mosaic Covenant? Who are you to say that the Mosaic Covenant is replaced by another covenant?"
 - a. Well, actually God said it through the prophet Jeremiah.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

- For if that first covenant had been faultless - the author of Hebrews uses the same argument for a new covenant as he did for a new priesthood. If the old were perfect, then why was the new prophesied as a better model?

Hebrews 7:11 - If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

- For finding fault with them - Israel constantly broke the Old Covenant with God. They disobeyed the law. They forgot God. They turned away from Him...and as a result, look at what He says in Jeremiah 31:31-34.
- He saith - Just as is the case in Psalm 110:4, God is the one speaking in Jeremiah 31:31-34.
- I will make a new covenant - This is not a modification of the Old Covenant (Mosaic Covenant). It's a New Covenant. It's different.
 - a. What is a covenant as it pertains to God in Scripture?
 - Promise
 - Can be unconditional - I WILL
 - Can be conditional - IF YOU WILL, I WILL
 - Illustration
 - If you wash my car, I'll give you \$20
 - I'll give you \$20
 - With Israel
 - With the house of Israel and with Judah
 - Romans 9:4 - Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;
 - Ephesians 2:11-14 - 11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the

commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

- Although the covenants (promises) are made with Israel, through faith in Jesus Christ, we are blessed through them.

b. 5 Major Covenants in the Scriptures

THE COVENANTS

Covenant = Promise

5 Major Covenants in the Scripture

- Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-7)
- Palestenian Covenant (Deut. 30:1-10)
- Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:12-16)
- Mosaic (Old) Covenant (Deut. 28:1-68)
- New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34)

- **Abrahamic Covenant** (Gen 12:1-7; confirmed in Genesis 15, 17, and 22)
 - a. Unconditional - I WILL
 - b. Land - His seed would possess the promised land in its entirety
 - c. Seed - God would make a great nation out of his seed
 - d. Blessing - they would be blessed and all the nations of the earth would be blessed
- **Palestenian Covenant** (Deuteronomy 30:1-10)
 - a. Unconditional - I WILL
 - b. The land promise God made to Abraham is reconfirmed and expounded upon.
- **Davidic Covenant** (2 Samuel 7:12-16)
 - a. Unconditional - I WILL
 - b. The seed promise God made to Abraham is expounded upon. David is promised a "son of David" who would one day rule over the Jewish nation and all nations from Israel.

- Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic - God unconditionally promises Israel a land, a great kingdom, and that all the earth would be blessed through them.
- These promises have not been fulfilled fully yet, but they will be one day in the end times. Israel will return to God, possess the land God has promised them, and Jesus will rule and reign over Israel and the earth during the end times (millennial kingdom).
- **Mosaic (Old) Covenant** (Deuteronomy 28:1-68; Exodus 19:5)

Mosaic (Old) Covenant	
Passage	Deut. 28:1-68
Type of Promise	Conditional
Promise	If you obey the law, I will bless you

- a. Conditional - IF YOU WILL
 - b. God says, "If you obey my law, I will bless you." (Deut. 28)
 - It doesn't have anything to do with salvation which has always been by faith.
 - Problem - Israel could never live up to their end of the bargain so God did not fully bless them at that point in time (captivity, oppression, they haven't yet fully possessed the promised land, etc.)
 - The Old Covenant failed not because the law was bad. It was good. It was just that Israel couldn't keep it.
 - What was the purpose of the Old Covenant? A major component was really to bring Israel to a place where they understood their moral inadequacy and their need for a Savior.
 - Because of Israel's failure to keep the law (their side of the old covenant), God promises I'm going to make a New Covenant.
 - He does this in Jeremiah 31.
 - This is the passage of Scripture that the author of Hebrews is quoting in Hebrews 8.
- **New Covenant** (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

New Covenant	
Passage	Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 11:19-20 & 36:26
Type of Promise	Unconditional
Promise	I will give you a new heart, a new teacher (the Holy Spirit), and ultimate forgiveness of sins as the foundation of all your blessings.

- Unconditional - I WILL
- I will give you a new heart, the Holy Spirit as a teacher, and ultimate forgiveness of sins as the foundation of all your blessings.
 - The promise will be fulfilled ultimately when Israel turns back to God and is saved in the end times.
- In this new covenant, God promises Israel salvation as the foundation of all their blessings. He promises a new heart, His Spirit within them, ultimate forgiveness of sins as the foundation for all of their blessings...how is that possible? Jesus. Jesus' death on the cross made the New Covenant possible.
 - And you and I get to reap the blessings of it because Jesus isn't just available to the Jews. He's available to all of us.
 - The promise in Jeremiah was made to Israel, but the blessings of that promise...salvation through Jesus, ultimate forgiveness of sins, a regenerated heart...they're available to all of us.
 - It's through His death on the cross that all the nations of the earth are blessed. Why? Because we can be saved as well.
 - Galatians 3:8-9 - 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.
 - Galatians 3:13-14- 13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

ILLUSTRATION - Businessman promising me a Chikfila in Camarillo.

- The promise is made to me alone

- Who reaps the blessings of that Chikfila? Anyone who wants it. It's open to the public.
- The promise was made to Israel.
- Who reaps the blessings of that promise? (salvation) Anyone who comes to Jesus in faith. Jesus is open to the public.

And so we see the difference between the old and the new covenant.

If the Mosaic (Old) Covenant was meant to be perfect and permanent, then why did God promise a New Covenant in Jeremiah 31?

It's because the Old Covenant was never meant to be perfect and permanent. But the New Covenant is.

He elaborates on this.

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

- This is in reference to the Mosaic Covenant or Old Covenant.
 - This new covenant is not going to be like that one.

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

- He's referencing Jeremiah 31 here.
- I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts
 - In the Old Covenant, the law was written in stone. Under the New Covenant, the law is written in hearts. What does that mean? It means that God gives us a new heart and a new teacher.
 - Ezekiel 11:19-20 - 19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: 20 That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.
 - Ezekiel 36:26 - A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.
 - In the old covenant, they were told to obey but they didn't have the power. Through faith in Jesus, God gives us a new heart, a new nature...and he gives us a new teacher in the Holy Spirit.
 - Israel had good intentions in keeping the law but constantly fell short. The problem wasn't in the law which was good in itself, but the problem was in the inadequacy of the human flesh of the Israelite people. What was needed was a new nature, a heart liberated from its

bondage to sin, a heart which not only spontaneously knew and loved the will of God but had the power to do it.

- And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people - this was the substance of the covenant of Moses' day.
 - "And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians." was God's promise to the Israelites when they were still in Egypt (Ex. 6:7).
 - "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." was God's promise to them when he had given them his law in the wilderness. (Lev. 26:12)
 - This promise was applied and referenced in the early church.
 - 2 Cor. 6:16 - And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
 - This promise will still be true in the new heaven and the new earth.
 - Revelation 21:3 - And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

- And they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord - You know, in Israel, in those days, it was only the higher ups that knew the Word. It was only the higher ups that had access to the real truths of God. They taught the average Joe, the poor people, the low class. They relied on the religious leaders to teach them. That's not the case for those who have accepted Jesus.
- For all shall know me from the least to the greatest - We don't need some religious leader to teach us how to know God. As believers we have the Holy Spirit within us that teaches us in accordance with the Word of God.
 - John 16:13 - Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

- For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness... - The greatest blessing of the new covenant is total forgiveness of sins. What a glorious covenant it is. Everything the old couldn't do it does.

13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

- In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old - By the very fact that God said, "There's coming a new covenant," He therefore renders the first one (the

Mosaic) old. Do you see? Just the statement of prophecy that there's coming a new one means that the old one is old.

- Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away - anything that is growing old and ageing will shortly disappear.
 - I believe that the author is referring to the pending destruction of the temple of Jerusalem that Jesus had prophesied.
 - And only a few years after this was written, Titus hit Jerusalem and destroyed the temple. By doing so, he wiped out Judaism and the Levitical priesthood in the process.

Jesus is a better priest that ministers in a better sanctuary and made possible a better covenant.

Through faith in Jesus' death on the cross we can have a regenerated heart, the Holy Spirit as a teacher, and ultimate forgiveness of sins.

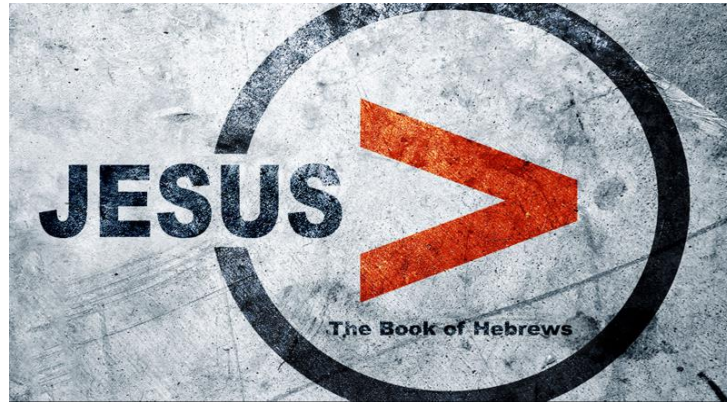
Application

Have you accepted Jesus?

We have a new heart. Are you living in accordance with it? Or are you stuck in the old man?

We have a new teacher. Are you listening? Are you in the Word?

We have ultimate forgiveness of sins? When's the last time you thanked God for that?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 12 - HEBREWS 8:1-13

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<div>M</div> Read Hebrews 8:1 & 10:11-12	As our high priest, where is Jesus right now, and why is that significant?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 8:2-5, Exodus 25:40, & Acts 7:44	Where does Jesus minister for us as our high priest? Why doesn't he minister in an earthly tabernacle or temple?
<div>W</div> Read Hebrews 8:6-13 & Jeremiah 31:31-34	What three things does God promise in the new covenant? How did Jesus make the new covenant possible?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 9:1-10	What is this passage saying?
<div>F</div> Read Hebrews 9:1-10	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 9:1-10

Review:

A BETTER PRIESTHOOD MEANS A BETTER COVENANT

- A better priest
- A better sanctuary (not earthly but heavenly)
- A better covenant (not old but new - Jer. 31:31-34)

Sermon:

A BETTER COVENANT REQUIRES A BETTER SACRIFICE

1.) The Sanctuary Under the Old Covenant

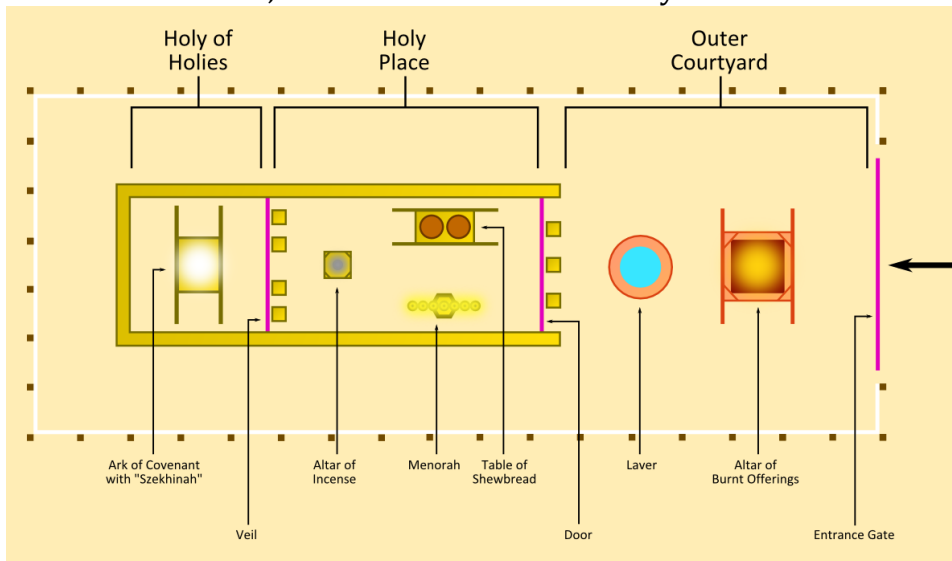
1 Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

- Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary - The Old Covenant was not purposeless. It was created by God. It had ceremonies of service to God, and it had an earthly sanctuary.

What were the ceremonies that God prescribed?

What was the sanctuary like where many of them took place?

2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.



- Tabernacle - tent. When God gave Israel the law, when God instituted the Mosaic covenant, He gave them instructions to build a tabernacle where these acts of worship and service to God would take place.

- There are 2 chapters in the Bible given to creation. There are 50 chapters given to the tabernacle.
- It's a picture of Christ.
- It's a reminder of the distance between God and man, and how Jesus erased that distance.
- 150 ft long by 75 ft wide
 - Outer courtyard
 - Covered tent with two rooms
- Exterior was a curtain with no top (pipe and drape)
- One gate - 7.5 ft high by 30 ft wide
 - There's only one way to God. It's through Jesus Christ.
- Courtyard items (not mentioned by the author)
 - Brazen altar



- Made of acacia wood
- 7.5 ft square
- 4.5 ft tall
- Top covered by a brass grate
- Coals underneath the grate
- Sacrifice was placed on the grate
- 4 corners of the altar were the horns of the altar to which the animal was tied when it was being sacrificed
- Picture of Jesus Christ - who was our sacrifice for sin
- Brazen (Brass) laver



- Wash area where the priests could wash off and cleanse themselves from the sacrifices
- Picture of Jesus Christ - who cleanses us from all our sin
- Tabernacle (15 ft tall)



- First room - the outer room - the holy place (30 x 15 ft)
- Second room - the inner room - the holy of holies (15 x 15 ft)
- First Room
 - Has 3 pieces of furniture; our author mentions two
 - Lampstand (menorah)



- On the left
- made of gold
- had a main stem with three branches on either side
- the main stem and all six branches each supported a flower shaped lampholder (Ex. 25:31-39; 37:17-24).
- The lampstands held oil (not candles) that would burn as the source of light
- This was the only source of light in the holy place
- It was never to stop shining
- It was a picture of Jesus who lights our path through this world of darkness
- Table of Shewbread



- To your right
- Made of acacia wood overlaid with gold
- It was 3 feet long, 1.5 feet wide, and about 2 feet tall

- It had golden plates, spoons, pitchers, and bowls (Ex. 25:23-30; 37:10-16)
- The showbread consisted of twelve cakes, baked with fine flour, placed fresh on the table every sabbath day (Lev. 24:5-8); the old cakes were removed from the table when the priest put the new cakes out, and the priest would eat the old cakes in the outer room (Lev. 24:9).
- Each loaf represented one of the 12 tribes
- It was a picture of Jesus who feeds us every day with His Word
- Altar of Incense (not mentioned by our author)



- Front and center
- Made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold
- 1.5 ft square by 3 ft tall
- The burning coals from the brazen altar out in the courtyard were placed on this
- Incense was burned on this daily (it was a symbol of the people's prayers rising up to God)
- It was a picture of Jesus who intercedes for us

The people would come to the outer courtyard. That's where the priests would make sacrifices. They would do that every day.

Then you have the outer room (the holy place) with the lampstand, table of shewbread, and altar of incense. Only the priests could enter into the outer room, and they would do so every day (burning incense, keeping the lampstand burning, and restocking the table of shewbread).

Thirdly, you have the inner room. Only the high priest could go in, and only once a year. If anyone else did, they would drop dead on the spot.

3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;



- Second veil - curtain that separated the outer room (holy room) from the inner room (holy of holies)

Behind the altar of incense, there was a curtain that hung from clasps above. It separated the outer room from the inner room.

Exodus 26:31, 33 - And thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.

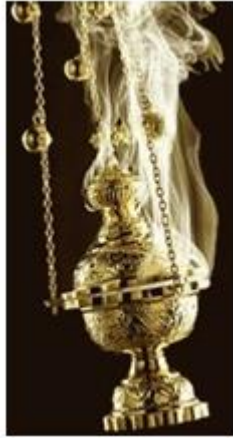
Hebrews 6:19 - Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

The author is now going to describe the inner room.

4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

- Golden censer -
 - used once a year in the most holy place (holy of holies) when Aaron was expressly commanded to burn incense in a censer before the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement
 - Golden censer or altar of incense? - https://defendinginerrancy.com/bible-solutions/Hebrews_9.3-4.php



- Ark of the Covenant -



- box of acacia wood plated with gold
- Roughly 4ft long by 2 ft wide by 2 ft high
- had the two stone tablets of the covenant, a golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded inside
 - The jar of manna and Aaron's rod were lost by the time of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 8:9). All that was in the ark were the two tablets.
 - The ark disappeared after the destruction of Solomon's temple in 587 BC. It doesn't appear in the second temple. The Holy of Holies was empty.

Aaron's Rod - Similarly, when twelve rods or sceptres, one for each tribe of Israel, had been laid up "in the tent of meeting before the testimony," Aaron's rod, the rod of the tribe of Levi, was found the next day to have put forth buds, blossoms, and ripe almonds-a token that Aaron was the man whom God had chosen for the priesthood (Num. 17:1-10). Moses was then directed to "put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony, to be kept as a sign for the rebels" (Num. 17:10).³³

Exodus 25:10 - And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

Exodus 16:33 - And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations.

Numbers 17:10 - And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not.

Exodus 25:16, 21 - And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

Exodus 34:29 - And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.

Deuteronomy 10:2, 5 - And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.

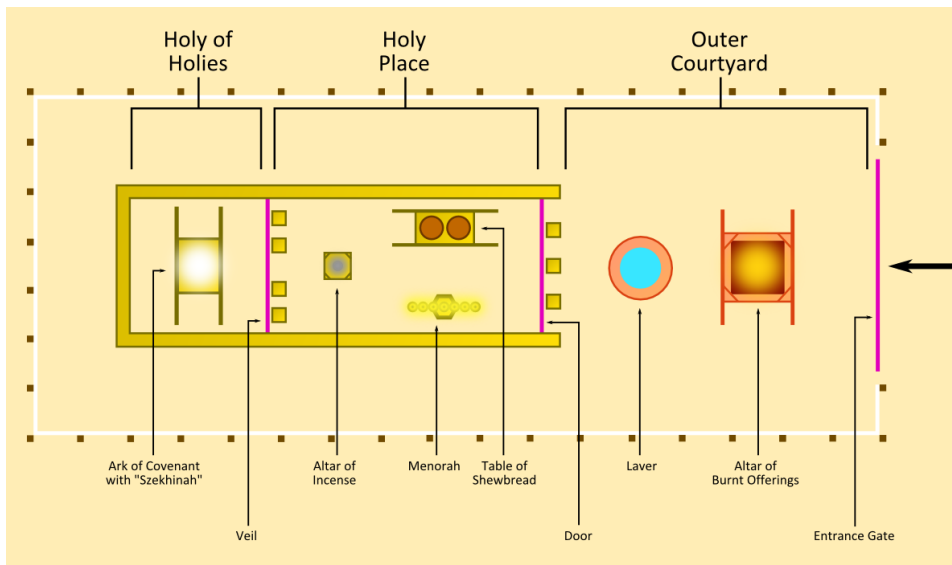
- Over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat - the lid of the ark was a golden slab called the mercy seat or place of atonement
 - On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would sprinkle the blood of the sacrifices on the mercy seat and in front of it.
 - God would appear in a cloud on the mercy seat inbetween the wings of the angels.
 - The mercy seat is a picture of Jesus Christ
 - It is through Him that you and I have complete access to God.

Exodus 25:18-22 - And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. 20 And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. 21 And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. 22 And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

- Of which we cannot now speak particularly - I could speak in detail about the symbolism and significance of these things, but now is not the time to do so.

Rather than focusing on the symbolism of the tabernacle itself, he's going to dive into the significance of the sacrifices made in the tabernacle on the Day of Atonement.

2.) The Sacrifices Under the Old Covenant



6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

Now when these things were thus ordained - When the tabernacle was set up and the furniture was prepared

The priests went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service of God

- The outer room was in constant use by the priests. They would tend to the oil on the lampstand (Ex. 27:20). They would offer incense upon the altar of incense (Ex. 30:7). They would put fresh loaves on the table of showbread (Lev. 24:8). Any member of the priesthood could carry out these duties.

7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

The second - the inner room (holy of holies)

The inner room was used once a year. Only the high priest could enter, and he could only enter once a year on the Day of Atonement. It was to make sacrifice for himself and the errors of the people.

- Errors of the people - sins of ignorance; these are sins that you forgot about or didn't even realize that you committed

- The Day of Atonement was a catch all for the sins you didn't make sacrifice for throughout the course of the year

There were stringent requirements on how he would enter the holy of holies (Lev 16).

- Only the high priest
- Only on the 10th day of the 7th month
- Only wearing white linen attire (symbol of holiness)
- He entered three times
 - First time - he would burn incense in the golden censer before the ark of the covenant (room would fill with smoke)
 - Second time - he carried the blood of the bullock which had been sacrificed as a sin offering for himself and his household, and sprinkled it on the front of the mercy seat and before the mercy seat
 - Third time - he carried the blood of the goat which had been sacrificed as a sin offering for the people, and sprinkled it on and before the mercy seat.
 - Having thus accomplished this part of the atoning ritual, he came out of the sanctuary and confessed the national sins over the head of the second goat, assigned by lot to "Azazel," which was then driven from the haunts of men into a "solitary land."
 - First goat - represented the sacrifice for the sins of the people
 - Second goat - represented the removal of sin from the people

Exodus 30:10 - And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the Lord.

Leviticus 16:2, 11-12, 15, 34 - 2 And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat. 11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: 12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail: 15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: 34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the Lord commanded Moses.

What's the point? What does all this mean?

8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

The Holy Ghost this signifying - the whole sacrificial set up was meant to teach us three things

(A) Access was limited

The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest - there was no direct access to God. How do you know that from the sacrificial system?

- Only one man on one day wearing one outfit had access to God. That's the definition of limited access.

While the first tabernacle was standing - Unimpeded access to the presence of God was not granted until Christ came to accomplish his sacrificial ministry.

What was the way into the holy of holies? Jesus

Hebrews 10:19-20 - 19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

Hebrews 6:19-20 - 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Do you remember what happened when Jesus died?

- The veil to the holy of holies was torn in two from the top to the bottom

9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

(B.) Cleansing was limited

Which was a figure for the time present - It wasn't just a picture of limited access. It was a picture of limited cleansing.

In which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience -

these external sacrifices could not ultimately cleanse anyone's heart. How do you know that from the sacrificial system?

- They had to keep making the sacrifices.
- Illustration - minimum balance on a credit card being paid each month vs the debt being wiped and setting up auto pay connected to his grace (where sin abounds, his grace abounds more)

Hebrews 10:14 - For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

And yet when Jesus died what happened? No more sacrifices. In fact, shortly thereafter in AD 70 the temple was destroyed and has not been rebuilt since.

10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

(C.) The Old Covenant was limited

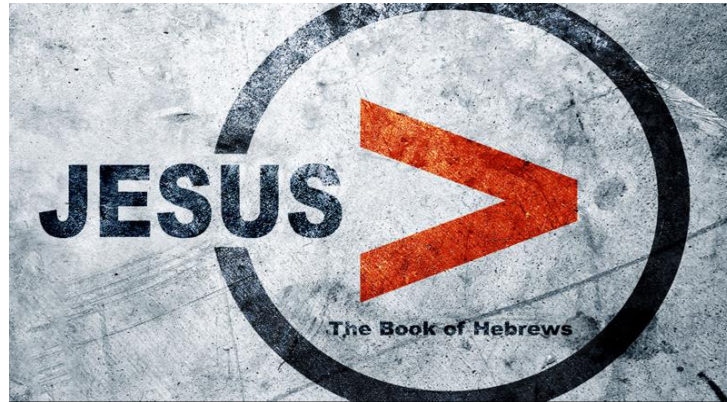
- Which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation - The tabernacle stood firmly in the midst of a covenant that was never meant to be perfect or permanent.
 - These outward sacrifices, dietary restrictions, cleanness requirements, ceremonies, etc. are all temporary things. They were all aspects of a temporary covenant given until the time of reformation (correction) came.
 - Meats and drinks - probably has to do with the food laws of Leviticus 11
 - Divers washings - Not only did the high priest have to bathe his body in water after performing the ritual of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:24), but similar purifications were prescribed for a great variety of actual or ceremonial defilements
 - Carnal ordinances - outward ceremonies
 - What was that time of reformation (correction)? Jesus.
 - Under the OT sacrificial system there was
 - Limited access to God
 - Limited cleansing from sin
 - Limited access to an imperfect covenant
 - Through Jesus' sacrifice we have
 - Complete access to God
 - Complete forgiveness of sins
 - Complete access to a perfect covenant

Application

Have you received Jesus as your Saviour?

You and I as believers have complete access to God. We have VIP access. Are you taking advantage of that?

- Are you confessing sin?
- Do you spend time with Him?
 - How's your Bible reading?
 - How's your prayer?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 13 - HEBREWS 9:1-10

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<div>M</div> Read Hebrews 9:1-5	How many rooms were there in the tabernacle tent? What were the rooms called? What items were in each room?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 9:1-5	What were the items inside the tabernacle used for? How are they a picture of Jesus?
<div>W</div> Read Hebrews 9:6-10	Who was the only person permitted to go into the Holy of Holies, and how often was he permitted to go in every year? Through Jesus, who has complete access to God each and every day?
<div>T</div> Read Hebrews 9:11-22	What is this passage saying?
<div>F</div> Read Hebrews 9:11-22	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 9:11-22

Review:

The Superiority of Jesus' Covenant

A Better Priesthood Means a Better Covenant

A Better Covenant Requires a Better Sacrifice

The Sanctuary under the Old Covenant (outer court, holy place, most holy place)

The Sacrifices under the Old Covenant (Day of Atonement)

Access was limited

Cleansing was limited

Old Covenant - promise to Israel (if you obey me, I will bless you)

New Covenant - promise to Israel (I will give you forgiveness of sins)

- *Available to us through Jesus Christ*

Sermon:

Today we're going to be looking at the sanctuary and the sacrifice under the New Covenant. Open up your Bible to Hebrews 9:11-22.

1.) The Sanctuary Under the New Covenant

11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

But - contrasts with the previous 10 verses

Christ being come an high priest of good things to come - Christ as high priest has brought about these good things that the Old Covenant never could: redemption, forgiveness of sins, complete access to God, eternal inheritance

Hebrews 10:1 - For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

By a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building - The sanctuary of the New Covenant that Jesus ministers in is not on this building or this earth. It's in heaven, and it is greater, perfect, complete. It was not made by the hands of man, but by God Himself.

Hebrews 8:2 - A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

The sanctuary under the Old Covenant

- Made with human hands
- Found on the earth

The sanctuary under the New Covenant

- Made by God
- Found in heaven

And so we see the sanctuary under the New Covenant.

2.) The Sacrifice Under the New Covenant

Notice that this says "sacrifice" not "sacrifices". That's because there was only one.

Old Covenant sacrifices:

- Made with the blood of animals
- Made repeatedly

New Covenant sacrifices:

A.) Made with the Blood of Christ

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Neither by the blood of goats and calves -

- The sacrifice that Christ made was not merely the blood of an animal, and it was not the blood of someone else.
- It was his own blood.

But by his own blood -

- The priests would sacrifice the life and the blood of someone else. That's not so hard.
- Christ sacrificed his own life and his own blood for you and for me. That's hard.
 - It's always easier to sacrifice someone else for yourself than it is to sacrifice yourself for someone else.
 - Old Covenant - sacrificed someone else for themselves
 - New Covenant - Jesus sacrificed himself for someone else

Ephesians 5:2 - And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Titus 2:14 - Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

He entered in once into the holy place

- The priests would go in to make their sacrifice in the holy of holies in the tabernacle year after year after year
- By virtue of one sacrifice, Jesus entered in once into the presence of God in heaven (holy place)

Having obtained eternal redemption for us -

- The priests never obtained forgiveness of sin, just forbearance of sin.
 - Romans 3:24-25 - Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (*payment/atonement*) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.
 - Up until the death of Jesus, the payment owed for sin had been postponed, but not paid for.
 - Illustration - Covid & forbearances
 - With all the sin before the cross, you know what God did? He granted a forbearance to believers knowing that one day Christ would make the payment.
- Jesus made one sacrifice that paid off the forbearance. My sin debt was forgiven. He didn't just pay off the forbearance. He connected his grace to our sin and turned on auto pay. His sacrifice covers all past, present, and future sins. He obtained eternal redemption through His blood and His death for those who accept Him by faith.

Communion Illustration

- Why do we partake? Remember the body and the blood of Christ
- What's so significant about the blood of Christ? The shed blood of Christ is what paid our sin debt. Listen to these Scriptures.

Acts 20:28 - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Ephesians 1:7 - In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Colossians 1:14 - In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

1 Peter 1:18-19 - 18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Revelation 1:5 - And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

Revelation 5:9 - And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

The sacrifice under the New Covenant was made with the blood of Christ on the cross.

i.) Brought about Better Results

Israel had two relationships with God in the Old Testament

- Physical - in their theocracy, God was the governmental head; Israel had an earthly relationship with God their king
- Spiritual – Israel had a spiritual relationship with God their Lord
 - If you broke the law (God's law), there were both legal consequences in your relationship with God your king as well as spiritual consequences in your relationship with God your Lord.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:



For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean -

- Blood of bulls and goats: referring to the annual sacrifice made on the day of atonement
 - Bullock - for the high priest
 - Goat - for the people

- The ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean: purification ritual for those who were unclean (those who had come into contact with dead bodies)
 - Ashes of a red cow would be preserved and set aside outside the city. When someone was unclean, part of the ashes would be mixed with water and sprinkled on the unclean to make them clean (Numbers 19)

Sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh -

- These sacrifices and cleansing rituals made those who offered them clean physically, but not spiritually. They were clean on the outside, but not on the inside. They made them ceremonially pure before God their king here on earth. Those physical rituals in and of themselves could not cleanse the conscience (heart) and make them eternally right with God their Lord.
- Illustration - have you ever had a boss that you were right with on the outside, but couldn't stand on the inside?

Hebrews 10:4 - For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Leviticus 16:14, 16 - And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

Numbers 19:2, 17 - 2 This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke: 17 And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel:

If these blood of goats and calves could cleanse you outwardly...

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

How much more shall the blood of Christ...purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God -

- If the blood of goats and calves could cleanse you outwardly, how much more should the blood of Christ be able to cleanse you inwardly?

- In Christ our conscience is cleaned out and freed from guilt because we have been forgiven through faith in the blood of Christ
 - The blood of goats and calves could make the Israelites externally clean and externally right with God
 - The blood of Christ makes us internally clean and eternally right with God.

Talking about the Old Testament sacrifices

Hebrews 9:9 - Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

Talking about the sacrifice of Christ

Hebrews 10:22 - Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

- How were those in the Old Testament saved? How did they become right with God their Lord?
 - Their salvation was made possible in the same way that it is made possible for us today: through the death of Christ on the cross (which God knew was coming)
 - Romans 3:25 - Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;
 - They were saved by faith
 - Gen 15:6 - Abraham believed God, and he counted it to him for righteousness
 - Hebrews 11
 - By faith Able, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.
 - Salvation has always been a gift of God in response to faith

The sacrifice of Christ brought about better results

- Not just external cleansing
- Internal cleansing to those of faith

ii.) Ratified a Better Covenant

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first

testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament

- Mediator: go between (between two parties) (brings two people together)
 - Christ has by His death become the mediator of a new covenant (promise) from God to Israel (Jeremiah 31)
 - At the heart of that promise is ultimate forgiveness of sins.
 - It's made possible through the death of Christ on the cross.

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

Hebrews 12:24 - And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

That by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament

- When Jesus died on the cross, He did not just pay the penalty of sinners who lived since the cross. He also paid the penalty of sinners who lived long before the cross. His death bought redemption from sin.
- But the death of Christ also brought about something else.

They which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance - the promise of eternal blessings

Jesus' death ratified/initiated the new promise of ultimate forgiveness of sins (past, present, and future), but it also brought about the promise of eternal blessings (eternal inheritance).

Negative + Positive

Illustration – someone paying off your mortgage but also giving you \$500,000 cash

But why did Jesus have to die to do that?

The Greek word for testament/covenant can have a couple different meanings dependent on how its used.

- It can express the idea of a promise, and that's how it's often used in the book of Hebrews

- It can also have the idea of a will
 - In verses 16 and 17, our author tells us that the New Covenant is not just a promise, but it's also like a will that comes with an eternal inheritance for believers.
 - Jesus had to die so that we could receive that inheritance.

16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

Testament - will (with the accompanying eternal inheritance mentioned in verse 15)

For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator - If there is going to be a will, the guy who gives the will has got to be dead or the will isn't any good. You don't get the will until the guy dies.

17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

For a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth - As long as the guy is alive, you can't collect the will.

Implication - Jesus gives us an eternal inheritance in his last will and testament, but he had to die for us to receive it.

It even uses the Old Mosaic Covenant as an example.

18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood

- Even the Old Covenant/testament (which is different than the new) was initiated/ratified by blood (by death)
- It wasn't the death of the one who made it, but death nonetheless.
- He's going to recall when the Old Covenant was ratified at the foot of Mount Sinai in Exodus 24:3-8

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

Exodus 24:6-8 - 3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. 4 And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5 And he sent young men of

the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord. 6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. 8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.

Leviticus 16:14-18 - 14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. 15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: 16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. 18 And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.

Leviticus 14:4-7 - 4 Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: 5 And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: 6 As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: 7 And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.

20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

- This was Moses' act of ratifying the covenant.
 - Illustration - how do you ratify a contract today? You sign it in ink.
 - Old & New Covenants - blood was the ink that ratified that promises
- Recall what Jesus said at the last supper in Matthew 26:
 - *Matthew 26:28 - For this is the blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*

21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

The tabernacle wasn't even built until Exodus 40, but they were still sprinkling blood all over everywhere. From then on, every ceremony connected with the covenant was a bloody ceremony. Blood, blood, blood, blood and more blood. The tabernacle, the vessels of the tabernacle, every bit of divine service was sprinkled with blood. It was all sprinkled with blood because God wanted men to know that every covenant He ever made with man was a covenant that had to bypass sin, and the only sin bypass there is is death.

Exodus 29:12 - And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put it upon the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar.

Exodus 29:36 - And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it.

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood - Almost every ceremonial cleansing under the law involved blood. There were a few exceptions. For example, the very poor could bring four pints of flour for a sin offering. But every other sacrifice under the law involved death and blood.

The sacrifice of Jesus was so much greater

- It wasn't made with someone else's blood. It was made with His own blood for everyone else.
- It didn't bring about forbearance of our sin debt. It brought about forgiveness of our sin debt.
- It initiated the promises of God...because the forgiveness of sin and the receiving of an inheritance both require death.

And without shedding of blood is no remission -

Each of us has a fundamental problem in our relationship with God. It's sin. Sin separates us from God. Because of our sin, we cannot be in the presence of God (we literally cannot get into heaven). Because of our sin, we deserve spiritual death in Hell.

There is nothing else that can grant your forgiveness of sins but the blood of Christ in His death on the cross. You can't enter into God's presence by being good. You can't enter into God's presence by being a fine citizen. You can't enter into God's presence by going through religious exercises. You can't enter into

God's presence by reading the Bible, by going to church, by being a member, by thinking sweet thoughts about God, by getting off drugs, by turning your life around. Isaiah 64:6 - all of our good works are like filthy rags to God.

The only way you'll ever enter into God's presence is to stop trusting in those other things to save you from your sin, and to put your faith in the death of Jesus Christ and His shed blood on the cross for you. That's the only way. That's the only access.

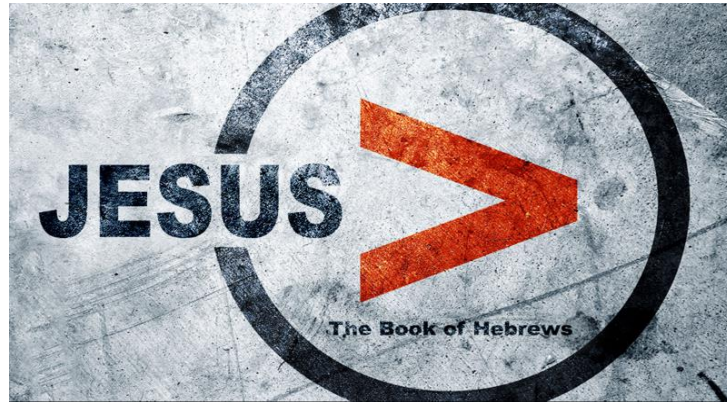
"Lord I know that I'm a sinner. I know that I deserve Hell. I don't deserve you. But you died for my sins on the cross and rose again three days later. I believe that. I trust in that. Based on that will you save me from my sins and give me a home in heaven with you?"

John 14:6 - I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.

Acts 4:12 - Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is none other name, under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Has there ever been a moment in your life where you have understood that you were a sinner, understood that the punishment for your sin was spiritual death in hell, understood that Jesus died for you sins, and by faith asked Him to save you from your sins? Your eternal destination literally depends on your answer to that question.

Leviticus 17:11 - For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 14 - HEBREWS 9:11-22

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 9:11-12	What kind of sanctuary did Christ minister in? Describe it. What is different about the sacrifice of Christ in contrast to the Old Testament sacrifices?
T	Read Hebrews 9:13-14	What results did the sacrifice of Christ bring about that the Old Testament sacrifices could not? Why is that?
W	Read Hebrews 9:15-22	When the owner of a will dies, the beneficiaries receive their inheritance. What inheritance do we receive in virtue of Christ's death on the cross for us?
T	Read Hebrews 9:23-10:4	What is this passage saying?
F	Read Hebrews 9:23-10:4	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 9:23-10:4

Review:

Jesus sacrifice is a greater sacrifice.

A.) Made with the blood of Christ

i.) Brought about better results

- Not just external cleansing, but internal cleansing
- Not just physical cleansing, but spiritual cleansing

ii.) Ratified (made possible) a better covenant: made it possible

It made possible the promise of forgiveness of sins and made possible the distribution of our will of eternal inheritance.

How did it make them possible?

- Forgiveness of sins requires death because the wages of sin is death. So Christ died for our sins so He could offer us forgiveness of sins.
- The bestowal of an inheritance requires death. Because Christ has died we can receive our eternal inheritance that has been promised to us.

Sermon:

iii.) Was necessary

In verses 23-24 we see the conclusion of the point that was being made last week.

In order to bring about a new, better covenant and the blessings that accompanied it (forgiveness of sins, access to God, an eternal inheritance), it was necessary that a better sacrifice be made.

23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be purified with these - In the Old Testament, it was necessary that the earthly tabernacle (pattern of things in the heavens) and its accessories be cleansed with the blood of sacrificial animals so that people might approach with acceptance and worship.

But the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these - but the heavenly system required a better sacrifice, and it is through the sacrifice of Christ that the heavens are rendered accessible to the guilty.

While ritual purification is adequate for the material order, which is but an earthly copy of the spiritual order, a better kind of sacrifice is necessary to effect purification in the spiritual order.

Hebrews 8:5 - Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

How do you know that?

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself - Christ has not gone into any physical sanctuary, but into the presence of God in heaven

Now to appear in the presence of God for us - Christ appears in the presence of God on the basis of his sacrifice to minister on our behalf as sinners. Whereas Satan accuses us, Jesus is our advocate who defends us based on His death on the cross for our sins.

Hebrews 7:25 - ...he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Romans 8:34 - Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

I John 2:1 - ... And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

So we see that the sacrifice of Christ was necessary because the heavenly order and spiritual cleansing required a better sacrifice.

B.) Made once

i.) In contrast to the Old Testament sacrifices

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

Nor yet that he should offer himself often - Jesus Christ offered Himself for sin one time

- when Christ entered into the heavenly sanctuary (into the presence of God), He did so by virtue of a sacrifice which was made once for all.

This is in contrast to

Often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others -

Over and over again, year after year on the Day of Atonement the high priest would

- Make the sacrifice
- Enter into the presence of God
- Leave

Jesus

- Made one sacrifice
- Entered into the presence of God once

If Jesus' sacrifice was not a one time thing then...

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world - If Jesus' sacrifice did require repeating, then He would have had to die over and over and over again since the beginning of the world.

Illustration - imagine Jesus having to die for every new sin from every single person

That would be absurd!

But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself - Rather, Christ has appeared once to put away sin by one perfect sacrifice of himself, thus marking the end of the world as we knew it. It's not that He came at the end of an era. Rather, His coming marked the end of an era.

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ was made once and presented once.

Ok Pastor, but that's obvious. No one believes that Jesus is sacrificed over and over again. Well that's precisely what the Catholic church teaches.

Illustration - Catholic doctrine of the perpetual offering of Christ

- The bread and the juice miraculously become the body and blood of Christ
- Jesus died once, but in the mass every week, the sacrifice is represented over and over and over again.
- "Inasmuch as the priesthood of Christ is perpetual, and sacrifice is an essential part of priesthood, therefore, the sacrificial offering of Christ must also be perpetual...The holy mass is a true and proper sacrifice...It is physical and propitiatory, removing sins and conferring the grace of repentance." – Ludwig Ott
- Is that what the Scripture says?

Hebrews 9:25 - nor yet that he should offer himself often...

Hebrews 9:12 - Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Hebrews 7:27 - Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

Hebrews 10:10 - By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

1 Peter 3:18 - For Christ also hath once suffered for sins...

Jesus Christ sacrifice was made and presented once.

The author then furthers his point about the one time sacrifice of Christ with an illustration.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment - Men and women die once by divine appointment (that's an appointment that none of us miss), and after death what follows? Judgment.

- For believers: judgment seat of Christ
- For unbelievers: Great white throne judgment

2 Cor. 5:10 - For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Revelation 20:12-13 - 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

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

So Christ was once offered to the bear the sins of many - Christ died once for our sins, and He bore the judgment that we deserved.

And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation -

- Illustration - high priest reappearing from the holy of holies
 - The Israelites who watched their high priest enter the sanctuary for them waited expectantly for his reappearance; that was a welcome sign that he and the sacrifice which he presented had been accepted by God. If he made one wrong move in the sanctuary, he died.
- Illustration - Jesus making the sacrifice and presenting Himself to God in heaven
 - When Christ appears the second time to those who expect him, it will not be to deal with sin once more. Rather, all the blessings which he won for his people at his first appearing will be theirs to enjoy in perpetual fullness at his second appearing.

Illustration Review-

- Man dies once and judgment follows.
- Jesus died once, bore our judgment, and for those who accept his sacrifice by faith, when He returns again, we will be with Him forever.

Titus 2:13 - Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Jesus sacrifice was made once in contrast to the Old Testament sacrifices. But it was also made...

ii.) In fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifices

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things

- The law - ceremonial law, the sacrificial law
- Shadow - foreshadow of good things to come
- Good things to come - privileges and blessings that came through the sacrifice of Christ; forgiveness of sins, complete access to God.
- Christ and his sacrifice are the perfect reality to which old testament system pointed forward. They are the fulfillment of it.

Can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect - the Old Testament sacrificial system could not bring about forgiveness of sins or complete access to God.

- But it foreshadowed something that could

Colossians 2:16-17 - Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Hebrews 7:11 - If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

Hebrews 8:5 - Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Hebrews 9:9 - Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

How do you know the Old Testament sacrificial system couldn't bring about forgiveness of sins?

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

For then would they not have ceased to be offered? - If the old testament sacrifices had been able to cure the problem of sin, then the sacrifices would have ended.

Because that the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins - Once you're cured, you stop thinking about the disease. It fades from your life.

- True cleansing and forgiveness of sins is a one time occurrence that brings about freedom from guilt regarding the penalty of your sin.
- Such a cleansing as this, which means that those who receive it are thenceforward "clean" without requiring any more clean ups, was unknown to the Levitical law

But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year

- Illustration - difference between a treatment and a cure
 - Every time you take that treatment, it reminds you that you have that disease.
 - Chemo & cancer
 - Injections & back problems
 - The old testament sacrifices were like a treatment that constantly reminded Israel of their sin and need for forgiveness. Every time you sinned, you made a sacrifice. Every time you made a sacrifice, you were reminded that your sins had not been forgiven once for all.
 - The cross is not a treatment. It is a cure for sin for those who receive it by faith.
 - As believers in Jesus Christ, when we look back at the cross it reminds us not that we need ultimate forgiveness of sins, but that we have ultimate forgiveness of sins.
 - Salvation is not about what we do. It's about what's been done for us.
 - The Old Testament sacrificial system was like a treatment that foreshadowed the coming of the cure.
- We are also talking about remembrance of sins in the sight of God. That remembrance of sins requires action on his part: either pardon or judgment.
- A pardon which has to be bestowed repeatedly cannot convey the same peace of conscience as a pardon bestowed once for all.
 - There is a major contrast between the old order in which "there is an annual reminder of sins" and the new order in which God promises His people that He "will remember their sins no more".

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

The relatively easy adaptation of the Palestinian synagogue to the new conditions after the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. shows that the principle of the insufficiency of animal sacrifice had been widely grasped."24 Yet the

Pharisees took part in the sacrificial cultus as long as it endured, and when it disappeared they had to give serious thought to the question how sin was now to be expiated.

Psalm 51:9-10, 16-17 - 9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Micah 6:6-7 - 6 Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? 7 Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

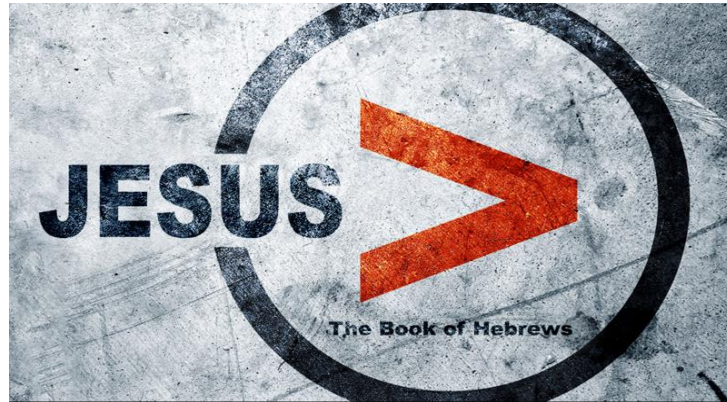
For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins -
Moral defilement cannot be removed by material means.

- Not a magic pill
- Not sacrifices
- Not hail Mary's
- Not good deeds
- Not religious pilgrimages

It can only be removed by faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The cross of Jesus Christ is the cure for the greatest disease this world has ever seen: sin.

Have you received the cure?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 15 - HEBREWS 9:23-10:4

READING	STUDY QUESTION
M Read Hebrews 9:23-24 (also Heb. 7:25 & 1 John 2:1)	Where does Christ minister for us? How does Christ minister for us according to these verses?
T Read Hebrews 9:25-28	How does the sacrifice of Christ contrast with the Old Testament sacrifices?
W Read Hebrews 10:1-4	In what way(s) did the old testament sacrifices foreshadow the sacrifice of Christ? In what way is the sacrifice of Christ a cure for sin, and not merely a treatment?
T Read Hebrews 10:5-18	What is this passage saying?
F Read Hebrews 10:5-18	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 10:5-18

Review:

Part 1 - Jesus > Angels (ch 1-2)

Part 2 - Jesus > Moses (ch 3-4:13)

Part 3 - Jesus > Priests (ch. 4:14-10:18)

Part 4 - A Call to Faith in Jesus (duty is founded on doctrine) (10:19-13:25)

Sacrifice of Jesus

Made with the blood of Christ

Made once

A.) In contrast to the Old Testament sacrifices

B.) In fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifices

Sermon:

C.) In accordance with the Scriptures

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure

Verses 5 & 6 are a quote from Psalm 40:6-8. It may have been viewed in ancient times as a Messianic reference. It's a strong quotation because it showed that even in the Old Testament, God wasn't pleased with the old sacrificial system.

Wherefore when he cometh into the world - This is Christ talking to the Father before He entered the world, before His incarnation

Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not...In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure - God instituted the Old Testament sacrificial system. Why didn't He like it?

- They took an act that was meant to be done in faith and that was meant to be a symbol of faith, and they made it into a ritual they performed with no faith at all. It was religion with no relationship.
 - Illustration - getting baptized without being saved; taking communion without being saved
- "Let go of the Old Testament sacrificial system. Jesus is a better & perfect sacrifice. God wasn't pleased with the system anyways. Look at Psalm 40:6-8"

- Well then why did He start it?
 - He started it the way He wanted it, but Israel took it and messed it up, and it turned into a dead ritual.
 - The problem wasn't the system. The problem was them.

1 Samuel 15:22-23 - 22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

- Saul disobeys God explicitly, but then tries to go through the motions of religion anyway.
 - Illustration - living like the devil during the week, coming to church on Sunday, and thinking God's pleased with you
- God says, "Rituals/religion without relationship mean nothing. You know how I know there's no relationship? You didn't obey me Saul."
- Illustration - honey I cheated on you, but here's a box of chocolates and a bouquet of flowers
- Rituals without relationship mean nothing to God.

Psalms 51:16-17 - 16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

- David realized that what God wanted all along was not a ritual but a relationship. The ritual was meant to be an outflow of the relationship, but Israel decided to cut off the relationship and keep the ritual.

Isaiah 1:10-11 - 10 Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. 11 To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

- Your empty religious rituals make me sick.

Application - our empty religious rituals make God sick

- Church attendance
- Giving
- Serving
- Bible reading
- Prayer

- These things are meant to be the outflow of a real thriving relationship with God. But outside of that relationship, they mean nothing!

So we see the issues of the old sacrificial system. It was insufficient to bring about complete forgiveness of sins. But not only was it insufficient. It was corrupted. Israel had kept the ritual but discarded of their relationship with God.

Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

- This is the implication of what it is written in the Hebrew in Psalm 40:6 where it literally says "Mine ears hast thou opened/dug" -
 - Remember, this is Jesus talking to God.
 - God, you have made a body for me. You have formed it. You have dug out my ears. You have opened them so that I might hear your will and obey.
 - The digging or hollowing out of the ears is part of the total work of fashioning a human body.
 - The Greek translation in the Septuagint is an interpretative paraphrase of the Hebrew, not a variant.
 - *Isaiah 50:5-6 - 5 The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. 6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*
- God's ultimate plan was not Old Testament sacrifices but the incarnation of Christ. Christ would come down to earth in the form of a man, live a perfect life, die on the cross for the sins of humanity, and be resurrected the third day.
 - The sacrifice of Christ was made once in accordance with the Scripture.

Psalm 40:6-8 - 6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, 8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

Jeremiah 6:20 - To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.

Amos 5:21-22 - 21 I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. 22 Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

Then said I, Lo, I come...to do thy will O God - I'm going to obey you. I'm going to do your will.

In the volume of the book it is written of me - If you just read the Old Testament, this would all be patently obvious. It's prophesied.

So far he has just quoted Psalm 40:6-8. Now he's going to provide commentary.

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

Above - in the verses I just referenced.

When he said Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

- Part 1 - in reference to the old system under the priesthood

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God

- Part 2 - in reference to the new system under Christ

He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second

- He said all this to show that he took away the first to establish the second.
- The old system was insufficient and corrupted. I'm going to remove it and replace it with something better. How? I'm going to prepare a body for my Son. He will come down to earth and do my will. What is that? Die on the cross for the sins of humanity.
 - He took away the first sacrificial system that He might establish the sacrifice of His Son.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

By the which will - What will? The will of God.

- Through God's will in accordance with the Scripture in Psalm 40:6-8

We are sanctified - we are made permanently holy

through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ - the body prophesied in Psalm 40. The body prepared by God before He entered into the world.

Once for all - It was a one time sacrifice made in accordance with the Scripture.

The sacrifice of Jesus was made once in accordance with the Scriptures.

D.) In confirmation of its effectiveness

How do you know the sacrifice of Jesus was effective?

i.) effective because Jesus sat down

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins - the priests made sacrifices every day that could never take away sins and they were always standing. They never sat down because they were never done.

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

But this man - in contrast to the numerous OT priests, we have one priest: Jesus Christ

After he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever - so we have one priest that offered one sacrifice and then...

Sat down on the right hand of God - He sat down, because He was done. His sacrifice was totally effective.

Hebrews 1:3 - Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

ii.) Effective because Jesus has defeated all of his enemies

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool

- Jesus has won the victory. Now it's only a matter of time until all His enemies (Satan, his armies, the unregenerate, and death itself) are put in subjection to him.
- Till his enemies be made his footstool - means to be put in final subjection

- The language arose from the custom of conquerors in putting their feet on the necks of their enemies, as a symbol of subjection
- *1 Corinthians 15:24-26 - 24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*

Psalm 110:1 - The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Hebrews 1:13 - But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

iii.) Effective because believers are eternally secure

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified - this is a fantastic verse on the eternal security of the believer. Once you are saved, you are perfected forever.

- The cross of Jesus Christ and the salvation it offers are a cure not a treatment.
 - Cures are effective.
 - Treatments are contingent.

iv.) Effective because it makes possible the new covenant

15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

Wherefore the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us - He's going to quote Jeremiah 31 where God promises a New Covenant to Israel with better results (forgiveness of sins and a new heart)

16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

The promise that the Holy Spirit made through Jeremiah has been made possible in Jesus.

Two options for the Jew

- Accept what the Holy Spirit through Jeremiah said and consequently accept Jesus Christ and the new covenant

- Reject Jesus Christ and the new covenant (but also have to reject Jeremiah and the Holy Spirit)

The one time sacrifice of Jesus has made possible the new covenant that God promised.

Jeremiah 31:33-34 - 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

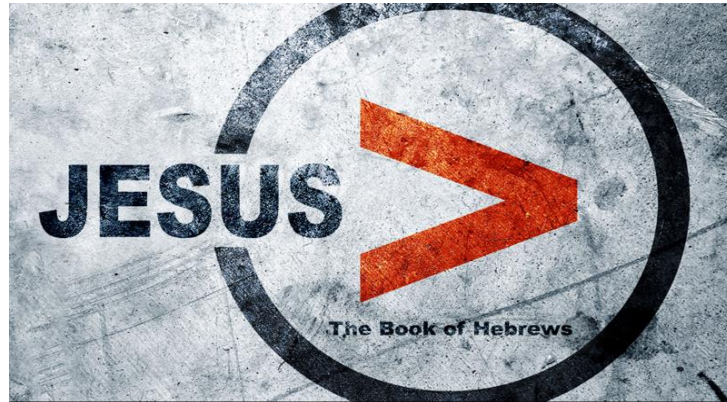
Ok, the sacrifice of Jesus is effective. What does that mean? What's the implication?

18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin - the sacrifice of Christ is effective, so stop going to the temple.

Illustration - There is a cure. Stop taking the treatment.

- Ok I've stopped taking the treatment. I've accepted the cure. What do I do now? You'll have to come back next week to find out (or you can just read ahead in the devotional guide!)



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 16 - HEBREWS 10:5-18

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read Psalm 40:6-8, 1 Samuel 15:22-23, Psalm 51:16-17, Isaiah 1:10-11</p>	<p>How does God view it when we engage in religious rituals while neglecting our relationship with Him? How had the Israelites done this with the Old Testament sacrificial system?</p>
<p>T Read Psalms 40:6-8 & Hebrews 10:5-10</p>	<p>What was God's plan for replacing the insufficient & corrupted Old Testament sacrificial system? What did the offering of Jesus' body accomplish for us?</p>
<p>W Read Hebrews 10:11-18</p>	<p>In what ways do we know that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was effective?</p>
<p>T Read Hebrews 10:19-25</p>	<p>What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/</p>
<p>F Read Hebrews 10:19-25</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

HEBREWS 10:19-25

Review:

Part 1 – Jesus is Greater than the Angels

Part 2 – Jesus is Greater than Moses

Part 3 – Jesus is Greater than the Priests

Part 4 – A Call to Faith in Jesus

- Chapter 10: An Encouragement to Faith
- Chapter 11: Examples of Faith
- Chapter 12: Enemies of Faith
- Chapter 13: Expressions of Faith

Sermon:

1.) An Encouragement to Faith

Hebrews 10:19-25.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,
20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

A.) The Basis of our Faith

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

Therefore - based on what we've learned in chapters 1-10

- Jesus is greater than the angels (mediators of the Old Covenant) (ch. 1-2)
 - His name is greater (God calls Him Son)
 - His worship is greater (the angels are commanded to worship Him)
 - His nature is greater (He is God incarnate)
 - His eternity is greater (He has always been & will always be)
 - His destiny is greater (His destiny is exaltation at the right hand of God the father)
- Jesus is greater than Moses (author of the Old Covenant) (ch. 3-4)

- Moses was the house. Jesus was the builder.
 - Moses was a servant. Jesus is the Son.
 - Moses delivered Israel from Egypt. Christ delivers us from sin.
 - Moses brought Israel to the edge of the Promised Land. Christ brings us to a better Promised Land, into a better rest.
- Jesus is greater than the priests (executors of the Old Covenant) (ch. 4-10)
 - He met the qualifications
 - He sympathizes with us.
 - He made sacrifice for sin
 - He was appointed by God.
 - He was greater than Melchizedek who was greater than Abraham who was greater than Levi.
 - And thus his priesthood is greater than Levi's priesthood
 - His priesthood was prophesied.
 - He is a better priest of perfect quality ministering in a better sanctuary that brought about a better covenant through a better sacrifice
 - A sacrifice made once
 - A sacrifice made with His own blood

Having boldness to enter into the holiest - the presence of God (the equivalent of the holy of holies)

Illustration - stringent restrictions on entering into the holy of holies (1 person, 1 day, 1 way)

We can have boldness in our access to God.

Illustration

- Very little access to communication prior to 1876
- But then something happened in 1876 – the phone was invented
- Now, just about everyone has access to call anyone even if they're thousands of miles away
- There was a time when there was very little access to the rest of the world, but now there is access
- There was a time when there was very little access to God, but now we have a direct line

How? What is the basis?

by the blood of Jesus - Jesus Christ's perfect sacrifice has removed the obstacle of sin that separated us from God.

Illustration - not a gap between us and God...an immovable rock between us and God.
Jesus death on the cross removes the rock of sin and gives us access to God.

Romans 5:2 - By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Ephesians 2:18 - For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Ephesians 3:12 - In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Through his death on the cross, we can have boldness in our access to the God of the universe because the problem of sin has been dealt with.

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us - There is a new and living way to God that Jesus has made for us.

- New - freshly slaughtered
- Living - Jesus Christ is the only sacrifice ever made before that's still alive today

What's the way? It's Him.

The way to God is through Jesus Christ.

Through the veil, that is to say, his flesh - There was this veil that separated the dwelling place of God in the tabernacle from the outer room. It stood inbetween man and God.

- Jesus body was like that veil.
- When the body of Christ was sacrificed at the cross (torn at the cross), it was like that veil between us and God was torn...and now we have direct access to God through Christ (through that opened veil)

There is one way to God, and it is through faith in Jesus Christ.

John 10:9 - I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

John 14:6 - Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts 4:12- Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is none other name, under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

We have access to God through Jesus Christ (who is greater than anything and everything), but we don't just have access, we also have a priest.

- And he's the only priest you'll ever need

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

And having an high priest over the house of God - Christ has not only made a way for us to God, but He is already there in the presence of God ministering for us.

Hebrews 4:14 - Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

1 Timothy 3:15 - But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

So we see that the basis of our faith is that Jesus is greater, that Jesus has made a way to God, and Jesus is ministering on our behalf in heaven. Based on that, he issues...

B.) A Call to Embrace Faith

Seeing that we have access to God and that we have a high priest ministering for us in heaven...

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us draw near - come to God; approach Him in worship

- For those who have not been saved, approach Him for salvation
- For those who have been saved, approach Him in worship

But how?

Illustration - approaching dignitaries with certain etiquette

What is the etiquette for approaching the God of the universe?

With a true heart - with a genuine heart

- You can be religious in a way that fools everyone in the world, but God sees past what you do in public, past what you do in private...He sees who you are in private (your most private thoughts)

In full assurance of faith - in confidence; not confidence in ourselves but confidence of our faith in God's Word and His promises

Why? Since we have had...

Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience -

- Illustration - I've never literally had my heart sprinkled
 - This isn't talking about sprinkling baptism either (you won't find that in the Scripture)
- Just as in the Old Testament, the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifice brought external cleansing
- So through the cross, the sprinkling of the blood of Christ on our hearts has brought internal cleansing.
- We've been saved.

and our bodies washed with pure water - some interpret this as a metaphor for salvation (c.f. Titus 3:5) or sanctification (c.f. Ephesians 5:25-27); I believe this is referring to baptism as an outward expression of a clean conscience, of someone who has been forgiven internally (1 Peter 3:21)

Titus 3:5 - Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Ephesians 5:25-27 - 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

1 Peter 3:21 - The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Embrace the access that you have.

Illustration - having access to the gym, but never going

- He's encouraging them to take advantage of the access that they have

Hebrews 4:16 - Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Ephesians 3:12 - In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Hebrews 9:14 - How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Ezekiel 36:25 - Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

C.) A Call to Continue in Faith

Seeing that we now have access to God, let us not only embrace faith, but also...

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering - continue in the faith that you have professed

For he is faithful that promised - the promises of God to us as believers are sure. We can bank on them.

- If God is faithful in what he has promised, let us also be faithful in continuing in that which we have professed.

Hebrews 4:14 - Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

1 Corinthians 1:9 - God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

D.) A Call to Encourage One Another in Faith

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works - Don't just continue in the faith alone. Continue together and encourage others to continue.

Provoke - irritate

- Do you know any people that just irritate you?
 - Illustration - my little brother was an irritator growing up
- Illustration - the irritation of an alarm clock provokes us to wake up for an early flight
 - God has designed you to irritate your brothers and sisters in Christ to love and good works...to continue in the faith.
- Illustration - "missed you Sunday", "I'm worried about you", "are you doing ok"
 - Fleshly response - who do you think you are?
 - Spiritual response - I better check myself

We cannot provoke/irritate one another to love and good works and by implication continuance in faith, if we are not together. You want to know why it's important for you to be in a church? That's why.

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is - This is not in reference to missing church, but in reference to leaving the church. Don't leave the fellowship of Christians in the church and go back to the temple and its fellowship

- For us, it's not the temple, but it might be the bar. It might be the casinos. It might be a group of lost work buddies. It might be my living room couch. It might be an extra hour of sleep.
- The primary thrust of the verse is not a command against occasionally missing a service because you're out of town. It's a command against leaving the church (trying to do the Christian life alone or even worse not trying to do the Christian life at all).
- God has designed you to be an irritator and to be irritated unto love and good works in the context of a local fellowship of believers, but you can't do that if you're not plugged into one.
- Why did people leave the church back in the first century? (Adolf von Harnack - church historian)
 - False Sense of Superiority & Self Sufficiency
 - People who worship God from Yosemite
 - It's not people who are insufficient that worry me. It's people who think they're sufficient.
 - Fear of Persecution
 - It's coming. There's a purging of the church that is happening.
 - Laziness
 - Looking for a Quick Fix

But exhorting one another - encourage one another

- Don't leave the church. Stay in the church, and minister to others in the church.
- God has designed you to minister to people in a local church setting.
- Church is not just about what you get, but what you give.
- Ask not what others in the church can do for you, but what you can do for others in the church.
- Application - ministry involvement (planning for next year)
 - Children's Ministry
 - Music
 - Small Groups
 - Hospitality
 - Meals

- Ushers
- Greeters
- Decor
- Letters of encouragement

And so much the more as you see the day approaching - our gatherings and encouragement to one another ought to be increasing more and more as we see the day of the return of the Lord approaching.

When is the Lord returning? I don't know...but I do know this. We're one day closer than we were yesterday.

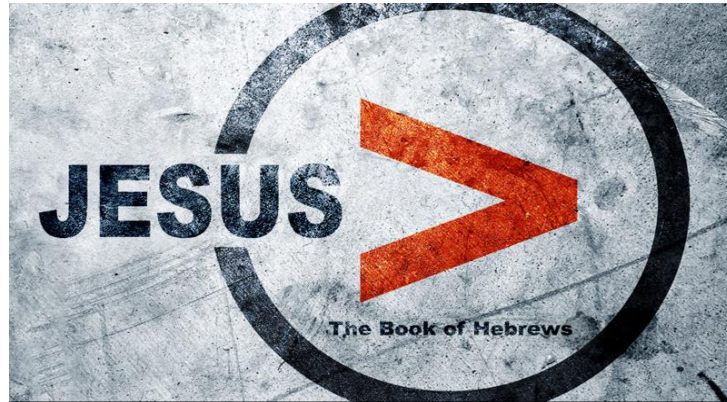
Invitation

You and I have direct access to God.

- When's the last time you used it?

God has designed us not just to continue in the faith but to encourage others to continue as well.

- Are you plugged in with the community here, or are you just here and there?
- Are you involved in serving? Are you using the gifts God has given to you to use in the church?
- Are you building people up or tearing them down?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 17 - HEBREWS 10:19-25

READING	STUDY QUESTION
M Read Hebrews 10:19-21	What does it mean that we have access to God through Jesus Christ?
T Read Hebrews 10:22	How should we approach God in worship as believers?
W Read Hebrews 10:23-25	Why is it important for us to be plugged in and serving as part of a local church?
T Read Hebrews 10:26-39	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F Read Hebrews 10:26-39	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 10:26-39

Review:

A Call to Embrace Faith

A Call to Continue in the Faith

A Call to Encourage Others in the Faith

Sermon:

1.) A Caution Against Leaving the Faith

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

Apostasy – drawing away from the true God to false gods (Deut. 13:13); literally to fall away (MacArthur J. , Hebrews Book Series, 1972-1973)

- There's a difference between a carnal Christian and an apostate.
- There's a difference between a doubting Christian and an apostate

Illustration – Christian school friends that have fallen away from the faith

- Intellectuals
- Fleshliness
- Politics
- LGBTQ

After that we have received the knowledge of the truth – the Greek word for knowledge is *epignosis* which means deep knowledge. This is in reference to someone who really understands in their deepest self. (MacArthur J. , Hebrews Book Series, 1972-1973)

- Truth - refers to the gospel message; the message of the New Covenant
- Enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, partaker of the Holy Spirit, tasted the Word and the powers of the ages to come (Hebrews 6)

If we sin willfully – knowing, understanding, and experiencing the truth, and yet rejecting it intentionally

- Intentional (premeditated); "with a high hand" (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 2974)
- Habitual (constant state of sinning) (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)
 - o Apostasy – habitual and intentional decision to turn your back on Jesus Christ (MacArthur J. , Hebrews Book Series, 1972-1973)
 - We know that "sinning willfully" is in reference to apostasy based on the author's further description in verse 29. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 2981)
 - o *Hebrews 3:12 - Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

- *2 Peter 2:20-22 - For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*

Example - Judas

- Looked like a true follower of Jesus Christ
- Watched Jesus perform miracles
- Heard Jesus teach
- Saw Jesus' life day by day
- Turned his back on Christ

There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins – There is only one sacrifice for sin: Jesus. If you reject that one way to God, folks, there are no other options.

- Further, for the first century Jews, he is telling them that the Old Testament sacrifices are obsolete! (MacArthur J. , Hebrews Book Series, 1972-1973)

Numbers 15:28-31 - And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

Hebrews 6:4 - For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation – apart from Jesus Christ, there is no other sacrifice for sins. But not only that, apart from Jesus all that remains is judgment and fiery indignation

- Fearful: terrifying
- Judgment: justice
 - Sin will be paid for. Either by accepting Christ's death on the cross or paying for it ourselves for all eternity.

- Fiery indignation: literally means fiery fire; figuratively means fiery anger (Bible Hub)

Which shall devour the adversaries – the enemies of God; those who sins against have not been pardoned

- For those who turn from God, there is no other payment for sins. All that remains is a terrifying justice and devouring fire.

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 - 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

Matthew 25:41 - 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

He gives an illustration to help support his claim.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two three witnesses – even

- Illustration – you break the law, you pay the penalty (fine, imprisonment, death)
 - o In the Old Testament with the theocracy of Israel, God's law was the law. If you broke the law, there was spiritual consequences like there are today, but there were also physical consequences (like there are for breaking American law). They took the law incredibly serious, and the consequences were incredibly serious.
 - o In the Old Testament, a man who lived in disobedience to the law of Moses, and whose disobedience was confirmed by 2-3 witnesses, was put to death. (MacArthur J. , Hebrews Book Series, 1972-1973)

Deuteronomy 17:2-5 - If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant, And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die.

Deuteronomy 19:15 - One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

He's using a lesser than to greater than example here. If that was the case with the law of Moses...

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God –

- if someone was put to death for disobeying the law of Moses, what do you think is going to happen to the one who stomps on the face of the Son of God?
- Trodden under foot – treat with rude neglect (Bible Hub)
- The punishment for disobeying the law of Moses was physical death. The punishment for disregarding the sacrifice of Christ is spiritual death, a much sorer punishment." (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 2988)

And we're not even talking about some random person who didn't really know Jesus. We're talking about someone who knew who Jesus was (had full knowledge), someone who was in the church, active in the church....looked like a believer.

Hebrews 2:2-3 - 2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

Hebrews 12:25 - See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

And hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing – the “he” in this verse is referring to Jesus Christ, not the apostate

- In Hebrews 10:14, the one who is sanctified is perfected forever
 - If that's true, this can't be genuinely in reference to the believer.
- Sanctified – made holy; set apart (Bible Hub)
 - The Scripture affirms that Jesus Christ was sanctified (set apart) so that we might be sanctified (set apart; made holy).
 - John 10:36 - Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?
 - John 17:19 - And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.
 - In fact, it was through his sufferings on the cross that Jesus Christ was set apart as a perfectly suitable Savior for us.
 - Hebrews 2:10 - For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect (*perfectly qualified to be our Savior and priest; set apart*) through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

- Hebrews 5:8-9 - 8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered (*perfectly qualified to be our Savior and priest; set apart*) 9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,
- “By His shed blood, Christ was set apart to God as the perfect sacrifice. You remember He entered into the Holy of Holies and, there, having borne the perfect sacrifice, shedding His blood, He then entered into the Holy of Holies even as the priest did and sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat. Christ, bearing His blood, as it were, and finalizing that great sacrifice and establishing the new covenant. So it was the covenant sealed in blood, and these are men who count that blood set apart to seal the covenant as an unholy thing.” (MacArthur J. , Hebrews Book Series, 1972-1973)

These have counted the blood of Jesus Christ wherein He was set apart as a perfect sacrifice, an unholy thing.

John Owens - The last aggravation of this sin with respect unto the blood of Christ, is the nature, use, and efficacy of it; it is that “wherewith he was sanctified.” It is not real or internal sanctification that is here intended, but it is a separation and dedication unto God; in which sense the word is often used. And all the disputes concerning the total and final apostasy from the faith of them who have been really and internally sanctified, from this place, are altogether vain; though that may be said of a man, in aggravation of his sin, which he professeth concerning himself. But the difficulty of this text is, concerning whom these words are spoken: for they may be referred unto the person that is guilty of the sin insisted on; he counts the blood of the covenant, wherewith he himself was sanctified, an unholy thing. For as at the giving of the law, or the establishing of the covenant at Sinai, the people being sprinkled with the blood of the beasts that were offered in sacrifice, were sanctified, or dedicated unto God in a peculiar manner; so those who by baptism, and confession of faith in the church of Christ, were separated from all others, were peculiarly dedicated to God thereby. And therefore in this case apostates are said to “deny the Lord that bought them,” or vindicated them from their slavery unto the law by his word and truth for a season, 2 Peter 2:1. But the design of the apostle in the context leads plainly to another application of these words. It is Christ himself that is spoken of, who was sanctified and dedicated unto God to be an eternal high priest, by the blood of the covenant which he offered unto God, as I have showed before. The priests of old were dedicated and sanctified unto their office by another, and the sacrifices which he offered for them; they could not sanctify themselves: so were Aaron and his sons sanctified by Moses, antecedently unto their offering any sacrifice themselves. But no outward act of men or angels could unto this purpose pass on the Son of God. He was to be the priest himself, the sacrificer himself, — to dedicate, consecrate, and sanctify himself, by his own sacrifice, in concurrence with the actings of God the Father in his suffering. See John 17:19; Hebrews 2:10, 5:7, 9, 9:11, 12. That precious blood of Christ, wherein or whereby he was sanctified, and dedicated unto God as the eternal high priest of the church, this they esteemed “an unholy thing;” that is, such as would have no such effect as to consecrate him unto God and his office. (Owen, 1980, pp. 6:545-546)

Another possible interpretation of this verse is that these apostates that the author is referring to were seemingly saved/sanctified brothers and sisters in Christ. As far as anyone could tell, they were saved, and so the author describes them as such. However, their apostasy would go to show that they were never truly saved/sanctified to begin with.

And hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace – has insulted the Holy Spirit by rejecting His working on his heart

- “Treading underfoot the Son of God, he rejects God the Father who sent him; counting the blood that is so holy as unholy, he rejects the Son that gave it; and insulting the gentle, gracious leading of the Spirit, he rejects the Spirit who convicts him.” (MacArthur J. , Hebrews Book Series, 1972-1973)
- He knows of God, and yet intentionally and habitually rejects God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 2:11 - For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren

Hebrews 9:13-14 - For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Jeremiah 1:5 - Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

1 Cor. 7:14 - For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

2 Peter 2:1 - But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Matthew 12:31-32 - Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

He's going to quote some Old Testament passages to further his point regarding judgment for these.

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. – Here he quotes Deuteronomy 32:35 & 32:36

- If God took vengeance in the Old Testament on his own people when they broke the law, how much more so do you think He will do so now to those apostates in the church who reject the gospel of His Son today?

Deuteronomy 32:35 - To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

Romans 12:19 - Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Deuteronomy 32:36 - For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.

Psalms 50:4 - He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God – To be judged as an enemy of God Almighty is a terrifying situation

Luke 12:5 - But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

The warning of 10:26-31 is followed by words of reassurance and encouragement. Our author does not wish to discourage his readers, but to embolden them so that they will emerge victorious from the present growing test of their faith. This he does now in the first place by reminding them of how they stood a severe test in the earlier days of their life as Christians. (Bruce, 1990, pp. Location 3040-3042)

2.) A Course for Continuing in the Faith

Illustration – how do I continue while in the middle of my race?

Don't turn away from the faith, but rather.

A.) Continue by remembering your past

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

But call to remembrance the former days, in which after you were illuminated – think back to when you first heard about Christ...when you were first introduced to the church...when you were excited and bold

Ye endured a great flight of afflictions – Remember how you endured persecution

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions – In one part, you were made a public spectacle. You were exposed to public persecution and mockery. (Barnes, 1834)

And partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used – On other occasions, when you didn't endure the persecution yourself, you were still close with and companions of those who did.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

For ye had compassion of me in my bonds – You even were sympathetic and careful of me when I was imprisoned. (Barnes, 1834)

And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods – “It was not an uncommon thing for the early Christians to be plundered. This was doubtless part of the afflictions to which the apostle refers in this case.” (Barnes, 1834)

Illustration: We know from chapter 12 verse 4 that none of these Hebrew believers had been martyred for their faith up to this point so that rules out some instances of persecution. This may have been in reference to the expulsion of Jews from Rome by Claudius in AD 49. According to the well known account of Suetonius, he expelled them because “they were constantly indulging in riots at the instigation of Chrestus.” A large-scale eviction of this nature would inevitably have been attended by widespread looting by the city proletariat, together with many other kinds of insults and indignities. (Bruce, 1990, pp. Locations 3063-3064)

Have you ever had someone take advantage of you financially?

Illustration – having to pay \$100 more at Honda the other day than I expected

knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance – You endured these intense hardships and trials because you realized this world was

not your home. You were laying up for yourselves treasure in heaven, not on the earth.

Acts 5:41 - And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

Cast now away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward – Don't throw away your confidence. You were confident then. Be confident now. Continue in the faith that you suffered for early on.

- Remember early on how you endured persecution because you were heavenly minded. Now, in the present, I want you to continue in the faith and keep your eyes on the prize ahead. (MacArthur J. , Hebrews Book Series, 1972-1973)

Illustration – remember that hard part at the outset of the race that you pushed through; remember how far you've come; remember how confident and determined you were and let it serve as motivation to keep going

*Matthew 5:11-12 - **11** Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. **12** Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

Matthew 10:32 - Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

Hebrews 3:6 - But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Hebrews 3:14 - For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

Hebrews 4:14 - Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

B.) Continue by remembering your future

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

For ye have need of patience – you need to patient in endurance. You need to continue. Why?

That after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promise – God will certainly fulfil his promise; we will enter into the utmost enjoyment of it; but in the meantime we must continue. (Bruce, 1990, pp. Location 3099-3100)

- Because having continued, you will receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. (Gill, 1811)

Illustration – You're in the middle of the race. You're tired. You've had some rough stretches, but you need to keep running. Why? Because the finish line awaits.

Galatians 6:9 - And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Hebrews 12:1 - Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Colossians 3:24 - Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Hebrews 9:15 - And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

1 Peter 1:9 - Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

C.) Continue by remembering your identity

The author is going to quote an Old Testament passage of Scripture (Habakkuk 2:3-4) to encourage them to continue and to give them confidence in their salvation.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

The prophet Habakkuk, in the later part of the seventh century B.C., cried out to God because of the oppression which was rife on every hand, and wondered when divine righteousness would at last be vindicated on earth. God answered his complaint and bade him be patient: the oppressor would at last reap the judgment which his heaven-defying ways had incurred and God's purpose would be accomplished; meanwhile, the righteous man would preserve his life by his loyal trust in God. (Bruce, 1990, pp. Locations 3104-3107)

For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry – The Lord is coming back soon. The end is just around the corner. Keep going. Don't quit. (Barnes, 1834)

Luke 18:8 - I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

2 Peter 3:8-9 - 8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Habakkuk 2:3-4 - For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Now the just shall live by faith – Those who are righteous will live their lives with confidence and faith in God. They are not living in reliance on themselves or their own strength and merit. Rather they live in reliance on God, in faith in God. (Barnes, 1834)

Romans 1:17 - For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Galatians 3:11 - But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him - The righteous live by faith. But for those who withdraw, who turn back, who apostasize, God has no pleasure in them. (Barnes, 1834)

2 Peter 2:19-22 - While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

1 John 2:19 - They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition – As genuine believers in Jesus Christ... we are not of those who turn away from the faith in apostasy.

But of them that believe to the saving of the soul - There are some who will leave the faith, but that's not who we are. We have been saved and justified (made just), and we can be confident in the promise of heaven.

- We are true believers whose souls have been purchased and saved by the blood of the lamb and will one day receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. (Poole, 1990)

Illustration – We continue in the race by going back to the Scriptures and remembering what they say about our salvation and our identity in Christ.

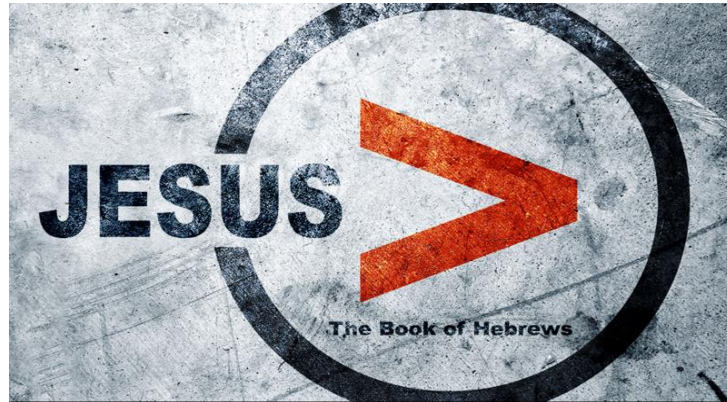
- That's exactly what the author does here. He takes his readers back to Habakkuk 2:3-4.
- He says, "The just/righteous live by faith. Others turn away from God unto judgment. But guess what? We're not the others. Through faith in Christ. We are just. We are righteous, and our eternity is secure."

Application – when someone who is genuinely saved is struggling with the assurance/confidence in their salvation, do you know where I turn to help them with that?

- I just take them to the Scripture (Romans 10:9, 13) and ask, "Has there been a time in your life where you've believed that and you meant it?"
 - o What does the Scripture say that you are then? Saved.

Invitation

Continue in the faith. Don't quit. The finish line is just around the corner.
Continue with confidence in your salvation.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 18 - HEBREWS 10:26-39

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 10:26-31	How does the Scripture define an apostate (someone who leaves the faith)? What is the end result of becoming one?
T	Read Hebrews 10:32-36	How can remembering our past and future help us to continue in the present?
W	Read Hebrews 10:37-39	How can remembering the Scripture give us confidence in our salvation?
T	Read Hebrews 11:1-12	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F	Read Hebrews 11:1-12	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 11:1-12

Review

In chapter 10, our author issued an encouragement to faith. He encouraged his readers to embrace faith and continue in the faith. In chapter 11, he's going to provide some examples of Old Testament saints that did just that.

Encouragement to Faith (Hebrews 10:19-39)

Examples of Faith (Hebrews 11:1-12:3)

Sermon

A.) The Definition of Faith

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

(1) It is the present substance of a future reality

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for – faith is the present substance of a future reality (illustration – Timmy taking you at your word if you promise him something)

“The promises related to a state of affairs belonging to the future; but these people acted as if that state of affairs were already present, so convinced were they that God could and would fulfil what he had promised (Bruce, 1990, pp. Location 3143-3144).

(2) It is conviction in the unseen

The evidence of things not seen – faith is the conviction in things not seen; illustration – physical sight brings conviction in the reality of a physical object & spiritual faith brings conviction in the reality of things not seen; it is the lens through which we see the spiritual order) (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 3160)

Application – we all have faith in unseen things (a person, a sports team, an economic forecast, what the future will look like) and we base how we live our lives on what we believe about these things.

For the Christian, our faith is not in people, places, things, or markets. It is in God and what he has said.

Hebrews 11:13- These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Psalm 27:13 - I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Romans 8:24-25 - For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

For by it the elders obtained a good report – it was through this kind of faith that those Old Testament saints before us obtained a good report; it is by this kind of faith that they were saved and through which they walked with God.

Application – why not works? Wouldn't that be more fair?

- Yes it would be much more fair. In fact, if we were saved by works, we would all end up with the exact same fate (the definition of fairness). We would all be destined for separation from God because of our sin.
- Yet God in his love for us decided to be unfair and make a way for us to be saved. Faith is merely taking hold of the lifeline that God has thrown us.
- Illustration – drowning in the middle of the ocean (will you take hold of the lifesaver or try to swim to shore?)
- Scripture tells a story of faith.
 - o You and I are not the heroes of that story. The Bible is not written about us. It is written about God. He is the hero of the story.
 - o God is not a part of our story. We are a part of His.
 - o I shouldn't apply the Bible to my life. I should apply my life to the Bible.

The author is going to tell a story of faith in Hebrews 11 starting in Genesis with creation and ending with Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. In every one of these stories, God is the hero, not the person.

B.) Faith in the Beginning

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

(1) Creation (Genesis 1-3)

Where he does the author start his story of faith? All the way back in Genesis 1:1 – “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear – the Scripture tells us that God spoke the universe into existence (the visible from the invisible). How do we know that? By faith. Faith in what? The Word of God.

Application – when we talk about the origins of the universe, it really is a matter of faith (believing in the unseen). The scientific evidence points to the fact that the universe hasn't always been here. (faith in a cause of the universe or that the universe came into existence uncaused)

Illustration – walking into the woods and finding a ball (two options – faith that something made that ball and left it there or that it just came into existence uncaused)

Romans 1:19-20 - Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

The story of creation is not a story about creation. It's a story about the Creator.

So the author starts his story of faith in the beginning with creation, but then he's going to further it by talking about Abel

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

(2) Abel (Genesis 4)

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain – Abel offers a first fruits offering of a lamb, and Cain offers a first fruits offering of the fruit of the ground. Abel's sacrifice is more excellent. Why? Because he offered it in faith. For Cain, it was just a religious ritual.

Application – God sees your heart. He knows whether your worship is done in faith or if it's just a religious ritual.

How do you know that Abel made his offering in faith?

Genesis 4:3-5 - And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

By which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts – God's acceptance of Abel's offering in Genesis 4 ("the Lord had respect unto his offering") testified to the fact that he was righteous. In fact, the New Testament calls Abel righteous in Matthew 23:35 and 1 John 3:11-12. And what does Habakkuk 2:4 tell us about the righteous? They live by faith.

Faith -> Righteous -> Sacrifice Accepted

And by it he being dead yet speaketh – even though Abel is dead, through the pages of Scripture he still speaks to us about the necessity of faith (MacArthur, 1972-1973).

The story of Abel is not a story about Abel. It's a story about the one that Abel worshipped.

Matthew 23:35 - That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

1 John 3:11-12 - For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

(3) Enoch (Genesis 5)

The only thing we see in Genesis about Enoch is that he walked with God, and God took him to heaven.

Genesis 5:21-24 - And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death and was not found, because God had translated him – he starts off with the end result of Enoch's life. God took him to heaven. He didn't die. God literally just took him to heaven. Why?

For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God – God took him to heaven because He pleased Him. How did he please Him? The answer is the only other thing we know about Enoch. He walked with God. He had a relationship with Him.

Pleased God by walking with Him -> Taken to heaven

2 Kings 2:16-17 - And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some

valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not.

Micah 6:8 - He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

But without faith it is impossible to please him – You can't please God by walking with Him without faith. Faith is the foundation of a walk with God. In what way?

For he that cometh to God must believe that he is – You can't walk with God if you don't believe in Him.

Illustration – I can't have a relationship with my wife if I don't believe that she exists

And that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him – what's the reward? Him. you can't walk with God if you don't believe that it's possible to have a personal relationship with Him.

Illustration - I can't have a relationship with my wife if I don't believe that it's possible to have a personal relationship with her. This podium exists, but I can't have a relationship with it. Why? It's not a personal being.

Faith -> pleased God by walking with Him -> taken to heaven

Enoch is a wonderful example of righteous living, but even in his example, we see that faith came first. Faith was the foundation.

The story of Enoch is not a story about Enoch. It's a story about the one that Enoch lived to walk with. It's a story about the one Enoch was taken to be with forever.

Jeremiah 29:13-14 - And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

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

(4) Noah (Genesis 6-10)

Creation – Genesis 1-3

Abel – Genesis 4

Enoch – Genesis 5

Noah – Genesis 6-10

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house – Noah had faith in the Word of God even when God told him something unprecedented. He believed that judgment and a flood were coming, and building the ark was the evidence that he believed (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 3259).

How do you know Noah had faith? He built the ark when God told him about the flood.

Faith -> Action (building the ark)

By which he condemned the world – God told Noah that a flood was coming, that judgment was on its way. Noah believed in the Word of God. Noah relayed that message to those around Him, but how did they respond? Unbelief. Noah's building of the ark by faith condemned the world's unbelief when the flood waters actually came.

And became heir of the righteousness which is by faith – Noah is called righteous by God in Genesis 7:1 because of his faith in the Word of God.

Genesis 7:1 - And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

The story of Noah is not a story about Noah. It's a story about the merciful God that saved Noah and his family and offered salvation freely to any that would receive it.

Genesis 6:13 - And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Romans 1:17 - For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Romans 3:22 - Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

C.) Faith in the Patriarchs

Whereas the faith of Abel, Enoch, and Noah might have been inferred from what the Scripture says about them, the faith of Abraham is explicitly stated. (Bruce, 1990, p. Location 3281)

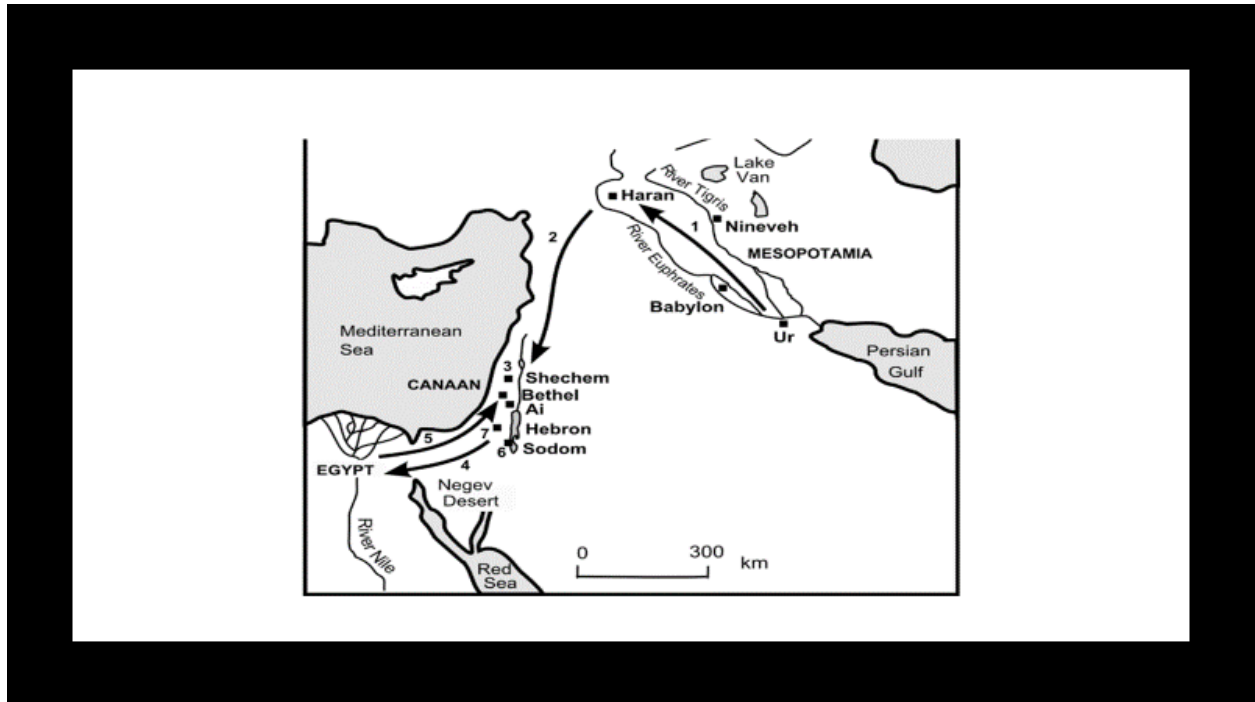
Abraham & Sarah – Genesis 11-23

Abraham is the ultimate example of faith in the Old Testament.

Genesis 15:6 - And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

(1) Abraham



(The Bible Journey)

Ur -> Haran

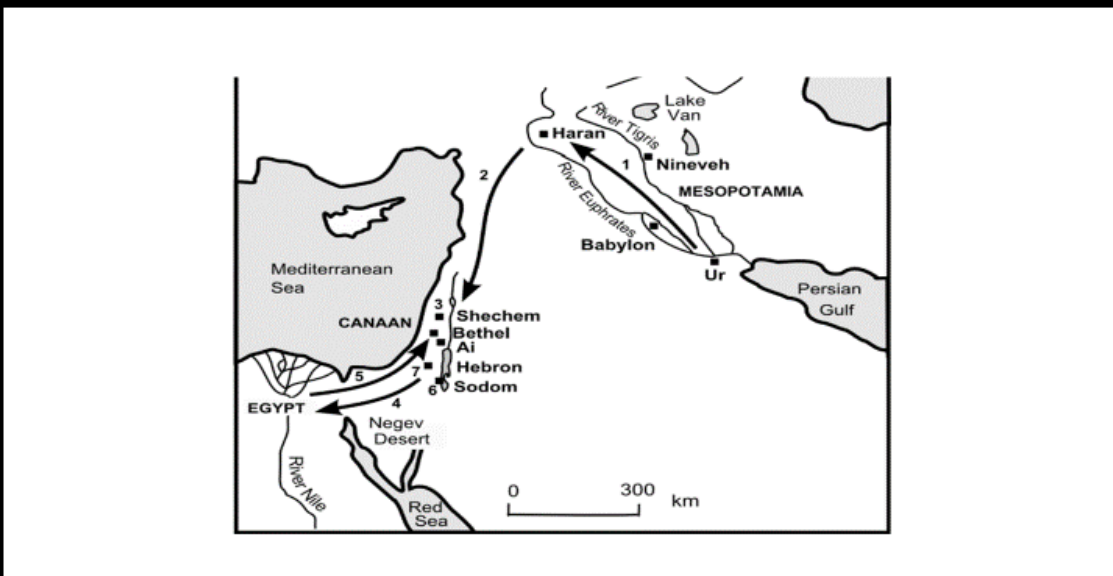
Abraham lives with his father Terah and his brother Nahor and Haran in Ur. Haran dies, but he's survived by his son Lot. Terah takes Abraham and Lot and their families with him and goes up to Haran (apparently named after Terah's deceased son). Terah dies in Haran. (Genesis 11:27-32)

Haran -> Canaan (Genesis 12:1-9)

Genesis 12:1-4 - Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

By faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went – God calls Abram to leave his home country to go to a land that he would reveal to him in the future. He had no title deed. He had no property. He had nothing but the Word of God...and how did Abram respond? In faith. How do you know that he had faith? He left.

Acts 7:2-5 - 2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, 3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. 4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. 5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.



Canaan -> Egypt -> Canaan

Famine drives Abram and his family from Canaan to Egypt. Some bad things happen there. Abram and his family come back and actually settle in Canaan. (Genesis 12:10-13:1)

Which he should after receive for an inheritance – “He had not fully received even this promise when he went out, for it was not explicitly given him till he had reached Canaan (Ge 12:1, 6, 7).” (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country – it's when Abraham is in the land of Canaan that God really spells out to him the promise of the land as an inheritance. Before he had a command. Now he has a promise, but he does not yet have the fulfillment of that promise.

Command to go to the land -> promise of the land -> not yet received the fulfillment of that promise

Genesis 13:14-15 - 14 And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

Dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise – he's in the land. He has the promise of the land, but he doesn't yet own the land. The promise has not yet been fulfilled. How do you know that? They lived as nomads and strangers in tents in the land without owning a square foot of it.

Genesis 17:8 - And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

Genesis 28:13-14 - And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God – Abraham lived as a pilgrim and stranger in a temporary tent, and no doubt he looked forward to the day in which he would truly possess the land and no longer be homeless in a tent. But in another sense, Abraham looked forward to a greater city, stable, immovable, with foundations (as tents do not have), whose builder and maker is God. He looked forward to the possession of the promised land, but he also looked forward to the possession of heaven, the New Jerusalem. (Ellicott, 1905)

Hebrews 3:4 - For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

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

(2) Sara

Genesis 18:11-14 - Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed – although at first when Sarah was told that she would bear Abraham a child in his old age, she laughed, remarkably she also became an example of faith. She trusted the Word of God, the promises of God.

And was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised – Miraculously the promise was fulfilled. She bore Isaac in her old age. She received the fulfillment of the promise because she had faith in the one who made the promise.

Genesis 21:1-2 - And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable – God told Abraham to go to a strange land back in Genesis 12. As part of this command, he promises Abraham that his seed will be as the sand of the sea and the stars in the sky even though he had no children. They obey. They arrive in the promised land, and through a miracle, Isaac is born to Abraham and Sarah...as far as having kids was concerned, Abraham and Sarah were as good as dead...but God against all odds, kept his promise. (Bruce, 1990)

The story of Abraham and Sara is a story about God. It's a story about the God that brought them to the Promised Land and kept His Word through the miraculous birth of Isaac.

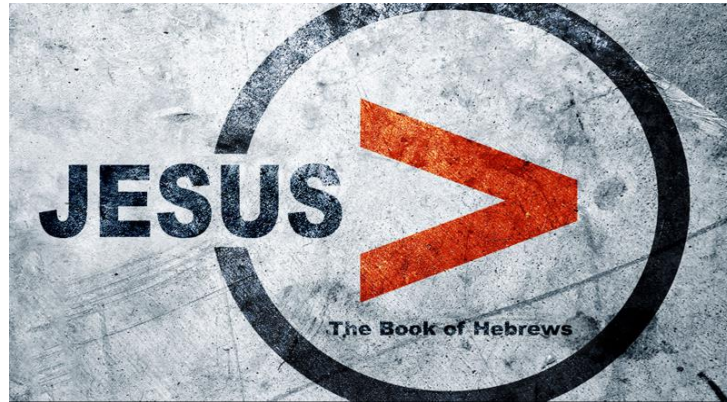
Romans 4:19 - And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:

Genesis 22:17 - That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Invitation

As we approach 2021, I have two words of encouragement for you.

- If you have not done so, become a person of faith (put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone as your Savior)
- Stop trying to be the hero of your story this year. Be a part of His story this year.
 - Too often our new years resolutions are asking God to be a part of our story
 - “Lord help me to ...”
 - May our focus in 2021 be...
 - “Lord may I...”
 - Spend more time with you this year
 - Grow closer to you this year
 - Serve you more this year
 - Give to you more this year
 - Share you with others this year
 - Stop trying to be the hero. The story’s not about you.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 19 - HEBREWS 11:1-12

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 11:1-2	How does the Scripture define faith?
T	Read Hebrews 11:3-7	Which Bible characters does the author list as examples of faith? Choose one and show how he lived by faith.
W	Read Hebrews 11:8-12	How did Abraham and Sara live by faith in their journey to the Promised Land and in their conception of Isaac?
T	Read Hebrews 11:13-22	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F	Read Hebrews 11:22	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 11:13-22

Review

Story of Faith (God is the hero. They were not. We are not.)

- Faith in the Beginning (Genesis 1-10)
 - o Creation (belief in the invisible because of the visible) (Gen. 1-3)
 - o Abel (sacrifice accepted -> righteous -> lived by faith) (Gen. 4)
 - o Enoch (taken -> pleased God by walking with Him -> foundation of faith) (Gen. 5)
 - o Noah (built the ark -> faith) (Gen. 6-10)
- Faith in the Patriarchs (Genesis 11-50)
 - o Abraham (left Haran & sojourned in the land -> faith) (Gen. 11-23)
 - o Sarah (gave birth to Isaac -> faith)

Sermon

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

(3) Sidenote about the Patriarchs

These all – in reference to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (vs. 9) & Sarah (vs. 11)

Died in faith, Not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them – They never saw the Promised Land come into their possession. They lived their whole lives believing without seeing the promise fulfilled, and yet they never stopped believing. (MacArthur, 1972-1973) just as they had lived in faith. In death they continued to look forward to the fulfillment of the promises that God had given them. (Bruce, 1990)

Illustration – these patriarchs were like sailors in a ship that could see the shore afar off. They could see it on the horizon. They looked at it. They never landed, but they saw it. (MacArthur, 1972-1973)

And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth – The patriarchs died as strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (Bruce, 1990) They were in the Promised Land, and they had faith that one day their descendants would take possession of it...but they knew deep down that the Promised Land was not their true home. That's why they called themselves strangers and pilgrims.

Stranger – foreigner (Sorenson, 2007) someone from somewhere else

Pilgrim – traveler/tourist (Sorenson, 2007) someone who sticks around temporarily (MacArthur, 1972-1973)

Genesis 25:8 - Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

Genesis 27:2-4 - And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

Genesis 49:33 - And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

Genesis 50:24 - And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Genesis 23:4 - I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

Genesis 47:9 - And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

He's going to provide commentary on that phrase "strangers and pilgrims" in verse 14.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country – The fact that the patriarchs called themselves strangers and pilgrims made it clear that the place of their sojourning was not their home. Canaan was no more their home as they sought the country of their hearts' desire than the wilderness was the home of their descendants in Moses' day who journeyed from Egypt to Canaan. (Bruce, 1990)

Illustration – first time guest at church that tells us he's not from here and he's only here temporarily (that he's a stranger and a pilgrim)...we can deduce from that that

Camarillo is not his home. We can deduce the same from the patriarchs calling themselves strangers and pilgrims in Canaan.

No person is a stranger or pilgrim in his own country. (Poole, 1990)

Country – homeland. They were seeking for a place to call home. (Sorenson, 2007)

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned – Although the patriarchs didn't think of Canaan as their true home, they also didn't think of Ur or Haran as their true home. If they did, they could have easily gone back, but they were actually insistent on not going back. (Bruce, 1990)

Genesis 24:6-8 - And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly – The truth is that their true homeland was not on earth at all. The earthly Canaan and the earthly Jerusalem were but temporary object lessons pointing to the saints' everlasting rest, the city of God. (Bruce, 1990)

Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God – The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

- Why? Because they lived by faith.

Exodus 3:6 - Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

For he hath prepared for them a city – God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, and God has prepared a true homeland for those who die in faith.

Hebrews 12:22 - But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

Illustration – Jesus’ answer to the debate between the Pharisees and the Sadducees on the resurrection

Matthew 22:31-32 - But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

- Jesus is quoting Exodus 3:6 when God is speaking to Moses in the burning bush. Abraham has been dead for 329 years, Isaac for 224 years, and Jacob for 198 years. Yet God still spoke of Himself as being their God. Jesus’ argument is that they must therefore be alive in some sense because God is not a God of the dead, but of the living. (Barnes, 1834)

What we see in this passage is that not only are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob alive right now, but God has prepared for them an everlasting city, a true home to inhabit one day.

Hebrews 11:10 - For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Hebrews 13:14 - For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

Matthew 25:34 - Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

(4) Abraham (Genesis 11-23)

Illustration – background of the story

- God promised Abraham that a great nation would come from him through the line of Isaac
- Isaac is miraculously born
- God tells Abraham to sacrifice his only son on Mount Moriah (he would have been somewhere between 5 & 37; he was most likely a young man)

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac – Abraham’s offering up of Isaac was a demonstration of his faith.

Application – sacrifice is an evidence of faith

- Time
- Treasure

- Talents
- Sinful pleasures of this world

It was a demonstration that his faith was in God and not in Isaac.

Illustration

- Your child has a terminal illness that's incredibly expensive to treat and your insurance won't cover it; you need 1 million dollars
- God promises that your child is going to get that treatment
- The next week you find a lottery ticket on the side of the road, and it's a winning ticket for a million dollars
- God tells you to take that lottery ticket and tear it up
- Isaac was the winning lottery ticket (Abraham, is your faith in the ticket, or is your faith in me?)

And he that received the promises offered up his only begotten son Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called – The fulfillment of God's promises depended on Isaac's survival. If Isaac was to die, how could these promises be fulfilled? (Bruce, 1990) Yet Abraham obeyed.

Where's the faith in that?

Genesis 22:1-12 - And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

James 2:21-24 - Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Genesis 17:19 - And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead – Abraham had taken God at His word and therefore knew God would either (a) spare his son or (b) if necessary, resurrect his son. In either case, he trusted God. (Genesis 22:5) (Sorenson, 2007)

Genesis 22:5 - And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

From when also he received him in a figure – in a sense, Abraham did receive Isaac from the dead. For three days of journey to Mount Moriah, he assumed Isaac would be slain. The whole matter of Isaac being spared death was a picture of the death and resurrection our Lord would someday experience. (Sorenson, 2007)

Figure – parable

Romans 4:17-21 - (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Romans 5:14 - Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

The author is going to transition from talking about those who lived by faith to those who died in faith.

Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph are going to be discussed as examples of men who faced death in faith. All these men died never having seen the fulfillment of God's promise, and so they passed it on to their children by faith. (MacArthur, 1972-1973)

Application

- It's easy to talk confidently about death, but it's another thing entirely when you face it in reality
- It's a remarkable thought to think that every person you have ever met will die
 - o The question is not "will you die?". It's "how will you die?".
 - o What we find in the case of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph is that they died in faith.

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

(5) Isaac (Genesis 24-27)

Isaac

- o Sandwiched inbetween Abraham and Jacob
- o Lied about Rebekah being his wife when dwelled in Gerar because he was concerned for his own neck
- o Loved Esau more than Jacob because of his venison

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come - The line of promise ran through Isaac, and as Isaac himself had received from God a reaffirmation of the promised blessings after Abraham's death, so he determined to transmit those blessings to the following generation. (Bruce, 1990)

Genesis 27:27-40 - And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed: Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee. And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

- The only real difference between the blessings to Jacob and Esau was that Esau would serve Jacob. (MacArthur, 1972-1973)
- God made promises to Abraham that he never saw fulfilled. Those promises were passed down to Isaac. He lived his whole life and never saw the promises fulfilled. Approaching death, he could have thrown his hands up in the air and died in unbelief. Yet, what did he do? He blessed his sons in faith that God's promises would be fulfilled in future generations.
- Isaac blessed both Jacob and Esau. His faith was real in that he blessed them both in faith in the fulfillment of a promise that he would never see fulfilled. Even in the midst of death, Isaac believed that God would fulfill his promise. (MacArthur, 1972-1973)

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

(6) Jacob (Genesis 28-36)

By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. – Just as Jacob has been blessed by his father regarding things to come, so he also on his deathbed blessed his grandsons concerning things to come. He thus demonstrated faith in the promises of God made to him and his descendants. (Bruce, 1990) Of all the 12 sons of Jacob, God had chosen the birthright to go to Joseph and his descendants. (MacArthur, 1972-1973)

Worshipped leaning upon the top of his staff – We can picture Jacob sitting on the edge of his bed, leaning on his staff

Genesis 48:5-22 - And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. And thy issue, which thou begetteth after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance. And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land

of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem. And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these? And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them. And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed. And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn. And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh. And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

- So we see that Jacob had faith that God would fulfill His promise completely, and he blessed his grandsons accordingly. He died as a man of faith, just as his father Isaac had died. (MacArthur, 1972-1973)

Genesis 47:31 - And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

(7) Joseph (Genesis 37-50)

By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. – Joseph also at the end of his life demonstrated faith in the promises of God.

- Joseph was in Egypt and it had been 200 years since the initial promise that God made to Abraham in Genesis 15 regarding the possession of the land, and it hadn't been fulfilled yet. Yet he believed that it would. (MacArthur, 1972-1973)

Genesis 50:24-25 - And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

- He expressed confidence that God would bring Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land, and he made his descendants promise that when that transpired, they would take his bones from Egypt with them to the Promised Land for burial.

Exodus 13:19 - And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

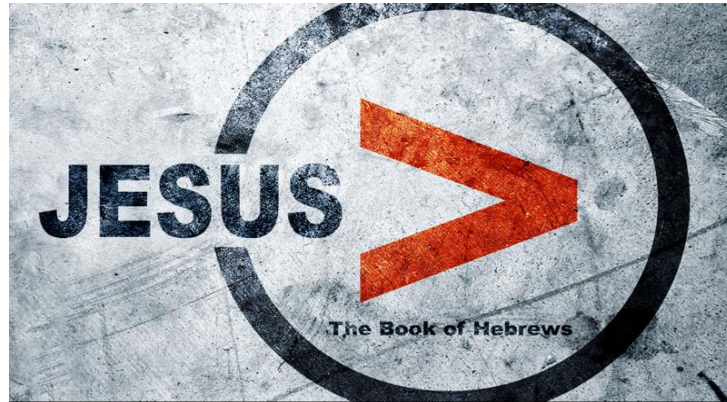
So we see that that patriarchs lived by faith. They believed that God would fulfill His promises to them here on this earth, and yet they not only lived by faith. They died in faith. Though they never saw the fulfillment of the promises made to them, they died still believing that God would keep His word.

And not only that, but in death they also understood that this world was not their home. They looked for a greater homeland, a better country, a place to call home forever.

Invitation

Have you made this world your home? The patriarchs were just strangers and pilgrims here on earth, and we are too. Don't get too comfortable.

How are you finishing your race? Don't just live in faith. Determine that one day you will die in faith as well.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 20 - HEBREWS 11:13-22

READING	STUDY QUESTION
M Read Hebrews 11:13-16	What was the true homeland that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob longed for? How do we know it wasn't Canaan or Ur?
T Read Hebrews 11:17-19	How did Abraham exhibit faith in his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, the child of promise?
W Read Hebrews 11:20-22	How did Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph exhibit faith in their deaths? How can I determine to finish my race well as they did?
T Read Hebrews 11:23-31	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F Read Hebrews 11:23-31	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 11:23-31

Review

The last several weeks we've been talking about stories of faith, examples of faith.

- We've seen that the story isn't about me. It's about God. It's His story. At a fundamental level, faith is trusting in God to be the hero of the story.
- We've also seen many examples of men and women who lived by faith. The remarkable actions they took indicate that they believed in God and His Word.
- We've further seen examples of those who died in faith. Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph all died still believing in God and His promises to them.
- Up to this point, the Scripture has given us examples of faith all the way through Genesis, and now we're going to transition into exodus.

FAITH IN THE EXODUS

Prior to this passage, we have already learned of Moses' faithfulness as a servant in God's house. Now we will learn how he is also an example of faith. (Bruce, 1990)

Following the death of Joseph, several hundred years pass, and Israel finds itself a burgeoning slave nation in Egypt.

- Problem: too many Israelites; potential for an uprising
- Solution: Pharaoh orders that all newborn Hebrew girls can live, but that all newborn Hebrew boys must be cast into the Nile
- This brings us to our next story of faith

Sermon

1.) Amram & Jochebed (Exodus 1:1-2:10)

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

By faith Moses when he was born, was hid three months of his parents – How was Amram & Jochebed's hiding of Moses an act of faith?

- They believed in God that their newborn son was destined for some great purpose (Barnes, 1834)
 - Because they saw he was a proper child (c.f. Exodus 2:2) - or because they saw that he was a handsome (goodly) child. It seems that the remarkable beauty of the infant was understood by Moses' parents as a divine sign given for the guidance of their conduct. (Ellicott, 1905)

- I think it's generally true that every parent believes this of their child
- They believed that God would provide a way of escape for their son
 - For three months, they hid their child most likely in hopes that some way might be found for his life to be spared (Barnes, 1834). They did this until they could no longer hide the child.
 - The actions they took were evidence of the faith they had
 - Illustration – I can't imagine hiding Jacqueline for hardly any period of time, but if I had to, I'd move heaven and earth to try
- They believed in spite of the consequences
 - And they were not afraid of the king's commandment – had their disregard for the law been discovered, the punishment would have been most severe (Bruce, 1990)

God blessed their faith.

Exodus 2:2-10 - And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

Moses very survival was the result of faith on the part of his parents. Just as Moses' parents lived by faith, so did he.

2.) Moses (Exodus 2:11-40)

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

By faith Moses when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter – according to Stephen's account in Acts, Moses would have been about 40

Acts 7:21-25 - And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the

Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.

- He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, and he fought back against the Egyptian oppressor, killing him in the process.
- When he defended the Israelite at the expense of the Egyptian, our author considers that the moment where he “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter”.
 - o Illustration – this is shocking
 - Egypt was a world power. Israel was a minority people.
 - Egypt was at the center of world history. Israel was a footnote.
 - Egypt was the slave master. Israel was the slave.
 - Moses was a member of the royal family, and yet he chose to be a slave.
 - Illustration – it would be like a member of the royal family renouncing his royalty and going to live as a bum on the street
- By identifying himself with the downtrodden Israelites, Moses renounced the status which he enjoyed as a member of the Egyptian royal family. (Bruce, 1990)
- He did so in faith...faith that God would use him to deliver Israel...but his faith would cost him dearly. What did it cost him?

Exodus 2:11-14 - 11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. 12 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. 13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? 14 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God – by identifying himself with the slave nation of Israel, Moses faced persecution, suffering, poverty, and hardship. He chose those things instead of...

Than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season – Moses might have argued to himself that he could do much more for the Israelites by remaining in Pharaoh's court and using his influence there on their behalf than by renouncing his Egyptian citizenship and becoming a member of a depressed group with no political rights.

- But for Moses to do this, when once he had seen the path of duty clear before him, would have been sin-the crowning sin of apostasy, against which the recipients of this letter needed so insistently to be warned. (Bruce, 1990)
Moses renounced his Egyptian status to identify with God's people. It cost him dearly. Why did he do it?

Hebrews 10:32 - But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

Psalms 84:10 - For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Romans 8:17-18 - And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Reproach – an insult aimed to disgrace or to damage a reputation (HELPS Word Studies)

Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater than the treasures in Egypt – Moses viewed the negative stigma of Messiah and his people as more desirable than the treasures and comfort and prestige in Egypt.

- Application: there is still a negative stigma against God and His people
 - o For us in the west
 - A joke
 - Awkward conversation
 - Weird
 - Loss of friendships
 - o For Christians in the east
 - Loss of business
 - Loss of family
 - Imprisonment
 - Loss of life
 - When Moses made the decision to identify with Messiah and His people, He lost everything...why did he do it?.
- In another sense, the word Christ here means God's anointed one. In Psalm 89:50-51, David calls himself God's anointed one, and Moses may have also thought of the stigma of being God's anointed deliverer as more desirable than the treasures and comfort in Egypt. (Ellicott, 1905)
Why did he consider the negative stigma of God and His people as more desirable than the treasures of the world? He had the long term in mind.

For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward - He was looking ahead to his reward.

Application – Satan will do anything he can to get you to look at the short term. God wants you to look beyond that.

- The example of Moses has been a challenge and encouragement to Christians for thousands of years to not give up when following Christ brings persecution & loss, but to keep their eyes on the reward ahead. (Bruce, 1990)

Hebrews 10:33 - Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

Hebrews 10:35 - Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

Moses' faith didn't stop when he renounced his Egyptian status.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

By faith he forsook Egypt – -He assumed that his Hebrew brothers would understand how God would deliver them by his hand, but they responded with "Who made thee a prince and judge over us?"

- Moses believed God would use him to deliver Israel from Egypt
- When he made his move, Israel did not respond in the way he thought they would
- He had burned his bridges with the royal family. He couldn't stay.
- Israel wasn't behind him. He couldn't lead a revolt. He couldn't lead an Exodus.
- He left Egypt to go into the strange land of Midian and wait in faith for God's timing for the deliverance of His people. (Bruce, 1990)

Illustration – instead of kicking down the closed door he wanted to go through, Moses waited on God's timing until he opened the door.

By his impulsive act of violence he had burned his boats as far as the court of Egypt was concerned; but he might have raised a slaves' revolt there and then. By faith, however, he did nothing of the kind; "he had the insight to see that God's hour had not yet struck, and therefore he resolutely turned his back on the course he had begun to tread, and retraced his steps till he entered on the harder way. For it was harder to live for his people than it was to die for them." (Bruce, 1990)

The exodus of Moses with Israel cannot be meant here, for it was made, not in defiance, but by the desire, of the king. Besides, the chronological order would be broken thus, the next particular specified here, namely, the institution of the Passover, having taken place before the exodus. Besides, it is Moses' personal history and faith which are here described. (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

Not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible –

Moses fleeing Egypt had more to do with his faith in God than his fear of Pharaoh.

Moses paid more attention to the invisible King of kings than to the king of Egypt. Moses' lifelong faith in God was the secret to his perseverance. (Bruce, 1990)

Hebrews 10:32 - But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

In faith, Moses burned his bridges with the royal family to identify with God and His people.

In faith, Moses fled Egypt to wait on God's timing for his people's deliverance.

Yet Moses doesn't stay away. God brings him back 40 years later.

- Moses confronts Pharaoh: "let my people go."
- Pharaoh says, "No."
- 10 plagues follow.
 - o The last plague is the angel of death and the killing of the firstborn.
 - o Through Moses, God tells Israel to kill the Passover lamb and put the blood on the doorposts of their homes. When the angel of death came through Egypt, if he saw the blood on the door posts, he would pass over that home.

28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

Through faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them – it was by faith that Moses instituted the Passover in accordance with God's command.

- The Passover became a perpetual memorial for Israel of the last night that their forefathers spent in Egypt when the angel of death passed through the land destroying the firstborn in every home, apart from those whose doorways were marked by the blood of the paschal lamb. (Bruce, 1990)

Exodus 12:21-30 – Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the Passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of

the LORD'S 203rd assover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

What happens?

All the Egyptian first born die.

Pharaoh says, "Get out of here."

Illustration – have you ever met someone that was just more trouble than they were worth?

Israel finally leaves Egypt to head back to Canaan (when they leave they take Joseph's bones with them).

29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

Israel finally leaves Egypt, and they are on their way to the Promised Land, but then Pharaoh's heart is hardened. He chases after them. Israel is pinned down between the Egyptian army on one side and the Red Sea on the other. Yet God held back the Egyptians with a cloud of darkness and sent a strong east wind that blew all night. The wind parted the waters, and made it possible for Israel to traverse the Red Sea on dry land.

By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land – it must have seemed impossible to get across the Red Sea. The wind could have abated at any moment. There were millions of Israelites, the crossing would have been miles wide, and it would have taken hours to cross. The Israelites could have drowned, and yet they believed in the Word of God. It was through faith that the Israelites passed through the Red Sea.

And God kept His word. Israel made it through to the other side. The Egyptians attempted to follow. God made their chariots to sink. The east wind abated. The waters returned, and they all drowned. God kept His word and protected His people.

Moses lived by faith.

- He chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy sin for a season

- He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt
- He left Egypt to wait on God's timing
- He came back to Egypt
- He kept the Passover
- He led Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea

Exodus 14:13-31 - And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians. And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon

the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

40 years pass in the record of faith inbetween the crossing of the Red Sea and entry into Canaan (Leviticus – Deuteronomy). We now find ourselves examining the account of Israel's defeat of Jericho.

3.) Joshua (Joshua 1-24)

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days – by whose faith did the walls fall down? Joshua's.

- In Joshua 5:14, an angel appeared unto him with strange battle instructions for how to attack Jericho. He was told for 6 days to march his army once around the outside of the city in silence. On the seventh day, he was told to march the army around seven times in complete silence, have the priests blow the trumpets, make a long blast with the ram's horn, and have everyone shout at the top of their lungs. He was told that the walls would then fall flat. How did Joshua (the great military leader) respond to this odd command? In faith and obedience. He took God at His word.

How do you know that Joshua had faith? Because he obeyed. He marched Israel around Jericho and looked like an idiot in the process. And yet God kept His word. The walls fell flat.

- Why would God work in that way? The story wasn't about Israel and their military prowess. It was about Him. It was His story.

Joshua 6:3-20 - And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him. And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD. And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And Joshua had commanded the people,

saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout. So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rereward came after the ark of the LORD, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city. And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

4.) Rahab (Joshua 6)

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Prior to Israel's invasion of Jericho, Joshua had sent out two men to spy out the land in secret. These two men came into the city and stayed in the house of Rahab the prostitute (harlot). When the king discovered that there were two spies in the city, he sent men to Rahab's home, but Rahab hid the spies and helped them escape. Why would she do that? Listen to what she said.

"I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have

shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."

By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not – The spies promised to protect her, and when the walls of Jericho fell flat, she and her family were saved and incorporated into the commonwealth of Israel. She was saved by her faith, and yet her faith was shown when she aided the spies.

James 2:25 - Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

Joshua 2:1-22 - And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country. And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death. And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way. And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of

this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window. And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not.

Joshua 6:22-25 - But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

Invitation

With these examples of faith, their faith can be deduced from the actions they took.

If you really believed that a flood was coming, you'd build an ark.

If you really believed that God had split the Red Sea for you, you'd walk through.

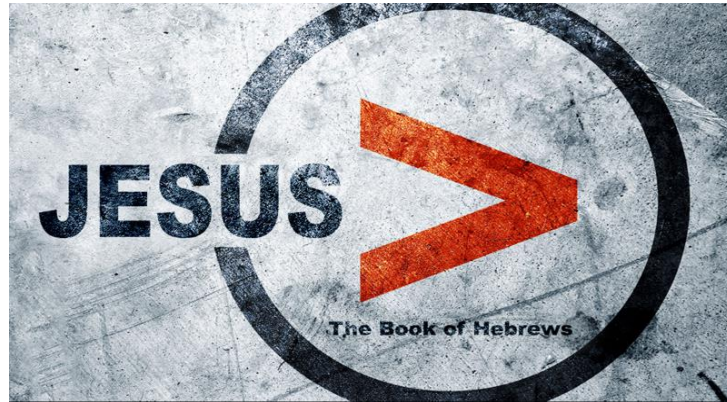
If you really believed that the walls of Jericho would fall down, you'd march around.

The same relationship that exists between faith and works exists today. For most of us in this room, we would say that we believe certain things:

- We believe in one God in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost)
- We believe that God has spoken to us through the Bible
- We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came to earth and died on the cross to make a way for us to be saved through faith
- We believe that our life's purpose is to follow Jesus by growing up, giving back, and going forth

Do you act like it? If someone looked at your life, would they be forced to conclude that you were a person of faith because of how you lived?

- That guy must believe in something. He's down at the church whenever the doors are open.
- That guy must believe in something. I've never met someone with such a heart of compassion for the poor and marginalized.
- That guys must believe in something. He's always talking about Jesus and what God has done in his life.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 21 - HEBREWS 11:23-31

READING	STUDY QUESTION
M Read Hebrews 11:23 & Exodus 2:2-10	In what ways did Moses' parents (Amram & Jochebed) live by faith?
T Read Hebrews 11:24-29 & Acts 7:21-25	In what ways did Moses live by faith?
W Read Hebrews 11:30-31, Joshua 2:1-22, and Joshua 6:3-25	In what ways did Joshua the general & Rahab the harlot live by faith?
T Read Hebrews 11:32-40	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F Read Hebrews 11:32-40	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 11:32-40

Review

Creation

Abel

Enoch

Noah

Abraham & Sarah

Isaac

Jacob

Joseph

Moses

Joshua

Rahab

We pick up the story of faith with the generation that followed the life of Joshua. We pick up in the book of Judges, and we are going to cover the remainder of the Old Testament.

So far, we've covered 6 books. Today we're going to cover the remaining 33.

1.) Faith in the Judges

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

And what shall I more say? – The author uses a rhetorical question to transition us from the conquest of Canaan through the time of the Judges to the time of the kings and prophets. (Bruce, 1990)

Judges 2:1-4 – And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. 2 And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? 3 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. 4 And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept.

- Israel conquered much of the land. God told them not to make any leagues or covenants with the people groups in the land, but to drive them out.
- And yet they disobeyed. They allowed some nations to continue living among them by paying taxes, and they also allowed them to continue worshipping their idols in accordance with their former customs.
- God told Israel that the people groups they allowed to remain in the land would be thorns in their sides.

Israel goes through a reoccurring cycle of repentance in the book of Judges.

- Cycle: sin -> suffering -> supplication -> salvation

7 Cycles In Judges

	Cycle	Oppressor	Years of Oppression	Deliverer—Judge	Years of Peace
1	Judges 3:7-11	Mesopotamians	8	Othniel	40
2	Judges 3:12-30 Judges 3:31	Moabites Philistines	18	Ehud Shagmar	80
3	Judges 4:1-5:31	Canaanites	20	Deborah/Barak	40
4	Judges 6:1-8:32	Midianites	7	Gideon	40
5	Judges 8:33-10:5	Abimelech	3	Tola/Jair	45
6	Judges 10:6-12:15, 11-12	Ammonites and Philistines	18	Jephthah/Ibzan/ Elon/Abdon	6,7, 10,8=31
7	Judges 13:1-16:31	Philistines	40	Samson	20

Chart from: *Talk thru the Bible* by Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa pg. 62

(Wilkinson & Boa, 2015)

- Note that these are listed in reverse order: Barak preceded Gideon. Jephthah preceded Samson. Samuel preceded David. We're going to work through these names in chronological order.
 - o Barak -> Gideon -> Jephthah -> Samson -> Samuel -> David
- Mesopotamia oppressed Israel for 8 years. They repented. God sent Othniel to deliver them. 40 years of peace followed. Israel turned away from God.
- God sent the Moabites and Philistines to oppress Israel for 18 years. Israel repented. God sent Ehud & Shamgar to deliver Israel. 80 years of peace followed. Israel turned away from God
- God sent the Canaanites to oppress Israel for 20 years. Israel repented. God sent Barak and Deborah.

And of Barak – God used Barak, and Deborah, and Jael to deliver Israel from the oppression of the commander of the Canaanite confederacy: Sisera. (Bruce, 1990)

- Deborah, the judge, called Barak and told him to go into battle against Sisera and his chariot army. She said that God would deliver the Canaanites into his hand.
- How did Barak respond to the Word of God from Deborah?
 - Judges 4:8 – “If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go.”
 - It seems odd that Barak would be mentioned by name as an example of faith in Hebrews 11.
 - And yet his refusal to go without Deborah may have been an outflow of his faith and dependence on God, whose spokesperson Deborah was. (Bruce, 1990)
 - Deborah responded in 4:9 by saying, “I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.”
 - How was Barak an example of faith?
 - He did not find his sufficiency in himself. He fully relied on God.
 - He looked to God to be the hero of the story, not himself.
 - Even though he would not get the honor for slaying Sisera, he still led Israel into battle. He didn’t care who got the credit as long as God got the glory.

40 years of peace follow Barak and Deborah until God delivers Israel into the hands of Midianite oppressors.

For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon – God sent Gideon to deliver Israel from the mighty Midianites who had oppressed Israel for 7 years (Judges 6:1-8:32).

- When the angel of the Lord came to Gideon to tell him of God’s plan for using him
 - Gideon was hiding from the Midianites (6:11)
 - Gideon doubted the angel of the Lord (6:13)
 - Gideon believed that God had forsaken Israel (6:13)
 - Gideon doubted God’s ability to use him (6:15)
 - Gideon asked for a miraculous sign from the angel (6:17)
 - Later on, Gideon asked for two more signs from God (6:36-40)
 - Gideon seems to be a better example of fear than of faith.
- Gideon had an army of 30,000 men to take on 100,000+ Midianites.
- God whittled down Gideon’s army from 30,000 men to 10,000 men to 300 men, and God told Gideon he would use him and the 300 men to deliver Israel from 135,000 Midianites. (8:10)
 - Illustration – Our church times 2 taking on the entire city of Thousand Oaks in battle.
 - God told Gideon to surround the encampment with his men. Each man would have a trumpet in his right hand and a lamp/torch within a pitcher

in his left. They were to blow the trumpets, break their pitchers so the torches would show, and shout "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon".

- They did this, and the 100,000 people in the encampment panicked. They woke up in the pitch black and started killing one another (assuming the Jews were within the camp) and fled.
- How was Gideon an example of faith?
 - His faith was not defined by what he felt.
 - It was defined by what he did. He obeyed.
 - Illustration – stepping out in faith even when you're scared to death
 - Illustration – accepting the pastorate in the middle of Covid
 - The battle plan God prescribed made it clear that Gideon's victory would have nothing to do with Gideon or military prowess, but with the miraculous provision of his God. He trusted in God to be the hero of his story.

Following Gideon, there was civil war during the time of Abimelech. Israel turned from God and so God sent 18 more years of oppression, this time at the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites. Israel repented, and God sent them Jephtha to deliver them.

And of Jephthah – Jephtha was a mighty courageous man, but he had been ostracized from his family, his home, and his inheritance because he was the son of a prostitute that his father had an affair with.

- Ammon was oppressing Gilead (where Jephthah was from) and they needed Jephthah. They approached him and asked him to lead them into battle.
- "Why would I do that? You guys threw me out and cut me off."
- "If I do what you want and defeat the Ammonites, will you install me as your head?"
- They agreed to do so, and God delivered Ammon into the hands of Jephtha.
- How was Jephtha an example of faith?
 - Before going into battle with the King of Ammon, he and the king exchanged messages (11:12-27)
 - Jephtha said "Why are you invading our land to attack us?"
 - The King of Ammon said "When your people came here from Egypt, you stole the land from us."
 - Jephtha replied "No. When we came out of Egypt, we needed to pass through your land to get to the promised land. We asked nicely, and instead of allowing us passage, you attacked us, and our God delivered you into our hands. That's why you lost the land."
 - The King of Ammon didn't like that answers, and yet in Jephtha's message to the king we see his faith expressed in the one true God.

- We also see Jephtha's faith in the vow that he made to God before going into battle against Ammon. (11:30-31)
 - If you deliver Ammon into my hands, I will sacrifice the first thing that walks out the front door of my house when I return home.
 - The content of that vow was foolish, and yet the vow itself was an expression of his reliance on God. He was not trusting in himself, but in God to be the hero of the story. He knew he could not do it on his own.

Following Jephtha, God used Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon to judge Israel. Then Israel turned away from God, and God sent the Philistines to oppress Israel for 40 years. Israel repented, and God sent Samson.

And of Samson – Samson was to be a Nazarite from his mother's womb. The Nazarite vow featured several different components (Numbers 6:1-21): (1) abstain from wine, strong drink, anything from the grape vine (2) refrain from going near dead bodies (3) refrain from cutting one's hair. This vow was a voluntary vow that would be made for a temporary period of time, and yet Samson was to be a Nazarite from birth.

- Samson was born and raised and God blessed him with incredible strength as a consequence of his Nazarite vow that he kept.
- Samson wanted to marry a Philistine woman of Timnath. On the way down to marry her, a lion attacked him, and he killed it with his bare hands. It was his first notable act of strength. (14:1-9)
- At his wedding, he made a bet with his guests that they couldn't solve a riddle of his. The loser of the bet had to pay the other party with 30 suits of clothing and 30 vestments of linen. Well, the party guests strong armed Samson's wife into getting the answer to the riddle. Having lost the bet, Samson went out, killed 30 Philistines, and took their clothes in order to pay up for the bet. (14:10-19)
- On another occasion, Samson was turned over to the Philistines, and killed 1000 men with the jawbone of a donkey (15:9-15).
- In another instance, while visiting a harlot in the city of Gaza, he left the city in the middle of the night. On his way out, he took the city's gate, along with its posts and bar, and left them on a hill outside the city. (16:1-3)
- Then we get to Delilah. Samson fell in love with her. The Philistines were using her to get Samson to divulge the secret of his strength (which tells you he didn't look the part). Samson lied to Delilah twice, but then finally divulges that the source of his power is his dedicated service to God symbolized by his unshaved head (16:4-21).
 - Samson was a carnal fleshly man that struggled on and off again with who the hero of his story was. When he told Delilah that the secret to his strength was his hair, we see his presumption that his powers came not from God but from himself.

- While sleeping, Delilah shaved his head. When he awoke, his strength was gone and the Philistines took him captive.
- Yet, Samson ended his life trusting in God to be the hero of the story. The Philistines brought Samson out to be a spectacle in their temple while they were offering a great sacrifice to their god Dagon. They set him up in between the two main pillars of the building to mock and make fun of him. Samson, in that moment, in faith, asked God to strengthen him so he could take down the building...and he did. (16:23-31)

Barak – felt he was insufficient

Gideon – was afraid

Jephthah – was from a broken family

Samson – was carnal for much of his life

Yet, they all lived by faith, and God blessed them.

And with Samson ended the book of the Judges, but God raised up another judge, the prophet Samuel.

And Samuel –

- By faith Samuel's parents kept their vow to dedicate him to the Lord's service in the temple at Shiloh after he was born. (1 Samuel 1)
- By faith, Samuel answered God's call as a child. (1 Samuel 3)
- By faith, Samuel led Israel into national repentance (1 Samuel 8:1-6)
- By faith, Samuel year to year went to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and Ramah and judged Israel and served God his whole life. (1 Samuel 8:15-17)
- By faith, Samuel anointed Saul king over Israel (1 Samuel 9-10)
- By faith, when Saul disobeyed the Lord egregiously, Samuel anointed David to take his place (1 Samuel 16)

2.) Faith in the Kings

of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

Of David also –

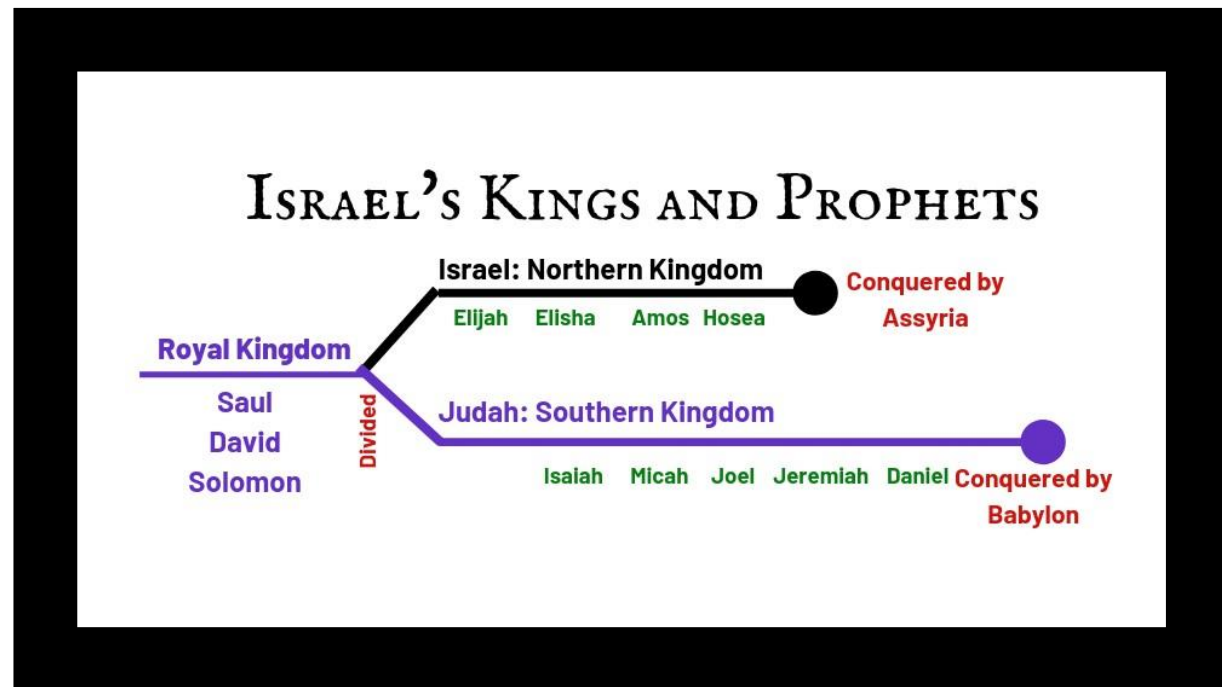
- David is the only king mentioned in the story of faith.
- By faith, David killed Goliath (1 Samuel 17:1-54)
- By faith, David fled for his life from Saul (the man whom he would replace as king) (1 Samuel 19-30)
- By faith, David spared Saul's life at En-gedi (1 Samuel 24)
- By faith, David spared Saul's life in the wilderness of Ziph (1 Samuel 26)
- By faith, David is made king over Judah and Israel (2 Samuel 2-5)
- By faith, David brought the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6)

- By faith, David received promises from God that his royal lineage would not be destroyed, but would issue in Messiah who would reign over the earth (2 Samuel 7)
- By faith, when confronted with the egregiousness of his sins with Bathsheba and Uriah, David repented (2 Samuel 12)
- By faith, throughout the Psalms, we see the heart of a man who leaned and relied upon God with every fiber of his being.

3.) Faith in the Prophets

of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

And of the prophets – Following the death of David, his son Solomon reigned. Solomon built the temple, and Israel was blessed under his reign. In the later years of his life, Solomon's heart was turned away from God, and when his son Rehoboam took the throne, the kingdom split in two (Northern – Israel; Southern – Judah) (1 Kings 12). The rest of the Old Testament is the story of those split kingdoms, the kings that ruled them, the Assyrian captivity of Israel, the Babylonian captivity of Judah, and the return of Judah back to their land.



(Wolf, 2019)

- It was during this time that God primarily ministered through the prophets who spoke for and acted on God's behalf.
 - Northern Kingdom of Israel
 - Elijah
 - Elisha
 - Amos
 - Hosea
 - Jonah
 - Southern Kingdom of Judah
 - Obadiah
 - Joel
 - Isaiah
 - Micah
 - Jeremiah
 - Zephaniah
 - Nahum
 - Habakkuk
 - Babylonian captivity of Judah
 - Ezekiel
 - Daniel
 - Post Exile (Judah returns to the land)
 - Zechariah
 - Malachi (Theology of Work)

These prophets heeded and proclaimed and lived by faith in the Word of God. They were examples of faith.

Then beginning in verse 33, our author then provide some insights into how specifically the prophets and the judges and the kings lived by faith.

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.

Who through faith subdued kingdoms – starting with Moses following their departure from Egypt and climaxing during the reign of David

Wrought righteousness – they lived righteous lives. They upheld righteousness among the people. They enacted justice on the wicked.

Obtained promises - as in the case of David and the prophets, they received the words of promise on the part of God...and in the case of others, they came into the possession of blessings that God had promised them. (Meyer, 1880)

Stopped the mouths of lions – as was in the case of Samson on the way to Timnath (Judges 14:5-6), David while he was watching his father's sheep (1 Samuel 17:34-35), and Daniel in the lion's den (Dan. 6:22)

Judges 14:5-6 - Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. And the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done.

1 Samuel 17:33-36 - And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

Daniel 6:20-23 - And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Quenched the violence of fire – as in the case of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who were cast into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:19-28)

Escaped the edge of the sword – as in the case of David when he fled from Saul (1 Samuel 18:11; 1 Samuel 19:10), Elijah when he fled from Jezebel (1 Kings 19:2), Elisha when Jehoram wanted him dead (2 Kings 6:31-7:2), Jeremiah when Jehoiakim wanted him dead (Jeremiah 36:19-26)

Out of weakness were made strong – as in the case of Gideon who was least in his father's house, and whose family was the poorest in Manasseh (Judges 6:15), as in the case of Jephthah who was the son of a harlot, as in the case of Samson who was more than likely a small Jewish man, as in the case of David who was the youngest of Jesse's 8 sons.

Application – God uses the weak so that he might get the glory

Waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens – became courageous in battle and sent their foreign enemies into retreat (Barnes, 1834)

Illustration – this is not talking about literal aliens

By faith, God worked in mighty ways in the lives of many in the Old Testament.

But for those who lived by faith, things did not always turn out so positive.

4.) Faith in Persecution

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

Women received their dead raised to life again – as in the case of the poor widow foreigner of Zarephath whose son was raised from the dead by Elijah (1 Kings 17:22-24), as in the case of the wealthy Jewish woman of Shunem whose son was raised from the dead by Elisha (2 Kings 4:8-37).

and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection – as in the case of the Maccabaeen martyr Eleazar who was stretched out on a frame and beaten to death (this is the exact form of torture the Greek word refers to), as in the case of others who refused to recant because they looked forward to a better resurrection than the boys who were raised to dead by the prophets. Those boys were raised to life to die again one day, but these martyrs looked forward to the future resurrection of the righteous from which they would never die. (Bruce, 1990)

1 Kings 17:22-24 - And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.

2 Kings 4:27-37 - And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me. Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me? Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child. And the mother of the child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her. And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked. And when Elisha

was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment – as in the case of Jeremiah who was beaten and put in the stocks (Jer. 20:2), who was mocked by both the public and his own family (Jer. 20:7-10), who was imprisoned (Jer. 37:15), who was held captive in a muddy cistern (Jer. 38:6-13). (Bruce, 1990)

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

They were stoned – as in the case of Zechariah (2 Chronicles 24:20-22), and according to Jewish tradition in the case of Jeremiah as well (Ellicott, 1905)

They were sawn asunder – as in the case of Isaiah according to Jewish tradition (Ellicott, 1905)

Were tempted – were tested

Were slain with the sword – though some such as Elijah escaped Jezebel's vengeance, many other prophets did not (1 Kings 19:10). By faith, some prophets were delivered. By faith, others were martyred. (Bruce, 1990)

They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented – they roamed about, either voluntarily or because of banishment, and they did so in cruddy clothes while being impoverished, oppressed, and mistreated. (Poole, 1990)

1 Kings 21:13-15 - And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab,

Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

2 Chronicles 24:21 - And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD.

Matthew 23:37 - O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

1 Samuel 22:17-29 - And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the LORD; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the LORD. And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod. And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword.

1 Kings 18:4 - For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.)

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

Of whom the world was not worthy – They were outlawed as people who were unfit for civilized society; the truth was that civilized society was unfit for them.

they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth – as in the case of Obadiah when he took a hundred prophets and hid them in a cave so they would not be slaughtered (1 Kings 18:4)

1 Samuel 22:1 - David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him.

1 Kings 18:4 - For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.)

1 Kings 19:9 - And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Many lived by faith in the Old Testament and saw mighty victories in this life. Others lived by faith in the Old Testament and were beaten, mocked, tortured, and killed for it.

What did they all have in common?

5.) Faith in the End

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, - from Abel through Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, the judges, the kings, and the prophets, the martyrs, those who lived by faith were approved by God because of their faith

And yet, they

Received not the promise – they saw the fulfillment of some promises (they saw some victories), but they never witnessed the fulfillment of the promise (the Messiah and all that he would bring)

Hebrews 11:2 - For by it the elders obtained a good report.

Hebrews 11:13 - These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

God having provided some better thing for us – All of these in the Old Testament who lived and died in faith, did so looking forward to something better that we have access to: Jesus.

That they without us should not be made perfect – Complete access to God and ultimate forgiveness of sins were a future promise until Jesus came. And yet through His death on the cross, Jesus has purchased complete forgiveness of sins for those of faith today and those of faith that preceded us as well. (Bruce, 1990)

Hebrews 7:19 - For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

Hebrews 7:22 - By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

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

Hebrews 9:23 - It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

Hebrews 9:8-15 - The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

The Old Testament is a story of faith. It's a story of people who lived in such a way that we are forced to conclude that they trusted in God. They trusted in God to be the hero of their story. And yet, the culmination, the conclusion, the climax of that story is not found in God's deliverance of Noah from the flood. It is not found in God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt. It is not found in God's deliverance of Israel from oppression through the Judges. It is found in God's deliverance of humanity from sin through the God man Jesus Christ. The story of faith climaxes with Him.

Hebrews 12:1-3

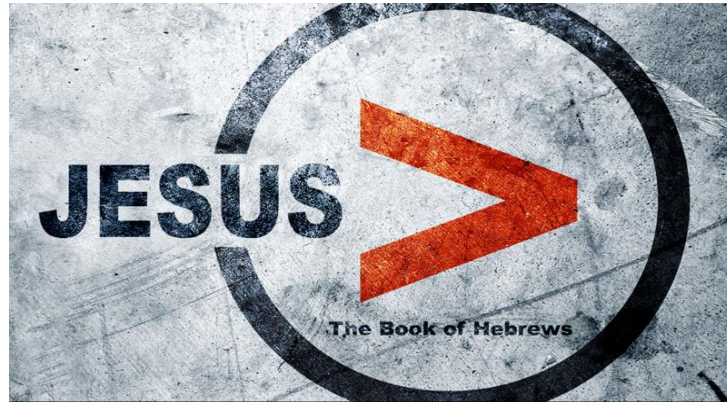
1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Invitation

The story of the Old Testament is a story of those who lived by faith, looking forward to the coming of the Jesus. Their faith should inspire us (who look back on the coming of Jesus) to continue on in faith. If they could live by faith before Jesus, how much more should we be able to seeing that He has already come.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 22 - HEBREWS 11:32-40

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 11:32	In what ways are each of the character listed examples of faith?
T	Read Hebrews 11:33-34	Who are some specific Old Testament characters that carried out these listed actions of faith?
W	Read Hebrews 11:35-12:3	Does living by faith guarantee that we won't experience persecution? Why or why not? Who is the climax of the Old Testament story of faith?
T	Read Hebrews 12:1-11	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F	Read Hebrews 12:1-11	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 12:1-11

Review

EXAMPLES OF FAITH

- 1.) Definition of Faith
- 2.) Faith in the Beginning
- 3.) Faith in the Patriarchs
- 4.) Faith in the Exodus
- 5.) Faith in the Judges
- 6.) Faith in the Kings
- 7.) Faith in the Prophets
- 8.) Faith in Persecution
- 9.) Faith in the End

These lived in faith without seeing the climax/end of the story. (10:39-40) They never saw Jesus. So the author has given us this story of faith, and now he's going to tell us what to do with it.

Sermon

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Why?

- Seeing that we are compassed with so great a cloud of witnesses - not spectators, but those who testify and whose lives testify to the blessedness of living by faith

What?

- Lay aside every weight - just as runners do with excess weights on their body and in their body. They want to eliminate resistance (excess clothing, body fat, etc.)
 - Illustration – running while holding 45 pound weights
 - Weights - things that hold us back from running our race
 - Application – what is holding you back from being all in your race?
 - Sports
 - Entertainment
 - Television
 - Work
 - Money
 - Things
 - Pleasure

- Lay aside the sin which so easily doth besets us – lay aside the sin in general that easily entangles and hinders us
 - Illustration – sack race; the sack trips us up
 - Sin is like that (weights hold us back; sin trips us up)
 - When we fail to repent of sin and turn from it, it comes back to trip us up in our race
 - Application – what sins are you holding onto? Or what sins are holding onto you like that sack?
 - Pride
 - Self righteousness
 - Anger
 - Worry
 - Greed
 - Selfishness
- And let us run with patience the race that is set before us – our Christian life; our story of faith

How?

- With patience – it's not a sprint. It's a marathon. There are good times and bad times. You and I need some grit.
 - Illustration – church revitalization; C.S. Lewis – a grief observed (lost his wife - Joy Davidman)
- 1 Cor. 9:24-27 - Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

How?

- With patience
- With our eyes fixed on Jesus – Looking unto Jesus
 - Application – not what do others want? Not what do I want? But Jesus, what do you want?
 - We live and serve out the fulness and freedom that we have in Him.
 - The author and finisher of our faith -
 - Author (pioneer) - He is the enabler of our faith. He blazed the trail through his life and death on the cross and made faith in Him possible.

- Finisher (perfecter) - He is the perfect example of living by faith. He finished his race... and looking to His example helps us to finish ours as well.
- How is he our example?
 - Who for the joy that was set before Him – exaltation at the right hand of God, forgiveness of sins for humanity, reconciliation of God and man...looking forward in faith to these things, He did what?
 - Endured the cross, despising the shame – Not my will, but thine be done. In humble obedience and faith, He submitted Himself to the will of the Father and was publicly disgraced on the cross.
 - Illustration - The cross was the most disgraceful means of death in Roman culture. It was for slaves and criminals of low degree. Romans weren't even permitted to be crucified. Jesus disregarded this disgrace and endured the cross. (Bruce, 1990)
 - And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God – the pioneer of our salvation suffered in faith and is not set down at the right hand of the Father.

Hebrews 2:7-9 - Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself - Christ has thus become our ultimate example of and inspiration for living by faith...and he did so in the midst of incredible hostility from the very sinners he came to save

Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds – when you find yourself tired and discouraged, look to those who lived by faith before you, and look to the ultimate example of faith: Jesus. Let his example encourage you to not quit, but keep running.

Hebrews 3:1 - Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

Isaiah 40:30-31 - Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

2 Corinthians 4:16 - For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

Galatians 6:9 - And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Faith in the end – the story culminates with Jesus

Now our author is going to transition from talking about examples of faith to enemies of faith.

ENEMIES OF FAITH

- Things that can hold us back or trip us up in our race
- 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.
- in your journey of faith, you have endured much persecution and hardship, but unlike Jesus and the Old Testament martyrs, you have not yet been called upon to die for your faith
 - Transition

1.) Responding Incorrectly to God's Correction

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children –

- He's quoting Proverbs 3:11-12, but this principle of God chastening/correct His children is all throughout the Old Testament (c.f. Deuteronomy 8:5; Job 5:17-18; Psalm 94:12)

Proverbs 3:11-12 - My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Deuteronomy 8:5 - Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

Job 5:17-18 - Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

Psalms 94:12 - Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;

- In the midst of your difficult circumstances, you have forgotten that hardship is not just always the result of persecution, sometimes hardship in our lives comes because we are out of God's will and He is correcting us.
- What are the wrong responses to God's correction?

My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him –

- What are the wrong responses?
 - Despise – looking down upon God's correction
 - Faint – letting up in exhaustion because of God's correction
 - Don't get mad and don't give up. Why?

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveith – God disciplines and punishes His children when they need it because he loves them

- Application – the same is true of godly parents
 - Illustration – being rebellious, throwing a chair through my closet doors, getting grounded forever
 - He was trying to teach me respect, submission, self control

In verses 5-6, he is quoting Proverbs 3:11-12. Now, he's going to apply it to his readers.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as sons – I believe that the overall tone of the book of Hebrews as well as the abundance of warning passages in the book tell us that there was backsliding and pulling away from God in this group of Hebrew believers.

- I also believe that this passage of Scripture indicates to us that they were enduring hardship and suffering as well in the midst of it.
- What the author is saying is, "Hey, the hardships you are enduring are not a bad thing. God is dealing with you as His children. He is punishing and correcting you to bring you back to where you should be."

For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? – You don't punish other people's kids. They're not your kids!

- Illustration – me grounding someone else's child because I thought he acted disrespectful

Proverbs 22:15 - Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Proverbs 29:15 - The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

Proverbs 13:24 - He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

But if ye be without chastisement – if you can turn from God and backslide into sin without experiencing discipline and correction from God

Whereof all are partakers – the discipline that all of God's children partake in

then are ye bastards (illegitimate children) and not sons – you're not a child of God. You're an illegitimate child. You're a professor of Christ, not a true child of Christ.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us – our earthly fathers disciplined and corrected us

- Application – if you're a father or a mother in this room, you should discipline and correct your children when they veer onto a dangerous path
 - That is the loving thing to do
 - Illustration – if your kid was walking blindfolded towards the edge of a cliff, and you loved them, you would do whatever it took to stop them
 - The same is true when it comes to spiritual danger: life altering choices, ungodliness, rebellion.
 - If you're a child or teen whose parents do have rules and consequences for breaking those rules, you should be thankful, because that means they care and they love you
 - It's not easy to confront and discipline. It's much easier to just let everything go.

And we gave them reverence – we respected our parents for their loving correction in our lives. Don't get mad. Don't give up. Appreciate correction when it comes, and grow through it.

Exodus 20:12 - Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Shall we not much more be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? – if we obeyed and revered our earthly fathers, shouldn't we even more so obey and reverence our spiritual Father, our heavenly Father and live spiritually?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure – our parents disciplined and corrected us for a short period of time from a finite, earthly perspective, as they saw fit

- Illustration – aha! See I knew it! Mom and dad just discipline because it's fun for them! That's not what this is saying.
- Illustration – different parents have different rules and standards. They're doing the best they can with what they know.

but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness – God's correction in our lives is always right, and it's always exactly what we need seeing that He is infinitely wise and all knowing. He works through correction to make us more like Him, more holy.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous – In the moment, correction is awful for the person receiving it. No one responds to correction with "Awesome. Thank you so much for taking away my internet access. That's great. This is really going to help me." No. It's grievous! It makes us sad. We grieve because of our loss of internet access.

Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby - For those who do not despise correction or quit because of it, but who allow themselves to be trained or guided by it, afterwards, it (the tree of correction) produces the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

Sin is joyful in the moment, but it takes us further from Christ, and is grievous in the end.

Correction is grievous in the moment, but it brings us closer to Christ, and is joyful in the end.

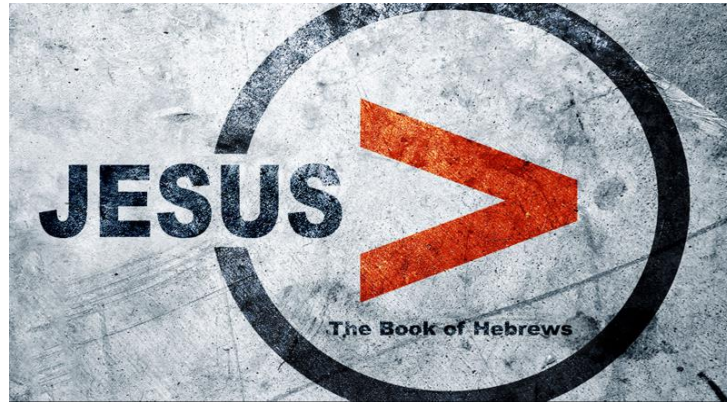
Be wary of having a fleshly response to God's correction in your life. It's an enemy of faith.

Invitation

Seeing that we are surrounded by so many whose lives testify to the blessedness of living by faith:

- Let us lay aside every weight
 - Is there anything in your life that is hindering you from being all in for Jesus?
- Let us lay aside the sin that trips us up

- What sin in your life are you holding onto that you need to repent of and cast away?
- Let us run our race
 - With patience
 - Are you at a time in your race where you just need to push through it, have some grit, keep going? Not quit?
 - Looking unto Jesus
 - Have you eyes veered off of him? Have you become caught up in what others want from you? What you want from you? Or is it Jesus, what do you want?
- Maybe in your race you're pulling away from God. Maybe you're caught up in sin and God is punishing you as His child.
 - Are you responding in the right way? Has it driven you to repentance, or are you angry at Him?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 23 - HEBREWS 12:1-11

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 12:1-3	How are we to run our race as Christians?
T	Read Hebrews 12:1-3	In what way is Jesus the ultimate example of living by faith?
W	Read Hebrews 12:4-11	Why does God discipline and correct his children when they fall into sin? When God corrects us, how should we and how shouldn't we respond?
T	Read Hebrews 12:12-17	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F	Read Hebrews 12:12-17	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 12:12-17

Review

Enemies of Faith (things that can hold us back or trip us up on our Christian race)

- Responding Incorrectly to God's Correction
 - o As God's children, He will punish us when we turn away into sin because He loves us.
 - o When that happens, we must not get mad or give up.
 - o We must give in. We must repent.

This morning in Hebrews 12:12-17 we're going to look at two other enemies of faith.

Sermon

Hebrews 12:12-17 –

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

1.) Disregarding the Weak Among Us

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

Illustration – Tim Tebow's Eye Black (Hebrews 12:1-2) (November 28, 2009; Playing the Florida State Seminoles; CBS read Hebrews 12:12)

Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down – the hands which are weak and relaxed (Bible Hub). Stand up. Straighten your shoulders. Lift up your weak hands. (Sorenson, 2007), and help lift up the weak hands of the others around you.

And the feeble knees – Steady the weak, shaky knees. Every other time this word for “feeble” is used in the New Testament, it has the idea of paralyzed (Bible Hub). “Get up, get going, and get back in the race, and help others to do the same.” Don't give up! (Sorenson, 2007)

Illustration – this phrase was a well known allusion to an Old Testament passage (Old McDonald had a farm -> nursery rhyme...or just keeping my eyes on the Lord -> Hebrews 12:1-2)

Ezekiel 21:7 - And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt answer, For the tidings; because it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold, it cometh, and shall be brought to pass, saith the Lord GOD.

Daniel 5:6 - Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

This word of encouragement is paralleled in Isaiah's exhortation to exiled Jews in Babylon who were discouraged and in danger of giving up. They had begun to doubt whether God's deliverance would actually come. (c.f. Isaiah 35:3-4)

Isaiah 35:3-4 - Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.

- Don't get discouraged. Don't give up, and don't let those around you give up either.

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Illustration – make straight paths for your feet is another allusion to an Old Testament passage (Proverbs 4:26-27)

And make straight paths for your feet –The encouragement is to smooth the way for the spiritually weak and lame. Don't just lift up their hands and strengthen their knees, but do everything you can to make the path smooth for them. (Bruce, 1990)

- You is 2nd person plural which means that the author is addressing the group
Lest that which is lame be turned out of the way – Remove the obstacles out of the way that might cause the weak and frail to stumble and fall. (Barnes, 1834)

Application – the strong serving the weak; the Christian race is not meant to be survival of the fittest.

But let it rather be healed – Rather than resigning the weak and frail to falling or turning down a wrong path, we should desire to see them heal and grow stronger spiritually. (Barnes, 1834)

Illustration – it's not just my race; it's our race. We are a family. Too often we read me when we should be reading we. (ECO Challenge – everybody has to cross the finish line for our team to finish)

Application – we are a family, and families don't leave anyone behind.

- If we took Jacqueline to Disney Land one day and she got tired, we wouldn't leave her behind.

Proverbs 4:26-27 - Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

Isaiah 35:8-10 - And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Jeremiah 31:8-9 - Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Galatians 6:1 - Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2.) Disregarding the Apostates Among Us

Apostates – those who professed the faith, but now deny the faith

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

This takes the illustration of running the race and puts it into ethical terms.

Follow peace with all men – actively pursue peace with all men

Application – if this is to be our attitude with those who hate us, how much more so with those who are our family in Christ? There is no place for division within the family of God.

Psalms 34:14 - Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

Proverbs 16:7 - When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him

Romans 12:18 - If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

And holiness – actively pursue holiness

Leviticus 11:45 - For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

1 Peter 1:15 - But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

Without which no man shall see the Lord – only the holy will see God. To see the Lord is the highest and most glorious blessing mortals can enjoy, but it is reserved for those who are holy in heart and life. (Bruce, 1990)

Matthew 5:8-9 - 8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Looking diligently – being ever so careful and watchful (Sorenson, 2007)

Lest any man fail of the grace of God – lest any of them that “professed Christ” should turn away in unbelief...lest any among them (who weren’t actually saved, but were so close to accepting Christ) should fall short of the grace of the gospel.(Poole, 1990)

Hebrews 2:1-2 - Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

Hebrews 3:12 - Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

Hebrews 4:11 - Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Hebrews 6:11 - And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

Hebrews 10:26-27 - 26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Galatians 5:4-7 talks about those Jews who knew about Jesus, understood the gospel, were so close to being saved and yet turned back to Judaism:

Galatians 5:4-7 - Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth

any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. 7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

- They had turned away from the grace of the gospel.

Why should we be watchful of those among us who profess to know Christ, but then turn away from Him? Paul uses an illustration.

Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you – once again, this is an allusion to an Old Testament passage.

Illustration – every sermon I have ever heard out of this passage was preached on the dangers of an attitude of bitterness

Deuteronomy 29:18 - Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood;

- Moses warned the Israelites about falling into the idolatrous practices of the Canaanites. (Bruce, 1990)
- The one who leaves the faith is like a bitter, sour, poisonous root that springs up in the midst of the community of believers (Sorenson, 2007)

What can be the effect of that?

And thereby many be defiled – Bitter roots left unchecked grow and spread. Be watchful for those that turn away and deny the faith, lest by that one poisonous root, many others may be drawn into sin (Poole, 1990) Lest a little leaven, leavens the whole lump.

Illustration – one rotten apple can ruin the whole bushel if not removed. Why? Because it spreads?

Galatians 5:9 - 9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

1 Corinthians 5:6 - Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

In verse 16 we see the bitter fruits of the root of bitterness. (Poole, 1990)

16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Lest there be any fornicator – strictly speaking, anyone who is sexually immoral; generally speaking, anyone who is unclean and immoral. (Sorenson, 2007)

Acts 15:29 - That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

or profane person – ungodly, greedy (Sorenson, 2007) lacking spiritual values (Bruce, 1990)

When one leaves the faith, they often revert back to living a lifestyle full of immorality and devoid of spiritual values.

The author gives us an illustration of what a lack of spiritual values looks like.

As Esau who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright –

- He is not described in spiritual terms, but rather in terms of his material interests (e.g. hunting) (Bruce, 1990)
- He sought to murder his brother Jacob upon discovery that he had stolen his blessing from his father
- He married an unbeliever
- He undervalued the blessing of the birthright
 - o Double portion of the inheritance
 - o Dominion over the family
 - o Priestly role in the family (Poole, 1990)
 - o “So little did Esau value the birthright which his heritage was bound up in that in a moment of hunger he sold it for a small amount of food.” (Bruce, 1990)

Genesis 25:31-34 - And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

Verse 17 tells us the end result of those who leave the faith, engage in immorality, and live a life devoid of spiritual values.

17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected – The author sees Esau’s lack of spiritual values, forfeiting of his birthright, and losing out on his father’s blessing as connected.

- Lack of spiritual values -> forfeiting of the birthright -> losing out on the blessing
- Application – you reap what you sow

For he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears – Esau begged his father to take back the blessing he had given to his brother Jacob, but Isaac could not. He could not.

Application – one day everyone will stand before God and give an account for their life, but at that point it’s too late to go back. It’s too late to change anything.

Those who have heard the gospel and yet turned away from it will have a moment of clarity as Esau did, in which it dawns on them how terrible of a decision they really made. But at that point...

It's too late to turn back to Christ. It doesn't matter how much anyone sobers up and mourns in that moment. What's done is done.

"Today is the day of salvation"

Genesis 27:31-41 - And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck. And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.

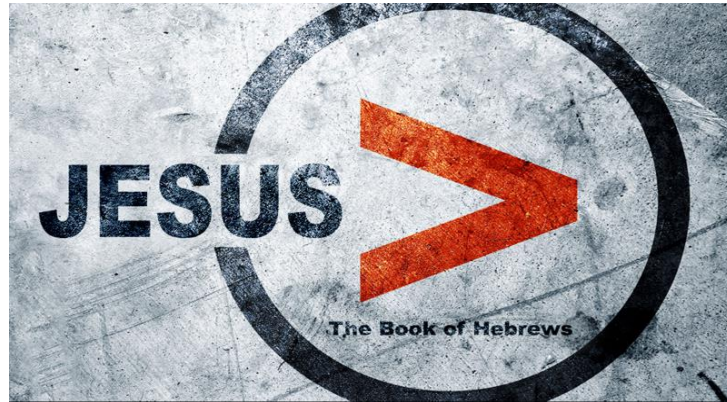
Invitation

Enemies of faith – things that can hold us back or trip us up on our race together as a family

- Be careful of disregarding the weak around us.
 - When one of us is struggling
 - We do not leave them behind
 - We do not make fun of them
 - We do not kick them while they are down
 - We help them up, and we do everything we can to clear the path for them to move forward
- Be careful of disregarding the apostate around us.
 - When a believer (not doubts) but denies the faith they have professed

- We must not ignore it. Why?
- That apostate is like a poisonous root that springs up in the midst of the church and spreads if its not dealt with.

For those who are not saved, today is the day of salvation.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 24 - HEBREWS 12:12-17

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 12:12-13	In what ways can those who are strong help the weak to continue in the race?
T	Read Hebrews 12:14-15	What does the author mean when he describes the bitter root in verse 15?
W	Read Hebrews 12:16-17	What are some of the fruits of apostasy? What is the end result of the life of an apostate?
T	Read Hebrews 12:18-29	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F	Read Hebrews 12:18-29	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 12:18-29

Review

Enemies of Faith

- Responding Incorrectly to God's Correction
- Disregarding the Weak Among Us
- Disregarding the Apostates Among Us

Sermon

DISREGARDING THE JUDGMENT OF GOD

1.) Two Pictures

The author is going to contrast the Israel's response to the law in the Old Testament with our response to the gospel in the New Testament.

In the Old Testament, God spoke to Israel from Mount Sinai. In the New Testament, God speaks to us from heaven through His Son.

You can reject, or you can receive. Choose wisely because there are major consequences.

A.) Mount Sinai

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

For ye are not come unto the mount - What is this talking about? Is this Mount Doom? Mount Sinai, the physical mountain that could literally be touched. This was the scene at Mount Sinai when God gave the 10 commandments to Moses and Israel (Exodus 19:10-20)

that might be touched – like a physical mountain

and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,– the mountain was consumed by fire, smoke, darkness, and storm (c.f. Exodus 19:10-19)

What happened at Mount Sinai?

Throughout the course of Exodus 19-34, Moses actually went up and down Mount Sinai 8 times.

First ascent – 19:3-7 (God offers Israel a covenant. Moses takes this message down to the elders of Israel. They respond positively.)

Second ascent – 19:8-9 (Moses goes back up the mountain to relay the elders answer to God. God says great. Moses takes the message back down the mount to Israel.)

Third ascent – 19:10-14 (God is speaking to Moses so we assume he's back on the mount)

Pastor, what happened on Mount Sinai?!

Exodus 19:10-20 - And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at your wives. And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

Fourth ascent – 19:20-25 (God tells Moses to remind the people not to come too close to the mount, lest they die. And the next time you come up, I want you to bring Aaron with you. He can come halfway up. Moses goes back down the mountain and relayed the message)

Then Exodus 20 happens.

Exodus 20:1 - And God spake all these words, saying,

God audibly spoke the ten commandments from the mountain to Israel.

Exodus 20:2-17 – The giving of the 10 commandments (Got Questions)

Exodus 20:18-19 - 18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: - Please don't let God speak directly to us again. We are too scared. You can relay the message, and that will work.

They were terrified. Why?

20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

For they could not endure that which was commanded – the whole thing just scared them to death. They just couldn't handle it. The smoke, the fire, the storm, the darkness, the booming voice of God, the ten commandments – it was just too overwhelming. (c.f. Exodus 19:13).

And on top of that...

And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: - Anything that touched the mountain was to be put to death.

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake – not only that, but the scene was so terrifying, that even Moses was scared.

This was the scene at Sinai when God gave Israel the law thousands of years ago. For us today, we are not literally standing at the foot of Mount Sinai. But, we do find ourselves in a similar situation where God has spoken to us and we must decide how we're going to respond.

What is the situation that we find ourselves in today?

Exodus 19:16 - And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.

Deuteronomy 9:19 - For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the Lord was wroth against you to destroy you. But the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also.

B.) Mount Zion

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem – Israel in the time of Moses was literally standing at the foot of Mount Sinai. Today, we are figuratively/metaphorically standing at the foot of heaven (Mount Zion; the New Jerusalem).

- What does Mount Zion mean?
 - That was another name for Jerusalem.
 - o Mount Zion was the site of the Jebusite stronghold which David captured and made his royal residence in the seventh year of his reign. David also made it the religious center of his kingdom by installing the ark of the covenant there. Later, when Solomon built his temple on the hill to the north of Zion (and the ark was installed there, the name Zion was extended to include this further area and became in practice synonymous with Jerusalem. (Bruce, 1990) (2 Samuel 5:6-9; 6:2).
 - But the Scripture tells us of a new Jerusalem, a heavenly Mount Zion where we will dwell with God forever. This is what we're really referring to when we talk about spending eternity with God in heaven.
 - o Revelation 21:1-3 – 1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
 - o Streets of gold, gates of pearl – that's all talking about the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21.
 - Israel was literally standing at the foot of Mount Sinai. Today, we are figuratively/metaphorically standing at the foot of heaven
- Hebrews 13:4 - For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

Mount Sinai had fire, smoke, darkness, storms, etc. What does Mount Zion or heaven have?

And to an innumerable company of angels – you can't even count them

Revelation 5:11-12 - And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

- Ten thousand times ten thousand = 100 million
- You can count to
 - o 1000 in ten minutes
 - o 100,000 in 2 days

- 1,000,000 in 1 month
- 100 million in ten years. (Math is Fun)

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn – the body of Christ; the assembly of those who have trusted in Christ and are already with him.

- At first, when it said “church of the firstborn” I thought it was referring to Christ as the firstborn. The New Testament often talks about Him as the firstborn. However, firstborn is plural in this verse (i.e. church of the first born ones).
 - What does that mean?
 - The firstborn receives the inheritance, and I think that’s what the author is trying to communicate here. The church of those who will receive their inheritance.

Romans 8:29 - For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Colossians 1:15 - Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Ephesians 1:12 – That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Revelation 14:4 - These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

Romans 8:17 - And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Which are written in heaven – who are enrolled as citizens of heaven in the Lamb’s book of life (Barnes, 1834)

Luke 10:20 - Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Revelation 13:8 - And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Revelation 20:15 - And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

And to God, the judge of all – we come to a God that is loving and kind and gracious and merciful, but who is also judge of all

- Illustration – justice is an expression of love (when injustice occurs and leadership fails to confront it, we become outraged. Why? Because we know in our heart of hearts that when wrongdoing has occurred, love doesn't just let it go. It acts justly.)
- As believers we can approach the judge not as the defendant, but as His child
The spirits of just men made perfect – Old Testament saints (Abraham, Sara, Esther, Joseph)

Hebrews 11:40 - God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant – the one that reconciles God to man, and makes the new covenant possible through His death on the cross

- Jesus -> deliverer

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

And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel – and to the blood that Jesus Christ shed on the cross for our sins

- When Abel was murdered, his blood cried out for justice. When Christ was murdered, his blood cried out for forgiveness. (Bruce, 1990)

Genesis 4:10 - And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Matthew 23:35 - That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

In the Old Testament, Israel stood before God at Mount Sinai and they had to decide how they were going to respond to what He was saying. In the New Testament, we stand before God in heaven and we too must decide how we are going to respond to His word.

2.) Two Choices

A.) Rejecting God

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh – God has spoken, and you have two choices: you can either receive what He says, or you can reject what He says.

- How has he spoken? Through Jesus.
- Hebrews 1:1-2 - God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;
- You better not reject what He says. Why?

For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven – if Israel did not escape God's judgment at Sinai, how much more so are we not going to escape God's judgment when we disregard His speaking to us from heaven through His son?
(MacArthur, 1973)

Illustration – If you got in trouble for getting smart with your boss in an email, what do you think is going to happen if you try to pull that same nonsense face to face?

Hebrews 10:28-29 - He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Hebrews 2:1-3 - Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

Whose voice then shook the earth – when He spoke from Sinai His voice caused an earthquake (c.f. Ex. 19:18)

But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven – there is coming a day of judgment when God will not only shake the earth, but also the universe, when he comes in judgment at the end of the age. (c.f. Haggai 2:6-7; Isaiah 13:13)

Haggai 2:6-7 - For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 13:13 - Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

Joel 3:16 - The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

And this word, Yet once more, signifieth – he's going to provide commentary on the phrase "Yet once more" from Haggai 2:6-7

Yet once more – one last time

the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain – Yet once more or one last time implies that this judgment is final and destructive. God is going to destroy and renovate the universe. Only the things that are unshakable (eternal) will survive. (Bruce, 1990).

2 Peter 3:10-13 - But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

You can reject God and his heavenly city, but He's still the same God whose voice terrified the Israelites at Mount Sinai. For those who accept Him by faith, heaven awaits with all of its splendor. But for those who reject Him in unbelief, judgment awaits with all of its terror.

Revelation 20:11; 21:1-2 – 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them... 1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

B.) Receiving God

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved – He's addressing this Hebrew community as genuine Christians

- As Christians, we have an eternal inheritance, that will not be shaken, heavenly Mount Zion, that endures forever...Knowing this

Let us have grace – Let us hold fast to the grace of the gospel. Let us hold fast to God's grace that is available to us in our ever present time of need...why?

Hebrews 4:16 - Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 3:6 - But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Hebrews 10:23 - Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and a godly fear – so that through God's grace we can serve Him acceptably with respect and awe. And we should serve Him in respect and awe. Why?

Romans 12:1-2 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

For our God is a consuming fire – The same God that appeared as a consuming fire on the top of Mount Sinai will one day judge the world in fire as well. (Bruce, 1990)

Revelation 20:11-15

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

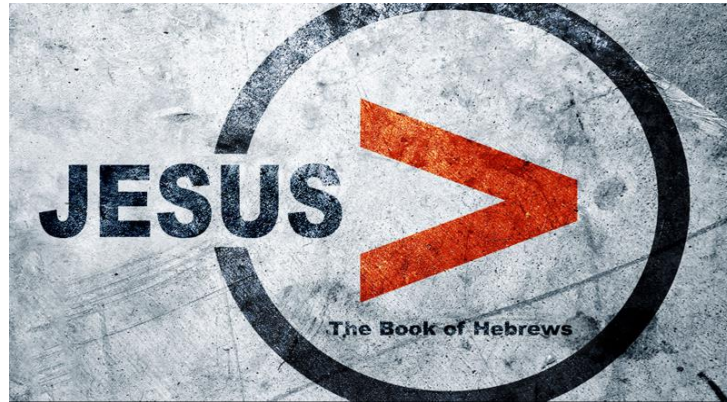
14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Invitation

Just as God revealed Himself to Israel thousands of years ago on Mount Sinai, so He has revealed Himself to us today through His Son. What will you do with Jesus? He died for your sins so that through faith in His death, burial, and resurrection, you might have forgiveness of sins and a home in heaven. For those who receive Him in faith, that's exactly what they'll get. But for those who deny Him in unbelief, who turn away from the faith, all that awaits them is judgment. For our God is a consuming fire.

You are standing in front of heaven. What will you do? Will you accept it or reject it?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 25 - HEBREWS 12:18-29

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 12:18-21; Exodus 19:1-20:19	How does the author describe Mount Sinai? What is significant about this mountain?
T	Read Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 20:11-21:3	How does the author describe the heavenly Mount Zion? What is significant about this mountain?
W	Read Hebrews 12:25-29	What are the two choices that each of us face, and what are the consequences of those choices?
T	Read Hebrews 13:1-8	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F	Read Hebrews 13:1-8	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 13:1-8

Review

Encouragement to Faith (Ch. 10:19-39)

Examples of Faith (Ch. 11)

Enemies of Faith (Ch. 12)

- Responding Incorrectly to God's Correction
- Disregarding the Weak Among Us
- Disregarding the Apostates Among Us
- Disregarding the Judgment of God

Expressions of Faith (Ch. 13)

Sermon

EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH

This is the conclusion of the letter. It ends with a similar assortment of practical instructions and personal comments as most New Testament epistles do. (Bruce, 1990)

Here's the question that God is asking each of us: do you trust me? Do you trust that I know what's best for your life?

- With each of these commands from God given in chapter 13, our response will be dependent on whether or not we trust that God knows best. If we trust, then our response is "Yes Sir". If we don't, our response will be "Well I don't know about that".

As we dive into our text this morning, the first command that we see is one to brotherly love.

1.) Brotherly Love

1 Let brotherly love continue.

Brotherly love – selfless action towards my brothers and sisters in Christ

Illustration – it's looking at my fellow Christians as brothers and sisters; We are my family, and we need to act like it (in a good way, not in a dysfunctional family way!).

Psalm 133:1 - Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

1 John 3:16 - Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Do you view your Christian brothers and sisters like family? Are you connected? Have you opened up?

Do you treat your Christian brothers and sisters like family? Are you giving? Are you unified? Are you selfless?

It's an expression of faith.

John 13:34-35 - A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

2.) Hospitality

Hospitality is a cultural value in many Eastern cultures. It is a cultural value in many Southern cultures (like Georgia and Alabama). It is not a California value. But folks, it is a Biblical value.

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Be not forgetful to entertain strangers –

- The emphasis here is on strangers, particularly Christian strangers (like when a missionary comes to town)
- Christians traveling from one place to another on business would be especially appreciative of hospitality from fellow Christians in ancient times. (Bruce, 1990)

God has called us to be over the top hospitable regardless of our culture.

- I'll give you a very clear cut application of this: visitors in church services
 - Every one of us needs to be making an effort to be hospitable to new people in church
 - "I'm not a people person"
 - Does it say, "People persons" in this verse?
 - Frankly, I'm not a people person! I'm just trusting the Lord.

Hospitality: it's an expression of faith.

Why? 1) Because God says so. It's an expression of faith. 2) ->

For thereby some have entertained angels unawares – as did Abraham in Genesis 18:2-10

- He showed hospitality to three men, who turned out to be three angels, one of which was the angel of the Lord. They told them Sarah would have a child.
- Contrast Abraham's hospitality with the three angels with how Sodom treated the two angels that Lot entertained

Genesis 18:2-10 - And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

Genesis 19:1-3 - And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

Leviticus 19:34 - But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Matthew 25:35, 43 - For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:... I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Romans 12:13 - Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

3.) Compassion

3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them – Remember them as if you were there with them. Have empathy.

Illustration – Lucian's (ancient writer) account of the imprisonment of Proteus Peregrinus

- The Christians ""left no stone unturned in their endeavor to procure his release. When this proved impossible, they looked after his wants in all other matters with untiring solicitude and devotion. From earliest dawn old women ('widows,' they are called²⁵) and orphan children might be seen waiting about the prison-doors; while the officers of the church, by bribing the jailors, were able to spend the night inside with him. Meals were brought in, and they went through their sacred formulas." (Lucian, p. 12)

Illustration – recall how the Butler did not remember Joseph in his bonds

And them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body – put yourself in the shoes of those who are suffering

Romans 12:15 - Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Are you empathetic with those who are suffering? Do you even notice?

"Pastor, I'm just not the compassionate type." Whoa...Does it say "compassionate types" in this verse? No. When we live in a way that is contrary to our natural personality traits, you know what that is? It's an expression of faith.

Matthew 25:35-40 - 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Hebrews 10:32-34 - 32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; 33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. 34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

4.) Right Relationships

4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Illustration – if I want to know about something, where is the best place to go? The internet right? No, the best place to go is to its designer.

- Jim Bushong & his Taj Majal chicken coop (if I wanted to know how to use it, I would not ask Eric Victoria, I'd ask Jim. Why? Because he made it)
- Who designed human beings? God. Who designed relationships between human beings? If I want to know how to do relationships right, I would not go to the internet. I would not go to Hollywood. I would go to God. Why? Because He made them and He knows them better than anyone else.

There is so much misinformation about relationships out there. Because of that, we're going to take some time this morning and talk about what God's design for right relationships is.

Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled –

- Marriage is honorable, and it is a wonderful creation of God, but so is singleness.
 - God has designed some for marriage and some for singleness, and there's nothing wrong with either of those relationship status.
 - Genesis 2:18 - And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.
 - It isn't good for any of us to be alone. We all need relationships (friends, close companions). We all need family, but God hasn't designed all of us for marriage.
 - 1 Cor. 7:2, 6-9 – 2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. 6 But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. 7 For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. 8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. 9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.
 - God has designed some for marriage and some for singleness, and both of those are good. If you think that singleness makes someone a second class citizen, then Paul, the greatest Christian who ever lived, was also apparently a second class citizen.
 - Singleness is a tremendous opportunity to find fulfillment in Christ and grow in holiness.
- Marriage is a binding covenant (promise) made to each other (Mal. 2:14) and before God (Prov. 2:17)
 - Binding (til death do us part)
 - Matthew 19:4-6 - And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man

leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**

- Promise to each other
 - Malachi 2:14 - Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: **yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.**
- Promise before God
 - Matthew 19:6 - ...**What God hath joined together.**
 - Proverbs 2:17 – Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, **and forgetteth the covenant of her God**
- “I swear to you in the sight of God til death do us part” (that’s serious)
- Consumer Relationship (my relationship with my gas provider)
 - Chooses the best option in the field for as long as it's the best option (Valero vs speedway)
 - Temporary
 - Self serving
 - My needs are more important than the relationship
 - This is the mentality many take with serious relationships today
- Covenant Relationship (my relationship with Jacqueline)
 - Permanent
 - Committed
 - The relationship takes precedence over my needs
 - I don't parent my daughter for as long as its convenient for me to do so. It's not like the first time she pooped her pants, "welp, this whole parenting thing has been great while it lasted. But you're really needy and I didn't sign up for this.". You don't back out of being a parent the first time your kids cries in the middle of the night or fails a science a test or gets suspended from school. You'd be looked down upon in the worst way by society. Why? Because society views the parent child relationship as a covenant. You are bound to that child for the rest of your life.
 -and God views marriage the same way. It's a serious, life long binding selfless commitment that places the relationship above your needs. God designed marriage as a covenant relationship, not a consumer one.
- The marriage covenant (promise) is a protective boundary that God has created for physical and emotional intimacy

- Gen. 2:24 – leave and then cleave unto your wife (the one you have promised yourself to unconditionally)
- Why? Is it arbitrary? Is it to keep us from pleasure? No. He's the designer. He knows how relationships work. The boundary of marriage is there to keep us from getting hurt.
 - Illustration – Jacquelin and the oven
 - Jacqueline has an obsession with our oven
 - This is Jacqueline listening to daddy say "Don't touch the oven. It'll burn you."
 - This is Jacqueline on her way to touch the oven.
 - What do I do? I put up a boundary. I won't let her touch it.
 - Why? Because I'm no fun and want to deprive her of pleasure. That's probably what she thinks. It's not that. It's because I want to protect her.
 - The answer is not even "No". It's "Not yet". The oven is a good thing, but handled the wrong way, it will burn her.
 - Physical intimacy is a wonderful creation of God, but handled the wrong way, it will burn you.
 - God has set up the boundary of marriage for physical and emotional intimacy to protect us, not to deprive us.
 - 1 Cor. 6:18 – flee fornication (physical intimacy outside the boundary). Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.
 - When you cross that boundary, you are burning yourself.
- When we give ourselves over to someone fully with no strings attached, no binding life long promise attached, you know what that is? It's a recipe for disaster and pain. That's exactly what we see in our hook up and break up culture.
 - God knew that, and so He said, "Before you give yourself over to someone fully, I want both of you to promise before each other and before me to unconditionally love the other for the rest of your lives"
- Application
 - I'm thankful for God's design. I'm thankful I was able to save a major part of myself physically and emotionally for Liz.
 - I'm thankful for parents who, when I was a teenager, put boundaries up for me when I wasn't really ready to be thinking about marriage.
 - Illustration – I hated the boundaries they put up (phone calls/texting), but looking back now, I'm just so thankful that they cared enough to put up with my attitude.

- Illustration – I would ask, “Don’t you trust me? Is the wrong question. I should’ve trusted them. “Don’t you trust me?” Is the wrong question. Do you love me? Is the right question.
- What do you do when you didn’t follow God’s plan? When you made mistakes that you can’t undo?
 - God offers redemption for those who say, “I can’t undo the past, but I can follow God’s plan going forward.”
 - Rahab the Harlot
 - The Woman at the well (5 husbands)
 - The Woman Caught in Adultery (go and sin no more)

Right relationships: they are an expression of faith. We will obey Him if we trust Him, and trust Him we should.

Whoremongers – male prostitute, sexually immoral (Bible Hub)

Adulterers – one who breaks the wedding vows

God will judge – judgment from God awaits those who engage in such practices.

Galatians 5:19 - Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

5.) Contentment

5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Application – covetousness leads to both fornication and adultery

- In singleness I can be content. Why? Because my fulfillment is found in Christ.
- In marriage I can be content. Why? Because my fulfillment is found in Christ.

Covetousness – love of money (Bible Hub)

- Luke 12:15 - And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.
 - The value of your life is not found in what you have, but who you have.
 - The purpose of your life is not found in what you have, but what you do with what you have.
 - The more you have, the greater responsibility you have to steward those resources for God’s kingdom.
- 1 Tim. 3:3 – pastors should not be lovers of money
- 1 Tim. 6:10 – the love of money is the root of all evil
- Don’t love money.

And be content with such things as ye have – Covetousness and contentment are polar opposites. Contentment says, “I have enough”, and it always will. Covetousness says, “I don’t have enough”, and it never will. (Bruce, 1990)

For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee -

- I am content in what I have because of who I have.
- Covetousness is thinking that I need something other than Christ.
- Illustration – studying this verse and reading a Christian book on anxiety this week
 - Anxiety is a warning signal that I am trusting in something other than Jesus in a situation where I know something needs to be done, but I’m not sure what to do.
 - Illustration – problem comes up and it has to be fixed. You’re the leader. People look to you. Your heart starts to pound because you know you need to do something, but you’re not sure what to do. How are you going to react in that moment?
 - Will you rely on Christ and trust in His help to find a solution?
 - Or will you look to a thing independent of Christ to fix your problem?
 - Contentment says, “I have enough because I have Christ.” Covetousness says, “I need more.” Contentment says “I have Jesus to lean on.” Anxiety says, “I need a fix to this problem.”
- What’s the solution?
 - Recognize your covetousness (and anxiety)
 - Remember Christ
 - Rest in Christ
 - Contentment is an expression of faith, and it leads to courage.

Exodus 20:17 - Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Luke 12:15 - And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

1 Timothy 6:9-10 - But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Philippians 4:11-12 - Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I

know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

1 Timothy 6:6-8 - But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

6.) Confidence

Christ centered contentment leads to confidence and courage.

- Not in my abilities
- Not in solutions
- But in Christ

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

So that we may boldly say – so that we can say with confidence in times of need, in situations where we don't know what to do, in instances where people are attacking us

The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me – If God is right here with me, why would this need to worry me? If God is right here with me, why would this situation intimidate me? If God is right here with me, why would I be scared of these people?

Illustration – He's our phone a friend lifeline

- o Not knowing an answer, getting anxious, remembering that you have a phone a friend, leads to confidence (why? Because you're confident in your friend)

That confidence is an expression of faith, not in me, but in Him.

Hebrews 4:16 - Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Psalms 27:1-3 - The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

Romans 8:31 - What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Psalms 56:4 - In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

7.) Remembrance of Spiritual Mentors

7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

Remember them which have the rule over you – remember those who have spiritually lead you and whose lives still lead you as an example to follow (apostles, pastors, other spiritual leaders). In what way were they examples to follow?

Who have spoken unto you the word of God – they taught them the Word of God

Whose faith follow – they lived by faith

Considering the end of their conversation – remembering how they finished their race, and aspiring to do the same (Bruce, 1990)

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

Hebrews 13:24 - Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

Acts 14:23 - And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever – their earlier spiritual mentors had passed away, but Jesus remained. Though people in our lives come and go, Jesus is always here. (Ellicott, 1905)

- We remember those who came before us, but we rest in Jesus who is always with us and will always be with us.

John 8:56-58 - Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

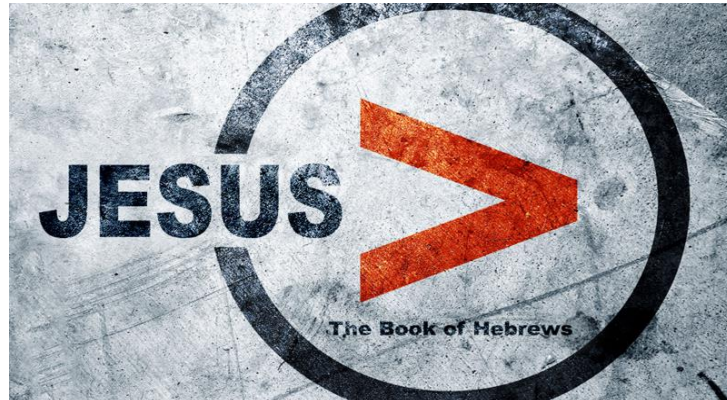
Revelation 1:8 - I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Invitation

To each and every one of us, God is asking: do you trust me? Do you really trust me?

- If you do, then follow my word. When you do, it is an expression of faith.
- Are you loving your brothers and sisters in Christ?
- Are you being hospitable to strangers?

- Are you being compassionate with those going through hard times?
- Are you following God's blueprint for right relationships?
- Are you content and satisfied in Jesus? Is he enough for you?
- Are you confident in Christ?
- Are you following the example of those mentors who have run the race before you?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 26 - HEBREWS 13:1-8

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 13:1-2	What two expressions of faith are mentioned in these verses? How can I grow in these areas?
T	Read Hebrews 13:3-4	What two expressions of faith are mentioned in these verses? How can I grow in these areas?
W	Read Hebrews 13:5-8	What three expressions of faith are mentioned in these verses? How can I grow in these areas?
T	Read Hebrews 13:9-25	What is this passage saying? Look up cross references at http://www.tsk-online.com/
F	Read Hebrews 13:9-25	How does this passage apply to me?

HEBREWS 13:9-25

Review

- Brotherly love
- Hospitality
- Compassion
- Right relationships
- Contentment
- Confidence
- Remembrance of Mentors

Sermon

8.) Doctrinal Stability

9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines – don't get thrown off track by all kinds of strange teachings

For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats – our heart (our spiritual life) is nourished and strengthened by the grace of God, not by food regulations (Bruce, 1990)

- Such as the ones that the Jews kept in the Old Testament that do not apply to us Christians in the New Testament

Which have not profited them that have been occupied therein – obsession over food regulations have never helped bring people into a closer relationship with God (Bruce, 1990)

- The keeping of the law has never saved anyone

Hebrews 9:9-10 - Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

Acts 10:14-16 - But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

Colossians 2:16-20 - Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle -

- In Judaism, the altar was the place where sacrifices were made by the priests. Often, in the case of certain sacrifices that were made, the priests would be permitted to later eat the meat of the sacrifice (c.f. Leviticus 10:16-20). It was part of their sustenance. However, in the case of the most important sacrifices, this was not the case.
- As Christians, we have an altar (speaking of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross) from which those priests who remain in Judaism can find no sustenance, for several reasons.

For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp – the animals that were part of the most important sacrifices, such as on the Day of Atonement, were not to be eaten, but rather to be taken and burned outside the camp

Leviticus 4:5-7, 11-12 - And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation: And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the vail of the sanctuary. And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation...And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung, Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp

unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate – Just as the bodies of the animals involved in the most important sacrifices were burned outside the camp, so too Jesus was crucified outside one of the city gates of Jerusalem. (Bruce, 1990)

- As we've seen throughout the book of Hebrews the sacrifice of Jesus was the end of all the other sacrifices. Why? Because it was permanent, effective, and final. It paid for the sins of the world, past, present, and future.
 - o The only way to find sustenance in His sacrifice is not to be religious or become a literal priest, but to put your faith and trust in Him alone as your Savior.

Are you doctrinally stable? It's an expression of faith.

10.) Boldness in Persecution

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach

- in the final hours of Jesus' life on his journey to Golgotha (outside the camp) He was reproached (disgraced)
 - o rejected by the Jewish authorities
 - o beaten
 - o whipped
 - o mocked
 - o tortured
 - o executed in the most humiliating fashion possible
 - o He was reproached (disgraced)
- If we are to follow Jesus, we too must take up our cross and follow Jesus "outside the camp." We must be willing to suffer mocking, insults, disgrace, and persecution
 - o Matthew 16:24 - Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
 - o John 15:18 - If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.
 - o Illustration – three positions on persecution in Christianity today
 - Those who avoid persecution
 - Progressive Christianity

- So obsessed about not offending the world that they reinterpret the Bible in light of what culture says on hot button topics (marriage, gender, life)
- Kind, but doctrinally wrong
 - for the sake of avoiding conflict with the world
- Those who seek persecution
 - Antagonistic Christianity
 - So angered at the sinfulness of the world that they hate those who don't know Christ. They seek heated conflict with lost people.
 - Doctrinally right, but mean
 - Application – in what world does acting this way make lost people more likely to follow Christ?
 - Illustration – prostitutes, tax collectors, adulterers, Samaritans: Jesus was kind to them.
 - Illustration – the people Jesus got angriest at weren't lost people, but religious hypocrites
- Those who persecution finds them (this is what Jesus is saying here: If you follow me, persecution will find you)
 - Doctrinally correct and kind
 - This is where Jesus was, and this is where we want to be. This is what the author is saying here: Let us follow Jesus' example, not looking for persecution, but understanding that if we really follow Him, it will find us.

Luke 6:22 - Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

1 Peter 4:14-16 - If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

For we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come – how do we stand firm in the mist of that persecution that will come? As we follow Jesus outside the camp, we remember that this world is not our home. We look for a heavenly city to come.

Are you bold in persecution? Are you right in doctrine? Are you kind? It's an expression of faith.

11.) Praise

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

If Christians no longer offered sacrifices at the temple, did that mean they offered no sacrifices? No. Christians still offer sacrifices to God, but they're spiritual.

1 Peter 2:5 - Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:1 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

By him – by Jesus (who is our altar, our perfect sacrifice)

Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name – the sacrifice of thanksgiving was a type of peace offering in the Old Testament. Here our author discusses it as a type of spiritual offering we present to God through Jesus Christ.

Leviticus 7:12 - If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried.

Psalms 50:12-15 - 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. 13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? 14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: 15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

Psalms 50:23 - Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

Psalms 116:17-19 - I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people, In the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

Are you praising God? It's an expression of faith.

12.) Good Deeds & Sharing

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased – doing good deeds and sharing with others are also spiritual sacrifices that are pleasing to the Lord

- Christ offered Himself as the ultimate sacrifice for us, and we to are called to present our lives as a sacrifice to Him (in how we live and in our generosity towards others)
- Illustration – Jesus’ parable of the rich fool in Luke 12 (he didn’t share)
 - o May that never be said of us: that we had so much and didn’t share
 - o Are you living a life of good deeds and sharing with others? It’s an expression of faith.

James 1:27 - Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Acts 9:36 - Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

Matthew 25:35-40 - For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Micah 6:7-8 - Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

13.) Following

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

Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves – follow the spiritual leaders that God has placed in your life (pastors). Why?

For they watch for your souls. – they are responsible for the spiritual well-being of those in their care (they “watch” as a shepherd watches over his sheep)

as they must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you – cooperate with the spiritual leaders that God has placed in your life so as to make their task of spiritual oversight easier for them and so that they might perform their calling with joy and not grief

1 Timothy 5:17 - Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

Acts 20:28 - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

1 Peter 5:2-3 - Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

Are you following the spiritual leaders God has placed in your life? It's an expression of faith.

SALUTATION

1.) Request for Prayer from Them

18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

Pray for us – the request for prayer indicates that the author more than likely had some kind of personal relationship with his readers (Bruce, 1990). Why should you pray for us?

For we trust we have a good conscience – we have a clear conscience before you and before God

In all things willing to live honestly – desiring to live honorably in everything that we do

Paul ends Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians asking the believers to pray for him.

19 But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner – In verse 18, we saw the why of the prayer request. In verse 19, we see the what of the prayer request. The author requested special, abundant prayer that he would be reunited with them.

2.) Offer of Prayer for Them

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Now the God of peace – God is the author and source of peace and blessedness (Barnes, 1834)

That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus – God offers peace through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus

- This is the only reference to Jesus' resurrection in the epistle (Bruce, 1990)

That great shepherd of the sheep – speaking of Jesus who loves, watches over and cares for his sheep

- John 10:14 – I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine

Through the blood of the everlasting covenant – God raised Jesus from the dead through the pathway of the cross. The shedding of His blood and His death on the cross were the necessary prerequisite to the exaltation that followed His resurrection.

Romans 15:33 - Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:11 - Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Philippians 4:9 - Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

1 Thess. 5:23 - And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 3:16 - Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Make you perfect in every good work to do his will – equip you to do every good work so that you might accomplish His will

Working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ – as He works in you that which He desires through Jesus

- Philippians 2:13 - For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

To whom be glory for ever and ever amen – in reference to God the Father (c.f. vs 15)

3.) Urge to Heed the Book

22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation – endure, patiently receive the word of encouragement that I have written to you (in reference to the book of Hebrews). Why? It's not that long.

- Illustration: bear with me in the sermon; it's not that long, I promise

For I have written a letter unto you in few words – believe it or not, Hebrews actually is not that long. One could read it aloud in 40 minutes:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFtxRxk_HM8.

4.) Personal Update

23 Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty – this is undoubtedly in reference to Paul's son in the faith Timothy

- This is the only account that we have of his imprisonment, and it tells us that he had been released (Bruce, 1990)

With whom, if he come shortly, I will see you

- The author was friends with Timothy and in closer proximity to him than the Hebrew Christians were.
- The author tells the Hebrews that if they connect soon, both of them will come and visit the Hebrews

Philemon 1:1 - Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer,

1 Thess. 3:2 - And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

2 Timothy 1:8 - Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

5.) Farewell

24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints – they had already been encouraged to follow their spiritual leaders; now the author encourages them to greet them on his behalf as well as all the saints (members of other house churches). (Bruce, 1990)

They of Italy salute you – our Italian friends greet you!

Acts 18:2 - And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

Acts 27:1 - And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.

25 Grace be with you all. Amen.

Grace be with you all. Amen. – The author wishes God's sufficient, empowering grace on the Hebrew Christians in closing his letter

Romans 16:24 - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Ephesians 6:24 - Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

2 Timothy 4:22 - The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

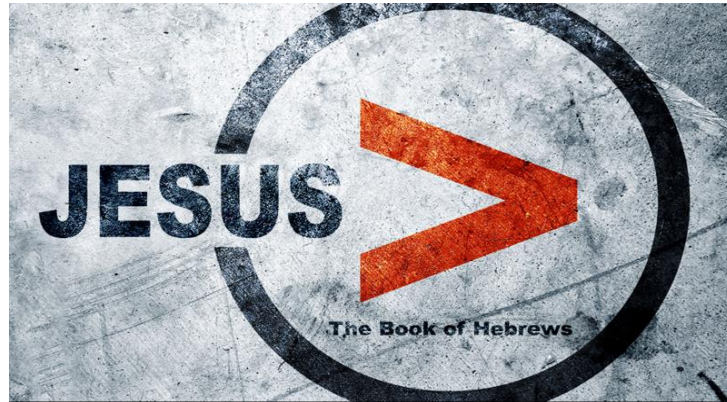
Titus 3:15 - All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

Revelation 22:21 - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Invitation

Are you living out the faith within you?

- Are you doctrinally stable and grounded in the Word?
- Are you following Jesus in truth and kindness? Are you willing to follow Him into persecution?
- Are you offering God the sacrifice of praise?
- Are you offering God the sacrifice of good deeds and generosity?
- Are you following the leadership of the spiritual guides God has placed in your life?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 27 - HEBREWS 13:9-25

READING		STUDY QUESTION
M	Read Hebrews 13:9-12	What expression of faith is mentioned in these verses? How can I grow in this area?
T	Read Hebrews 13:13-14	What expression of faith is mentioned in these verses? How can I grow in this area?
W	Read Hebrews 13:15-16	What expressions of faith are mentioned in these verses? How can I grow in these areas?
T	Read Hebrews 13:17	What expression of faith is mentioned in this verse? How can I grow in this area?
F	Read Hebrews 13:18-25	How does the author end his letter? What are some of the highlights of his closing remarks?

ARGUMENT FOR JESUS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT USED IN HEBREWS

CHRIST & THE ANGELS

Psalm 2:7-8 - 7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. 8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

- **Christ's name is greater than the angels (proof 1)**
 - The angels are never called the Son of God
 - As the firstborn, Christ has the right to inheritance

2 Samuel 7:12-14 - 12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:)

- **Christ's name is greater than the angels (proof 2)**
 - The angels are never called the Son of God
 - As the firstborn, Christ has the right to inheritance

Psalm 97:7 - Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods

- **Christ's worship is greater than the angels**
 - The Hebrew word for gods is elohim which can in certain circumstances be in reference to angels (e.g. Psalm 8:5; Hebrews 2:7)
 - The Psalmist may be condemning those who worship false idols, and then in contrast calling on the angels to worship the true God.
 - Despite the fact that the Son is positionally lower than the angels in his incarnation, he is still worthy of their worship in his nature.

Psalm 45:6-7 - 6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. 7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

- **Christ's nature is greater than the angels**
 - On one hand you have the created servants (Psalm 104:4), and on the other you have eternal God. He is eternal God that rules in righteousness who has been anointed by the Father with the oil of gladness above the angels.

Psalm 102:25-27 - 25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end

- **Christ's eternity is greater than the angels**
 - Creation comes and goes, but the Son has always been and will always be.
 - The angels are created. The Son is eternal.

Psalm 110:1 - The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

- **Christ's destiny is greater than the angels**
 - Jesus' destiny is sitting down exalted positionally at the right hand of the Father. That's the destiny of the Son. The destiny of angels is in verse 14. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Jesus reigns, that's His destiny, they serve, and they'll keep serving forever.

Psalm 8:4-8 - 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? 5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. 6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: 7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; 8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

- **Christ's dominion over creation is greater than the angels.**
 - Man is lower than the angels temporarily (Luke 20:33-36) and in his physical, non glorified nature.
 - When God made Adam pure and innocent, He gave him honor and glory in his position. He was exalted over the earth. He was created to rule over the earth!
 - God's ultimate destiny for mankind is to reign (underneath the direction of the divine Son of Man) in the world to come. (Daniel 7:27)
 - Angels administrate in the present fallen world, but Jesus will rule and reign in the world to come, and through His death on the cross He has purchased redemption for mankind so that those who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior may rule and reign underneath him.

Psalm 22:22 - I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

- **Christ calls believers brothers in the Old Testament**
 - In the first part of Psalm 22, you have the crucifixion of Jesus. In the second half, you have Jesus standing in the midst of the church talking to his brethren and praising God. What happens inbetween? The resurrection.

Isaiah 8:17 - And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

- **Christ lives by faith**
 - This is Christ talking in the Old Testament. The path that Jesus as our pioneer forged to God was one of faith.

Isaiah 8:18 - Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

- **The children of God given to Christ would live by faith**
 - Here once again this is Christ talking in the Old Testament. Just as Messiah forged a path to God by faith, so those who follow his trail and become children of God and brothers of Christ would do so by faith.

CHRIST & MOSES

Deuteronomy 18:15 - The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

- **Moses was pointing someone greater than himself who would come after him**

Psalms 95:7b-11 - 7...Today if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

- **There is a heavenly rest available to those who respond to the promises of God in faith**
 - The qualification for rest is faith. They did not enter into God's rest because of unbelief.
 - The punishment for unbelief is death.
 - If David was referencing this rest 1000 years after the Exodus, then there must be a greater rest available than the Promised Land...a greater rest that was available then and is available now today.
 - David doesn't say to respond to God tomorrow or next week or next month. He says to respond to God Today. The rest of God is available today, but none of us are promised tomorrow.
 - When God completed his work of creation, He rested. So His people, having completed their appointed work and life on earth, will enter into His rest.

CHRIST & THE PRIESTHOOD

Genesis 14:18-20 - 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

- **Melchizedek (priest) > Abraham > Aaron (priest)**
 - He received tithes from Abraham
 - He blessed Abraham
 - If Melchizedek is > Abraham, then his priesthood is greater than any priesthood that came out of Abraham.

Psalms 110:4 - The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

- **New priesthood > old priesthood**
 - If the old priesthood were permanent and perfect (could bring about full access to God & forgiveness of sins), then why did David prophesy of a day in which Messiah would minister as part of another priesthood
 - The old priesthood and the ceremonial laws were designed for one another. If one is changed, then the other is changed too.
 - Christ's priesthood and priestly ministry is forever according to the prophecy in Psalm 110:4.
 - The fulfillment of the prophecy "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" thus announces the annulment of the ceremonial law, the sacrificial system, the old priesthood
 - The inauguration of the Aaronic priesthood rested on a divine command (Exodus 28:1), but there is no record of a divine oath in the record of their appointment as there is in Psalm 110:4.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 - 31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

- **If the Mosaic (Old) Covenant was meant to be perfect and permanent, then why did God promise a New Covenant in Jeremiah 31? It's because the Old Covenant was never meant to be perfect and permanent. But the New Covenant is.**
- I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts

- In the Old Covenant, the law was written in stone. Under the New Covenant, the law is written in hearts. What does that mean? It means that God gives us a new heart and a new teacher.
- And they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord - You know, in Israel, in those days, it was only the higher ups that knew the Word. It was only the higher ups that had access to the real truths of God. They taught the average Joe, the poor people, the low class. They relied on the religious leaders to teach them. That's not the case for those who have accepted Jesus.
- For all shall know me from the least to the greatest - We don't need some religious leader to teach us how to know God. As believers we have the Holy Spirit within us that teaches us in accordance with the Word of God.
 - John 16:13 - Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.
- For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness... - The greatest blessing of the new covenant is total forgiveness of sins. What a glorious covenant it is. Everything the old couldn't do it does.

Leviticus 16:2, 11-12, 15, 34 - 2 And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat. 11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: 12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail: 15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: 34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the Lord commanded Moses.

- **Under the Old Testament sacrificial system, access to God was limited and cleansing was limited.**

Exodus 24:6-8 - 6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. 8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.

- **Blood was necessary for the ratifying of covenants.**

Leviticus 17:11 - For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

- **Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission.**

Psalm 40:6-8 - 6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, 8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

- **The incarnation of Christ was God's plan for replacing the Old Testament sacrificial system.**
- This is Christ talking to the Father before He entered the world
- Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not...In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure - God instituted the Old Testament sacrificial system. Why didn't He like it?
 - They took an act that was meant to be done in faith and that was meant to be a symbol of faith, and they made it into a ritual they performed with no faith at all.
- but a body hast thou prepared me:
 - This is the implication of what it is written in Psalm 40:6 where it says "Mine ears hast thou opened/dug" -
 - God, you have made a body for me. You have formed it. You have dug out my ears. You have opened them so that I might hear your will and obey.
 - *Isaiah 50:5-6 - 5 The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. 6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*
 - God's ultimate plan was not Old Testament sacrifices but the incarnation of Christ. Christ would come down to earth in the form of a man, live a perfect life, die on the cross for the sins of humanity, and be resurrected the third day.
- Then said I, Lo, I come...to do thy will O God - I'm going to obey you. I'm going to do your will.
- In the volume of the book it is written of me - If you just read the Old Testament, this would all be patently obvious.
- Hebrews 10:8-9 - 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.
 - This is the author's commentary on Psalm 40:6-8
 - He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second
 - He said all this to show that he took away the first to establish the second.
 - The old system was insufficient. I'm going to remove it and replace it with something better. How? I'm going to prepare a body for my Son. He will come down to earth and do my will. What is that? Die on the cross for the sins of humanity.

- He took away the first sacrificial system that He might establish the sacrifice of His Son.

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