

HEBREWS CHAPTER ONE

The author of this book does not tell us his name and there is nothing in the book to say who wrote it. Some claim the author was the apostle Paul but Paul always begins his letters with his name. There have been many suggestions, such as Barnabas or Apollos or even Luke but nobody knows who wrote this book. All that we know is that Timothy was a friend of the author. We know that from ch 13:23. So, anyone who tells you he knows the writer is pretending to knowledge they do not have.

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

The book begins with the mention of the various ways God has spoken to mankind. These methods range from the prophets to dreams, angels and even a burning bush. Keywords are “in time past”. These times are now over.

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;

Times have now changed and God has now spoken to us by His Son. Notice here that Jesus has been made heir to everything and we are told elsewhere that we are joint heirs.

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:

There are several things to notice in this verse. “Upholding all things by the word of His power”, shows us that He created, and holds together, the whole of creation. “Purged our sins”, was the finished work on the cross.

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

In other words, He has done what the angels could not do. He has paid the price for mankind's sin both as a whole and individually. No angel could do this.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

Read this verse carefully. He is not saying that He has begotten Jesus today. Rather, He is saying that He has never said this to an angel.

6 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

Jesus was the first man to be born of the Holy Spirit.

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

Angels worship the Lord Jesus Christ and they are His servants. Angels could announce His birth in Bethlehem and strengthen Him in Gethsemane but they could not take His place on the cross.

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

Be sure to notice that this is God the Father speaking and He calls His Son God making Him deity.

9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

This is another of those verses referring to the Godhead. This is one part anointing another part.

10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

This verse is further assurance that Jesus Christ is the Creator of the universe.

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

Most of this chapter has dealt with showing Jesus Christ as far superior to the angels. Now we have verses inserted to show the power and eternity of the Creator.

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.

We are also told that His throne is for ever and ever. It will last as long as God lasts.

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

There are several fulfilled prophecies in Hebrews. This verse refers to Ps.110:1 which says; **The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at 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?

Not only do angels serve God, and Christ, but they also serve humans. Mention is made of “those who inherit salvation”. This can only refer to the nation of Israel. They, as a nation, get their salvation in the latter part of the Tribulation by virtue of their being a Jew. This, after all, is the very reason for the Tribulation period, to bring the Jews back to God. No Gentile, in any dispensation, has ever inherited salvation.

HEBREWS CHAPTER TWO

1 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.

We must be very careful to listen and do what God says. God's words are much more important for us than anything that angels or men say and this is why it is so important to have the correct word of God. There was a danger that these Hebrews could wander away from what is true. There was the risk that they might go back to their old ways and so avoid the trouble that the Jews caused them. We would call this backsliding.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

God sometimes sent his word by the angels in the past. The law

included both blessing and punishment. The good news that God will forgive sin came by Jesus Christ.

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;

There is no escape for any who do not accept Jesus Christ. God, in the person of Jesus has made for us the only way to heaven. If we do not accept that offer, there is no hope for us.

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?

God, in the form of Jesus, did not leave His message to men only but witnessed, in person, for three and one half years.

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

This is speaking of the millennial kingdom. The world to come will not be under the control of angels but rather under the direct control of the Lord Jesus with the saved as His administrators.

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?

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:

This is one of those verses with a double meaning. It applies to Adam and it applies now to the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam, until the fall, was set over the works of God.

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.

Adam was to replenish and subdue the Earth but he fell in sin. Jesus Christ has now come to subdue all things under Himself.

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.

At first glance this may seem contradictory but it isn't. As we saw from chapter one, Jesus is much greater than any angel. This is saying that He had to be made a little lower than the angels so that He could die for our sins.

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.

Most of this verse is self explanatory. The first part is almost a quote from those verses in Colossians which say "All things were made by Him and for Him". He has also brought many sons to glory through His sacrifice at Calvary. The last phrase is a different story; "**to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings**". It seems odd that God made Jesus perfect since Jesus is God in the flesh. He was conceived and born without sin. He lived without sin and by His obedient suffering He became the perfect sacrifice.

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,

Jesus makes us holy when we trust in him. He brings us into the family of God and makes us his sons and daughters. This is what we mean when we say we are "born again" because all who trust in Jesus receive a new birth from the Holy Spirit. This is also one of the ways we can know we are saved. If there was no change in your life, there was no spiritual rebirth.

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

This is hard for some to understand. We are now lumped together with the Jews as His brethren. He sometimes speaks of us as brothers and sisters and sometimes, as in the next verse, as His children.

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

Jesus was God but while he was living on earth as a man, he had to put his trust in God. During his life on earth he was the same as we are in that He had to depend on God. In this verse He is speaking of the men and women who followed him and, by extension, us today if we put our trust in him.

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;

The children spoken of here are flesh and blood human children. This is to show that Jesus came in exactly the same way that other human children come into the world. Jesus became a real human being just like them. He died as we must die. The devil had the power of death but Jesus broke that power with His sacrifice at Calvary.

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

Every normal person has some degree of fear of death but consider how much fear you would have if you were not a Christian and therefore certain of your eternal destiny. Satan's power is broken where the death of a Christian is concerned.

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

This is all about God coming down in the flesh, to live a sinless human life, and suffer and die to repair the mess that Adam had started.

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.

This is the reason we no longer have priests here on Earth. Jesus is now our High Priest and makes intercession, to God, for us. An earthly priest is no longer necessary.

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

Jesus had to suffer all kinds of testing, but he did not fail. This makes him able to help any who are in need of the strength to do what is right.

HEBREWS CHAPTER THREE

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

So then, the Lord Jesus Christ is both the Apostle and High Priest of the believer. An apostle is sent with a message and Jesus was sent with a message from the Father. A High Priest is the one who intercedes, for us daily, with the Father. He was sent from Heaven and is now back in Heaven.

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

Now Jesus is to be compared to Moses. All Jews knew of Moses and the works he had done. Moses was faithful to his calling and we will see in the next verse that Jesus was faithful to the Father.

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.

We are referred back to the beginning and reminded that Jesus Christ is the Creator and built the “house”. God's people are building materials. Jesus is the builder.

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

The thought behind this is that the works of man, no matter how great, can never compare to the work of God who built it all.

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;

Again Christ is being compared to Moses who was a hero to the Jewish people. As the Lord Jesus Christ was shown to be greater than the angels in the last chapter so Jesus is shown to be greater than that greatest of Old Testament saints, Moses. This had to be shocking to the Jews who heard this

for the first time.

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.

We were told in verse five that Moses was a servant in the “house”. Now the Holy Spirit shows us that Jesus, the Son, is over the “house” and thus greater than Moses.

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

Notice the parentheses here. It begins after the word wherefore, and closes at the end of verse eleven. The Holy Spirit is going to insert a direct quote from Psalm 95 verses 8-11.

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 swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

End of parentheses and end of quote from Psalms. I am sure that you all remember that of the adults who came out of Egypt, only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to go into the promised land so in a very real sense they did not enter into His “rest”. Added- actually it doesn't say that. It says those who were disobedient, at Kadesh Barnea, did not go in. That leaves room for more to go into the promised land. See verse 18.

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

They are being warned of unbelief here which would be just as serious as the nations unbelief when they came to Kadesh-Barnea and refused to believe that God would fight for them in the promised land. It is now the sin of unbelief that condemns a person to Hell.

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

Now we are given a way to keep ourselves ,and other brethren,from backsliding. We are to lift each other up in prayer and one on one, and we are to do it daily.

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

These Hebrews were cautioned to be on guard against falling into the same unbelief that their forefathers had at Kadesth -Barnea. See to it, that under this new dispensation you do not become careless and not believe the clear teachings of God. Those who oppose God will be excluded from his rest. That may be shown under all dispensations, and in all circumstances; and there is no less danger of it under the gospel, than there was when the fathers were conducted to the promised land. The short version is;believe God.

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

Notice that God has used the term “to day” three times in this chapter. Do it now,do not put it off. We are warned over and over not to put off salvation.

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

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

What was this great sin?It was then ,as it is now,unbelief. The people refused to believe God when He said He would fight for them and give them the promised land. They were afraid of the giants and refused to believe that God would protect them. They paid the price by dying in the wilderness.

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

Is this not as true today as it was in Moses day? If we refuse to believe then we do not enter into His rest. That is those unbelievers go to a burning Hell,not a place of rest.

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

So,the two sides are; believe it,John 3:16,believe it from the heart,confess it, Rom 10:9-10 and receive it,John 12:1. Then the flip side; He that believeth

not, is condemned already”,John 12:1

That begs the question,what must we believe?

That Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

That He was born from a virgin.

That He lived a sinless life.

That He died on Calvary's cross to pay for our sins.

That He rose from the dead and is now in Heaven.

And finally,that He will come again.

HEBREWS CHAPTER FOUR

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.

Heavenly rest is spoken of here and was promised and settled before the foundation of the world. The lost should fear missing this rest. There is also the word “therefore in this verse. When we see that word, it is a signal to look back on what came before. In this case that would be chapter three. There the Hebrews missed out on God's rest when they refused to go into the promised land for fear of the giants. There is a cute little saying,”when you see the word “therefore “ be sure to look back and see what it is there for. To go back to the “rest” for a moment,consider a verse we are all familiar with,John 14:2 **In my Father’s house are many mansions: if [it were] not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. {14:3} And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also.** So here we have one of the promises of part of the rest we will enter. Now,before we leave this verse be aware that it is not speaking of anyone losing their salvation. Verse two explains the condition of the people being spoken to. This is why we don't pull verses out of context to prove a doctrine.

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.

We have two classes of people here. One group heard the gospel and were saved. The other group heard the gospel but did not have faith to believe. In other words they rejected the gospel.

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.

This verse is a promise for believers and is in sharp contrast to the first two verses which contained a warning to the lost. The unbelief of those mentioned earlier does not put aside the fact that believers will enter into rest. This has been true from before the foundation of the world and is still true today. As in so many verses there is a double meaning. We have rest in Heaven but we also have rest in Jesus available to us here and now.

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.

Here is a reference to Psa.95:7-11 which comes up again in verse seven I will put it here. **For he [is] our God; and we [are] the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, {95:8} Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, [and as in] the day of temptation in the wilderness: {95:9} When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. {95:10} 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: {95:11} Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.** Redneck version. Do not do as your forefathers did when they were in the wilderness. There was even a point then when God regretted making man. Most of them did not enter rest. Do not make the same mistake.

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

That is, "Since there is a rest spoken of in the Scriptures, implying that it is to be enjoyed by God's people, it must still be available for us." This is connected with Heb 4:9, where he says that "there remaineth a rest to the

people of God".

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.

The offer of rest was not confined to the Jews, to whom it was first made. David regarded it as existing in his day; and that man might even then be invited to come and partake of the rest that was promised. It could not be, therefore, that the offer of rest pertained merely to the promised land. It must be something in addition of that. It must be an offer of heaven. There is a rest spoken of long after the offer of the promised land, and that all the promises of rest could not have pertained only to that.

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

The Jesus here is Joshua of the Old Testament. This is an accurate translation since the Hebrew name Joshua becomes Jesus when translated into Greek. Joshua did not give them rest so the rest spoken of here is yet to come.

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

Our rest is still out there in a future time.

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

This is another of those double meaning verses. Obviously the saved dead have entered into their rest but it is also possible for those of us still alive to temporarily put down our burdens and works and rest in the Lord. Think of it as a time of close communion and /or meditation on the things of our Lord..

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

This is a tricky verse. I see it this way. If a person is truly saved he, or she, will work as if their salvation depended on it even though it does not. It becomes a work based on love rather than necessity.

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.

Take a good look at the first few words of verse twelve. It must be hard, if not impossible, for a lost person to believe that a book can do the things listed in this verse. This is a book that is quick and sharp and powerful and can read your thoughts and your intentions. One last comment before we move on. The word quick is used to describe this book and quick is the biblical word for living or alive. Think about that. John 6:63 tells us again that the written word is a living personality.

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.

Every sin is seen by God and sooner or later, we will stand before Him and give account. We who are saved can confess our sins and be forgiven but the lost will have all their sins open to view at the Great White Throne Judgment. Do not think that we who are saved get off scott free at the judgment seat of Christ. There we will give account of the talents, and time, we have wasted since God saved us. At best it will be an embarrassing time for most of us.

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.

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.

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.

Don't you just love the phrase "**boldly to the throne of grace**". Never mistake boldness for arrogance. Boldly means you can approach without being fearful in God's presence. You are free to ask what you will as long as it is inside the will of God. Grace is God giving us what we do not deserve.

HEBREWS CHAPTER FIVE

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:

As far as the Jews were concerned Jesus was not qualified to be a priest since He was not from the tribe of Levi. The writer of Hebrews takes care in this section to set forth the qualifications that do qualify Him to be High Priest for both the Jews and Gentiles.

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.

Jesus can have compassion on the ignorant since He has the same infirmities that we do. The amount of tolerance Jesus shows is based on the amount of scriptural knowledge the person has. For instance, consider the difference in the way He dealt with the Samaritan woman and Nicodemus. He was patient with the woman and not so much with Nicodemus who was expected to know the scriptures. There is also the caution in James 3:1 where we are told not to be many masters since those will receive the greater condemnation.

3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

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

He is a priest after a higher order than Aaron. No one, including Aaron takes the duty of priest, or high priest, themselves. The Priest must be called 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 glorify Himself by naming Himself High Priest. This was done by God. The same one who said to Him, "**thou art my Son**" is the one who said to Him, "**Thou art a priest**". These words came from God the Father.

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

So, what is different about this? Melchisedec was a priest before the Law and more importantly he was a priest to the Gentiles and to Abraham. Since Christ is “after this order”, He is fitted to be a High Priest to all of us, both Jew and Gentile.

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;

This is a pious type of fear referred to similar to the fear we have for God or, as children, the fear and respect we have for our parents. The prayers are those prayed in the garden of Gethsemane and are not for deliverance from death but for deliverance from the sins, of the world, that will be placed on Him. It does not make sense that Jesus would fear death since He had full knowledge of where He would be after death. One last thought before we leave this verse. Jesus did not have to go through the torture and mental anguish of the cross. He could, at any time, have decided that mankind was not worth the price. Instead, He did it for us.

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

Though he was God's Son, Jesus came to know, through pain, what it was to obey God. That is, he learned experimentally and practically. Of course He knew what obedience was; and He did not have a perverse nature which would lead Him to disobey God the Father, but rather, he was willing to test these things in sufferings.

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

This made him perfect for his work. He is now the source of the salvation that never ends for all who believe. He is now worthy in all respects to be our high priest. By his suffering he is not made a perfect man, for he was that already, but a perfect high priest.

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

Melchisedec is quite a character. He was a priest at the time of Abraham. Why? Abraham tithed to him. Why? He lived at what would

later be called Jerusalem. He is called the king of Salem, which, in English, would be the King of peace. To wrap it up, He has no mother nor father, no descendants and has no beginning nor end. We will see a much better description of Mel when we get to chapter seven. In the meantime, I will leave it to each of you to decide for yourself who this person was.

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

This verse is still speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ when it uses the words “**Of whom we have many things to say,**”. The balance of the verse is speaking of us. We, as a body, are dull of hearing. In other words we don't care enough to listen and learn.

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.

13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

Verses twelve and thirteen describe a problem. These listeners have been Christians for some time and should by now have been able to teach others. They were not yet able to teach, because they had not grown as Christians. As we grow in the word of God, we should be able to teach other people. If we do not go ahead in our belief, we shall go back. We cannot stand still. These listeners had trusted in Christ, but they had still not grasped the basic teachings of the word of God. All who are like this are beginners in the word of God and his ways.

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.

The mature Christian is like a person who can eat solid food. This means that he, or she, can understand the things of the spirit. He studies the word of God and prays. This is not just the use of the

mind. It is the use of both the mind and the spirit. In this way he learns to grow in the Christian life.

HEBREWS CHAPTER SIX

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,

There are many styles of preaching today. If we had one of those “foaming at the mouth”, yelling, screaming, bible throwing types then it would be entertaining but we wouldn't learn much. We, meaning most of us, need to be taught the word of God. We need to move past the baby food stage and be fed some real scriptural meat. We need to be taught how to lead holy lives, how to lead others to Christ and, above all, how to be led by the Holy Spirit. And concerning that last, how to determine what is the leading of the Holy Spirit and what might be leading by another spirit.

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

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

The writer is about to begin teaching them sound doctrine beginning with the doctrine of baptism. This is not as easy as it might sound. Baptism, to most of us, is immersing a person in water but notice the plural which tells us there is more than one baptism. In fact, there are seven baptisms in scripture. There are also seven judgments. So, teaching doctrine is not as simple as you might think. Some of it gets to be strong meat.

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,

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

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.

Before we go on let me point out that the writer of Hebrews did not believe that anyone in this dispensation could lose his salvation. This is proved by what he says in verses 18 and 19. Be sure to notice that, according to this verse, if a person loses his salvation then he cannot get it again. So, if this does not, and cannot, apply to us in the Church Age then to whom does it apply? You have to go forward into the tribulation period for this to apply. We are plainly told there that a person can lose his salvation and that one must work to keep it during that dispensation. See Rev. 14:12 which says; **Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,** and Rev. 13:15-18 which says; **And he had power**

to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. {13:16} And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: {13:17} And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. {13:18} Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number [is] Six hundred threescore [and] six, and Rev.20:4 which says; **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. So, with this we do have a period of time where these verses can apply. So keep this verse in mind for your Christian friends who believe they can lose their salvation and be sure to point out to them that if they do lose it they can't get it back again.**

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.

Now the writer switches back to the group he is addressing and gives us a word picture. Verse seven is a picture of a profitable Christian. This person is fed and nurtured by the word of God and grows and produces fruit. Verse eight is the flip side. This is the person who has not been saved though exposed to the word. This person is like weeds and prunings which are unprofitable and are cast into the fire. There is also that phrase to consider;” **and is nigh unto cursing**” which indicates there is a point where God the Holy Spirit ceased to draw a person and that person remains lost. Now, before we leave this verse notice that it has a double application. It also applies to Tribulation Christians at the second Advent.

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

The writer has just warned his readers in strict words. But he does not want to leave them in doubt so he switches to encouragement. He calls them his ‘beloved’ to show that he cares for them. He tells them that he is sure that they will grow as strong Christians. They will go on to receive the many good things that come with their knowledge of Christ. He does not tell us what these things are but we know that they must be good, because they come from God.

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.

God will not forget what they have done. Because they really did believe and trust in God, it showed by a change in their lives. They were still doing good works to help the servants of God. This should be true of us today. If we love God, we shall love his people, and help them in whatever way we can.

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

The writer is hoping his Christian readers will be eager to live for God

to the end of their lives. . After we leave this earth, we shall live and be happy with God forever.

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

Did you ever doubt your salvation? Most of us, probably all of us have at some point in our Christian life. This doubt does not come at a time when we are working, studying, praying and doing the things that Christians should do. The doubts come when we are lazy and ignoring God. This is the time Satan and his helpers can creep in and cause doubt.

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.

This promise is not salvation but the other things promised to Abraham. The promise was to bless and multiply Abraham and his descendants. Look at the promise as it was given in Genesis 22:16. **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:]{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; {22:18} And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.** So that was the promise. Abraham was already saved at this point. You can go back to Genesis chapter fifteen to see when Abraham was saved.

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

When we are called on to swear to something we normally place our right hand on the Bible. This is a thing greater than us.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs

of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

Since God realizes the importance of oaths to us He made this oath for our sakes. What He has promised He will do. Concerning salvation, if we have done what God required, then He will keep His part of the bargain.

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:

The two immutable things are God's promise and His oath. He can not give a false promise nor false oath.

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.

Your anchor, and mine, is that royal High Priest who went into the holy of holies in Heaven. That anchor for our soul is held by a nail scarred hand.

HEBREWS CHAPTER SEVEN

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;

We get to talk more about that fascinating character Melchisedec. Whether, or not, you believe this was a theophany, a two dollar word for an Old Testament appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, or not, at the very least he is a perfect type of Christ. Let's read the description of him again.

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;

Jerusalem will be the city of peace when the Lord returns and rules from there. It is ironic that it has been the least peaceful place on earth since the Jews came out of Egypt.

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.

Some commentators point to the fact that Jesus had a father to prove that Melchisedec was not the Lord Jesus Christ. This doesn't hold true unless you confine Jesus to the thirty three and one half years He was on earth with us. If my understanding of the Trinity is correct then Jesus was a part of the Trinity from eternity past.

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

All that aside the author is now showing how much greater Jesus was than either Melchisedec or Levi.

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:

In this way the Levites are like Melchisedec in that both are entitled to receive tithes. The Levites receive this through their descent from Abraham. The bible is clear that those who perform as priests, or pastors in the New Testament, are to have their living through tithes and offerings.

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

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

The first time tithes show up in the bible is Genesis 14:20.

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

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

Now watch this. Levi, a descendant of Abraham is credited with the tithes Abraham payed to Melchisedec though he was not even born at the time. So, Levi gets his living from tithes and he gets credit for the tithes payed by Abraham. God does, indeed, work in mysterious ways.

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

When Abraham gave Melchizedek the tenth part, Levi had not been born. The idea is that Levi was still in his parents, and that they were still in their parents. So, one can say that the priests in the family of Levi already paid the tenth part through Abraham. This again shows that Melchizedek is greater than Levi. And because Jesus is a priest like Melchizedek, he too is greater than the priests of the Jews.

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?

He could not be called after the order of Aaron since that would have made Him a Jewish priest and Jesus had to be High Priest of both Jew and Gentile.

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

Here we are told that the priesthood changed at Calvary. David was the first priest from Judah but the Lord Jesus is a priest for eternity.

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

Under the old law, all priests had to come from the family of Levi. Aaron came from this family. No priest came from any of the other sons. The old law did not allow it. Jesus came from the family of Judah and not from the family of Levi.

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

There is no doubt that the Messiah was to come from Judah. That was

prophesied in Micah 5:2 The prophets also said that he was to come from the family of David. That would be Isaiah 16:5. The Jews knew this and they knew that the Messiah would be both king and priest. Moses never said that a priest would come from the family of Judah. That was left to the later prophets.

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

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

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

He was a priest before God gave the law to Moses. This is also true about Jesus, for he was God before the law came. The Jews did not know where Melchizedek came from and had no record of his death. So they saw a life which had no beginning and no end.

Let's take verses eighteen and nineteen together. They are important.

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

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

It could not be more clear that the Law has been done away. These verses even show that the ten commandments are no longer in force. This does not mean that we have been left without rules. Jesus ,and later Paul, left us plenty of commands in the New Testament.

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:)

Christ is a priest to both Jew and Gentile and His priesthood is forever.

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.

These priests, the Levites, end their priesthood at death. The priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ does not end because He does not die.

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.

Though He is from the tribe of Judah Jesus still qualifies as a priest in the same way that Melchisedec did. He lives forever and continues to intercede for humans.

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

Notice the difference in our High Priest and the priests of today. Ours is holy, harmless, undefiled, separated and made higher than the heavens. None of these things apply to the priests of today.

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.

Doing the best they could was not enough. The Levites still had to offer sacrifices for themselves first. The Law made these men priests but the Law could not keep them clean. It was now time for the old priesthood to be replaced by the new High priest.

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.

Jesus is superior to the Levitical priesthood in that He does not need to offer sacrifices for Himself. The Levites had first to offer sacrifice for their own sins before interceding for the people. He only offered one

sacrifice and it was sufficient for all eternity.

HEBREWS CHAPTER EIGHT

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;

The writer now goes into more detail to bring together the reasons why Jesus is superior to the earthly priests. Apparently there was resistance from this group of people. Keep in mind that this is addressed to Hebrews and they were very attached to the law and the priesthood. We have the New Testament and 20-20 hindsight but it would have been very different when this was written. The writer will be driving home what he has said up until now.

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

There was an earthly tabernacle made by Moses. It was patterned after the tabernacle ,in Heaven,made by God. The high priest was allowed behind the veil,into the Holy of Holies only once a year. To go in he had to be cleaned up,prayed up and offer sacrifices for his sins. If these things were not done properly he would be killed.

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.

The Jews would have asked,what does this man have to offer? Our priests offer gifts and sacrifices. Now,is that an opening to witness for the Lord Jesus Christ or not? Notice that sacrifices and gifts are different. Sacrifices are for sin while gifts are to acknowledge God's supremacy and providence and are a way of thanking God for taking care of us.

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:

Remember that at the time of this writing the temple was still in existence and the priesthood was still under the Levites. Since this was the law, Christ was not qualified for that office. The obvious question from the Jews would be what does Christ have to offer that our priests do not. Our priests take gifts to God every day.

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.

When Moses and the Israelites were building the tabernacle in the wilderness, God gave very exact instructions which had to be followed to the letter. The measurements and materials had to be as nearly perfect as it was possible to do. The reason was that it was to be an earthly copy of the one in Heaven.

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.

To show that Christ ministry was superior, the writer compared the sprinkling of blood on the mercy seat. The earthly priest had to kill a lamb and sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat once a year in order to hold off the wrath of God. This was offering the blood of a substitute. Christ, on the other hand, carried His own blood behind the veil and sprinkled it once and for all. By the way, this is likely the only blood in Heaven and my guess is that it is still there, and perfectly preserved as a reminder for eternity.

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

The fault with the law was that no one could keep it.

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:

This is a quote from Jeremiah 31:31. This will be a new covenant and will be for Israel and Judah as well as with the Gentiles. It will be

completely different from the old, failed covenant. It needs to be said here that the old covenant failed because the people could not keep it and not because of faulty design by God. The new covenant is salvation by faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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.

God in his love and mercy to them rescued them from Egypt. He was like a father who leads his children by the hand to a place of safety. It was then that he made the old agreement with them. They failed to do what they had agreed to do by continually turning away from God.

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:

Now, instead of having laws written on stone we have the laws of God in our hearts and minds. This is through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit people did not have the power to obey the law 100% of the time and to fail to keep one part was to fail it all. Now God has given us the power to obey the new rules. That power is the Spirit of God, who lives in the hearts of his people.

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.

Under Old Testament law everyone watched each other to make sure the rules were not broken. Now the Spirit convicts us when we sin. Now all who are saved are able to speak directly with God. There will be no need for anyone to teach them to know the Lord. God himself will teach them.

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

The very essence of our salvation is that God will forgive sin. It is not

that God will just overlook our sins but that He puts them out of his mind forever. This is because Jesus has paid the cost of all our sins. As we believe, and trust, in Jesus, he makes us free from our sins. As we come to Jesus, God accepts what Jesus has done and forgives, and forgets, completely.

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.

Imagine how upset these old Jews must have been to hear that their old covenant and the Law were now out of date and were being replaced with something entirely new and different. The new replaces the old and the old is at an end. The old agreement has no longer has an effect, for it is of no use now that the new one has come.

HEBREWS CHAPTER NINE

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

The last chapter considered the differences between the old earthly tabernacle and the tabernacle in Heaven. It also looked at the differences in the old priesthood and our new High Priest in Heaven. The Jews were well aware of how the old tabernacle was laid out. It had two parts, the Holy place and the Holy of Holies. The priest entered the Holy place through the first veil. There were found there a candlestick, a table and the shewbread. The candlestick was the only light source and was never allowed to go out. The priests went into this part of the tabernacle twice daily, morning and evening. The shewbread was unleavened and was renewed each Sabbath. The priest could then eat the shewbread if they chose to do so. At the back of this room was another veil and behind that was the Holy of Holies.

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

3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the

Holiest of all;

Into this Holiest place the high priest was allowed to go only once a year and that was to sprinkle blood on the mercy seat.

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;

Behind the second veil, in this holiest place were several objects. There was a censer to carry fire for the burning of incense. There was the Ark of the Covenant, a large wooden box covered with engraved gold. Inside the Ark was manna, perfectly preserved from the wilderness days. There was also Aaron's rod in the Ark. Let's go back to Numbers 17:8-9 for a moment and read about this miraculous rod. **And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.** In addition to those there were also the tablets of stone with the ten commandments on them.

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

There was a lid on the Ark called the Mercy Seat and on this lid were two cherubims facing each other and it was on this Mercy Seat that the blood of a spotless lamb was sprinkled.

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

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 High Priest went in one day a year and that was the "Day of Atonement" On that day he probably went in several times, Jewish tradition says four times. He offered the blood of a bullock for himself and his family signifying that he was a sinner and needed forgiveness

as much as any other. Then he offered the blood of a lamb or goat for the people.

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:

That part of the verse “ **Was not yet made manifest**” shows that the way to heaven was not opened, or fully understood. The Old Testament Jews did not know how men would appear before God nor how they would be pardoned. That way has now been opened by the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ to heaven, and by the assurance that all who will may come in his name.

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;

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

Men knew that all of these offerings and sacrifices were not complete but only covered them for another year. That last phrase of verse ten, **imposed on them until the time of reformation** shows that something better was to come in the future. A lamb would be replaced by The Lamb.

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;

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.

The blood of animals was never enough. Now Christ has taken His own blood into the real Holy Place, placed it on the real Mercy Seat and that is enough for all eternity.

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:

The blood of goats and heifers and their ashes had the effect of cleaning a person on the outside. This could not take away a person's sin, for that is on the inside. It is only the blood of Jesus that can make the inside clean. It is only the blood of Christ that can remove the sin.

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?

Jesus was both human and God and never sinned. In addition He did not inherit sin from Adam as the rest of us do. So how much more effect must the blood of Jesus have than the blood of animals! Before we leave this verse be sure to notice that the blood of Christ is spoken of in the present tense. In other words it is available now and we recognize this when we ,”plead the blood”,when petitioning God for something.

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.

The author of Hebrews continues to refer to the promised eternal inheritance which no one has received yet. As believers our continued faith in Christ insures that we will someday receive everything God has promised.

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

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

A person can draw up a will anytime they wish but it does not take affect until the maker dies. The death of Christ on the cross at Calvary marks the clear division between the old and new testament. The eternal blood of God,because that is what it is,is sufficient to cover the sin of mankind from the first sin in Genesis until the last person goes out into eternity future. As far as sin is concerned the blood is as fresh

now as it was at Calvary.

18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

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,

Even the tablets with the law and the people were sprinkled with blood at Mt.Sinai. You find this in Exodus 24:3-8

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

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

In the next verse we are told that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Why is this important? Consider this; if Jesus had died by some other method, say poisoning, strangulation, sickness or even old age we would all be going to Hell with no hope. It had to be death with the shedding of blood.

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

That word almost can throw you. Under the law some vessels were purged by water, some by fire and some by the ashes of the red heifer but when we come to the remission of sin there is no almost. All sin requires the shedding of blood for cleansing.

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.

The blood of animals was sufficient for the earthly tabernacle but in Heaven the sacrifice had to be perfect. Only the perfect blood of the Lord Jesus Christ could be used there.

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:

Jesus did not go into the holy place made by men. That was only a copy of the true one. He went into heaven itself. Now he is there at the right hand of the Father on our behalf.

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

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.

This verse sums up the last part of the chapter. The chief priest of the old covenant had to go into the most holy place once every year. He had to take the blood of an animal with him. Jesus does not need to go to heaven again and again with his blood. If he had needed to do this, he would have had to die many times since the world began. As it is, Jesus came once in these last days. He came to take away all sin. He died once for all time as the perfect sacrifice.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

This verse is good for witnessing but it is not a doctrinal statement. It is true that most people die once, but this is not always the case. Enoch did not die and those saints alive at the Rapture will not die. Furthermore, there have been many that already have died twice. Lazarus, Jonah and Jarius are three that come to mind. Notice that colon at the end of verse 27, showing that the thought goes on into the next verse.

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.

This is referring to the Second Advent when Christ will return as a Judge, leading a conquering army. When He comes back again one day He will not have to do anything more about sin, for salvation, for he has already done that.

HEBREWS CHAPTER TEN

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 'law' here means the whole of the old covenant of the Jews which was no more than a shadow of the real covenant that was to come. The "law" had value since it showed a holy God and what He expected of the people. It told them that people could not come to a holy God covered with their sins. There were sacrifices offered for sins, but these could not take them away. They could not make people clean in the sight of God. People still could not come directly to God by means of the sacrifice of animals.

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.

If animal sacrifice could have removed sin then the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ would not have been necessary. Sacrifices could not remove sins or allow people to approach God directly.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

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

Sacrifices during the year were a constant reminder to people of their sins. Literally thousands of animals were sacrificed annually. The priests who did this were little more than butchers. To say the least, it was a bloody mess. All this carnage was to constantly remind the people just how bad sin was. This is why sacrifice of vegetables and fruit was not acceptable. It took the death, of a living animal, to show people the seriousness of sin. Sacrifices were to remind people not only to ask God to forgive their sins but also to call them to repentance.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

The old law of Moses was not able to deal with the problem of sin in a way that satisfied God.. So Jesus came to be the answer to that problem. The writer shows Jesus speaking to God, in the words of Psalm 40:6-8.

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

The Psalm says that God did not want sacrifices and gifts. Burnt animals and gifts for sin did not please him and we need to understand what this means. It was God who gave the law of Moses to his people. Sacrifices and gifts were a part of that law. What God wanted was hearts that obeyed him. The first of the ten commandments is that we should love God. The key to pleasing God then, and now, is to obey because we love and want to please God. God does not want religion, but a change of heart and mind.

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.

Verses 8 and 9 are still Jesus speaking to God the Father. This is referring to taking away the law and replacing it with mercy and grace. Do not miss that part of the statement where He says He took away the law. That is very important since we still have many groups today still trying to keep parts of the law. At first glance that might not seem a bad thing but if we try to keep the law, or parts of it, for salvation, we are saying, in effect, that the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus was not enough.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the

body of Jesus Christ once for all.

We who are believers are sanctified and set apart once for all. We never have to go back and be re-saved. Such an act would show disrespect for Jesus' suffering.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

These priests had a miserable job. The same sacrifices day, after day, after day with nothing ever changing.

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

Calvary was painful, agonizing, shameful and degrading but when it was over it was done with once and for all.

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

In Psalm 110:1 God says to Christ, 'Sit at my right hand. Sit there until I make your enemies a place to rest your feet'. From the time that he rose from the dead, Jesus has been waiting for God to do this. He has overcome all his enemies, but we do not yet see them put under him. The apostle Paul says the same in 1 Cor. 15:24-25. He says it this way; **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. {15:25} For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.**

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

The writer says again that Jesus died once for all time and for all sin. It is most important that we know and believe this. All who trust in Jesus, God will make holy. Jesus makes those who trust Him perfect. Jesus has done all that God said was necessary. This verse speaks of spiritual circumcision. The Holy Spirit does the operation of cutting the spirit away from the flesh. This is why you sometimes hear Christians say that their spirit does not sin. For the born again Christian, that is a true statement. The body can still sin but the spirit can not.

15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

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 Holy Spirit is a witness to the truth of this as well. In Jeremiah 31:33, he says that God will put his laws in the hearts and minds of his people. He will remember our sins no more. It is as if they never happened and do not exist. This is because Jesus took them all on Himself at Calvary.

18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

When Jesus forgave, and forgot our sins he forgot them forever. Now, if you could ask Jesus what payment we could give for sin He would say, "what sin". For the saved person it is gone forever.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

Always remember that this is boldness, not arrogance. Enter the presence of God with respect and even some Godly fear.

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;

We do not need a Jewish priest nor any other priest. In fact, to use a priest now would be an insult to our High Priest in Heaven. This would be placing some human person in a higher position than the Lord Jesus Christ.

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.

We can now come directly to God. The only way in is by Jesus, who

is like the curtain in the tabernacle in the wilderness. We have to come with sincere hearts. The heart here means the real person as we are on the inside and not someone pretending to be something we are not. God sees the heart and mind. No drama allowed. We have to be right with God and be pure as we come to him. Another way to put this is to be prayed, and confessed, up. This is one of the main requirements to have your prayers answered.

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:

Encourage one another. Pray for one another. We have a tendency to get so wrapped up in our own lives that we don't pay enough attention to the needs of our fellow members. The other key word in that verse is provoke. That doesn't mean to provoke a person to anger but to encourage, maybe even nag a little, them to do 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.

This is pretty obvious but I am going to make some comments here. We are not to miss church for ball games, fishing, hunting, to visit friends or go four wheeling or, you fill in the blank. God expects you to be faithful. Do not put other activities ahead of God. Now for a commercial. Sunday School is a part of the church service and what was said above applies to Sunday School as well. I realize I am speaking to the choir here as you folks are the faithful ones who are always here. One last comment. I actually heard a member complain that they were not growing spiritually. That member never comes to Sunday School and SS is where you learn the word of God.

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.

All who were living at the time of this writing were under the Gospel dispensation. The Jews, as a nation, had already rejected Christ so their doom in Hell was assured. The same fate was now in store for those who professed to be Christians but who were not. Since both groups had lived in the Gospel age, they would be subjected to judgment, and the lake of fire, at the judgment day.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

Any who did not respect and obey the law of Moses died. The law was the law period. There was no pity for them, if two or three witnesses said that they were guilty there was no mercy.

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?

This is the person who has heard the gospel and refused to accept it. The writer likens it to walking on the blood of Jesus over and over again. Be careful with that phrase “**wherewith he was sanctified**” because, two commas later, the writer is still talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't miss that, and make it a saved person.

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.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

We know what he has told us to do and that is to put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. If you need a reference for that use Acts 16:31. It will be terrible for a person who is guilty, when he or she has to face God. There can be no escape, if we do not obey him.

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

These were good people and well thought of by the writer. This congregation was like many today with some saved and some not. Those who were saved had gone through trials and were strengthened by it. Others had heard the true gospel, practiced for a while and fallen back into Judaism. Remember the parable of the sower in Matthew. These were the seed that had fallen on stony ground and had no roots.

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.

This is the verse that some use to “prove” that Hebrews was written by Paul. It proves no such thing since almost everyone who preached the Christian gospel in those times wound up in jail at some point. Maybe Paul wrote it, maybe not. Only God knows for sure.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

These people were under pressure to turn away from Christ. We would say, “they were hurting”. They had almost lost confidence that God would take care of them.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

How much longer should you hold out for God? Hold out one more day, and then one more.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

He is coming and it will be soon.

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Watch this verse and the next one carefully. Notice that God has no

pleasure in the backslider.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

See the difference? One has truly believed and is saved for eternity. The other has heard a clear presentation of the Gospel but has drawn back, and not accepted, so is headed for the lake of fire.

HEBREWS CHAPTER ELEVEN

Chapter eleven is known as the "faith" chapter and is one of the most important chapters in the bible.

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Here, in the first verse we have God's definition of faith. Everything we believe is based on faith. No one in this room has seen Jesus but we take His existence as a certainty and we do that by faith. Another word that goes hand in hand with faith is trust. If you have faith then you have trust. A life of trust in God at all times, is what pleases him.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

The elders refers to those people in the list coming up. All of these mentioned are Old Testament saints and the list does contain some surprises. Please understand, as we go through the list, that the Holy Spirit did not put these people in here as a memorial to them. They don't need it as they are long gone from this earth, and in a better place, where they could not care less about what is written here. This is for us, to help us get a firm grasp on just what faith covers.

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.

Think about this statement and what we believe. God spoke the universe, and everything in it, into existence from nothing. From a

logical standpoint that is ridiculous. Yet, how many of you in here this morning believe that is just what happened? Every hand went up. That is belief by faith. You believe it because God said and you trust God.

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.

Now the writer begins to list some of those we call heroes of the faith. These are people who trusted God no matter what came into their lives. He starts here with Abel and contrasts him to his brother who lacked faith. They each brought a sacrifice to God. God accepted Abel's sacrifice, not because of what he offered but because he did it in both faith and obedience. Though the bible doesn't say, it stands to reason that God had explained, in advance, what he wanted. Cain's sacrifice did not please God because his heart was not right with God. He had the unconfessed sins of jealousy and envy in his life. Cain's answer to this was not to deal with the sin, but to add to it by killing Abel. Some people are quick to say, "that's even worse". No, it is just more sin. Remember that sin, in God's eyes, is just sin. It is us that tend to put sin in categories, one worse than the other.

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.

Enoch's faith was so strong that he walked with God. This means that their fellowship was so close that they walked side by side as any two friends might. Think about this; the friendship was so close that God wanted him close. Because of his faith God literally took him home to heaven to be with Him. Like many things in the Old Testament, Enoch is a "type". He is a type of the Rapture of the church when the living Christians will be taken to Heaven without dying.

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.

To please God we must come to him in a certain way, that is, through

Jesus Christ, but this cannot be done without belief in his existence. Now, notice also that the last phrase of the verse;” **he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him**”, is present tense. In other words He does it now. It's not something you have to wait until you get to Heaven for. You diligently seek Him by prayer, study and meditation on His word.

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.

Only Noah and his family were safe in the ark when the flood came because only Noah trusted God, and was right with God. Therefore Noah would receive the good things that God has promised to those who trust him. Now before we leave this verse I want to point out that Noah was right with God in two ways. First, he believed, and trusted, God. That is faith. The bible also has this to say about Noah, in Genesis 6:9; **These [are] the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man [and] perfect in his generations, [and] Noah walked with God.** What I wanted to point out there was the statement that Noah was perfect in his generations. What this means is that none of Noah's ancestors had intermarried with the angels or the resulting giant offspring. Go to Genesis 6:4 which says; **There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare [children] to them, the same [became] mighty men which [were] of old, men of renown.** This was the time leading up to the flood. None of Noah's ancestors had been a part of this wickedness. Be sure to notice that either more angels came after the flood, or, the ones who were here left and then came back. These angels and the resulting giant offspring make a great study.

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.

One of the reasons we believe is because some of those who came before us had such great faith. Abraham believed God and left his home and most of his family to go to a land he had never heard of.

Abraham believed God and had a son when he was about a hundred years old. What would have become of Abraham if he had not believed God and had stayed in Ur?

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:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were looking for a city made by God. We are doing the same. There is a beautiful song, "Looking for a City". We should sing that one now and then. When you study this, using several commentaries, you run into a big problem. Most, that is 99%, of the commentaries have the city that Abraham was looking for as the New Jerusalem. That's a problem since the Jews are an earthly people and the bible clearly states that the New Jerusalem is for "The Bride". New Jerusalem is not for the OT saints though I suppose we will all be able to visit back and forth. One, the usual, commentator got it right and had to go back to Jeremiah to prove it. Jeremiah 48:30, and forward to the end of the chapter, give the description of this city. I won't read all of that but just 48:35 which is enough to show that the city Abraham looked for was an earthly Jerusalem made by God. That promise has not been fulfilled but will be in the millennium. **[It was] round about eighteen thousand [measures:] and the name of the city from [that] day [shall be,] The LORD [is] there.** The New Jerusalem will be 1500 miles on each side and either a cube or, more likely, a pyramid since Christ is said to be the "head of the corner" and there is only one shape that has a cornerstone that is also a headstone.

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.

Sarah was past 90 when she conceived. At first she did not believe when told she would have a son. She laughed. When she found out that the promise came from God, then she believed.

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.

The Holy Spirit here describes Abraham as “as good as dead” when he fathered Issac. Now Abraham's descendants are as numerous as the stars or the sand of the sea. That's a lot of Jews.

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.

Sometimes we wonder just how many of the OT people were saved. If we put verses 12 and 13 together then we see that the number who “died in faith” were innumerable. We are also told here that the promises to them have not been received yet, and are still future.

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.

Here they are looking for a city or seeking a country. Abraham was a rich man and could have purchased whatever land he wanted yet all he and his offspring purchased were a couple of spots to bury their dead. Verse fifteen also points out that they could have returned to Ur at any time. The fact that they did not is further proof of their faith.

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.

That city is still future and will be right in the middle of the land divided among the twelve tribes. See Ezek 45: and Ezek 48: where we are told that this is where the sanctuary will be and that the name of the city will be The Lord is There. Most of the commentators really mess this up and try to make the city either New Jerusalem or put it in Heaven.

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:
19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.**

Keep in mind that this was the son that the promises would come through so Abraham was obeying God by the terrible act of killing his son and at the same time killing all hope of the promises. What must have been in his mind while he was doing this? Nevertheless he obeyed God believing that God would raise Issac from the dead and that God would do it immediately. We know that because of what Abraham said to the servants. He said “**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,**

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

Many of the sins of the Old Testament saints were overlooked by God, or maybe ignored would be a better word. This is a prime example of God's grace. For instance, Isaac doubted five times before he did as God wished and blessed Jacob. Even then he thought he was giving the blessing to Esau.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

God considers Egypt, and by extension, Africa, as a type of the world. Nothing God considers important is ever left in Egypt. He brought the nation of Israel out of Egypt. He did not leave the Messiah in Egypt longer than necessary to save His life. He brought Joseph's bones out of Egypt and He did not preserve His word through manuscripts from Alexandria Egypt.

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.

The faith in this instance was in the parents of Moses disregarding the decree of the king to destroy all male children as soon as they were born. Moses parents believed that the Lord would save the child.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

Be sure to notice that Moses sins, nor for that matter, the sins of any of the Old Testament saints are not mentioned in the New Testament. Why is that? Because they now have the covering blood of Jesus Christ just as we do and God has promised not to remember their sin. In the Old Testament they were not covered since Christ had not died.

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Selfishness and sin are pleasant for a time but there is always a price to be payed. Actually selfishness is a sin so I should not have separated those two. Consider some we all know about and probably know people affected by them. Tobacco, alcohol, gambling and pornography all have a price. Cancer, liver disease, broken homes, child abuse, bankruptcy, and broken marriages are just some of the price paid for these sins.

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Moses chose the path for the long term, choosing to suffer with his people for the greater reward of Heaven. I wrote that and now I don't particularly like what I wrote. I really do not think that Moses had any vision of Heaven when he chose to abandon the riches of Pharaoh. Moses found God later, out in the desert, on a mountainside, in a burning bush. At any rate, and for whatever reason, he did choose the right path. One last thought before we leave this verse. Did Moses have some inkling of the Christ who was to come? The bible, to this point has had little to say on that subject but somehow Moses had at

least a hint of the Messiah and the rewards to come.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

Moses left Egypt twice. Once when he killed the Egyptian and again at the exodus.

28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

The faith in the case was confidence that God would not destroy the firstborn of the Israelites when He destroyed the firstborn of the Egyptians. It also established that the passover would be celebrated as a perpetual memorial of this great deliverance.

29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

It took a long time for the nation of Israel to cross over the Red Sea. We don't know ,for sure,how many people there were but it was between two and five million. These were walking and dragging along whatever belongings they carried. It took faith to step out between those walls of water and it took a lot of time to cross.

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

This army of Jews had been wandering around the desert for forty years and now God had them walk some more. They wanted to fight and God wanted them to walk. That took faith and that faith caused the walls of Jericho to fall down.

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Now,pay close attention to this one. Rahab's house was part of the wall of Jericho. It is impossible for the walls to fall down flat and leave Rahab's house standing yet that is just what happened. Rahab, had faith,and helped the spies and because of this she ,and her family,are the sole survivors of Jericho. So,the bottom line is,we have a Gentile prostitute as an example to follow,and a good example it is. It shows

us that God respects faith no matter your background, race, lineage ect.

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:

Look who the Holy Spirit puts in this list of heroes of the faith. Samson makes the list. What God is saying here is that there are too many people of faith to list.

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.

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.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

Elijah raised the son of the widow at Zarephath and Elisha raised the son of the Shunamite widow. Even those who were tortured refused to deny God. That takes a lot of faith.

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

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;

This is still going on today in many parts of the world. If all you can do is die for God then He will give you the faith to do it.

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

Don't you love that first part of the verse in parentheses? The world was not, and is not, worthy of those martyrs who have died in faith, depending on God. When you think you have a trial you can't get through think of some of these people and let that strengthen your

faith. God has given them to us for examples in our own lives.

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

The last two verses show that the OT saints have to wait for us. They had faith but have not yet received all that God promised them. All believers are still looking for a city built by God. When the time comes, we will all receive the full promises of God.

HEBREWS CHAPTER TWELVE

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,

Think of those heroes of the faith mentioned in the last chapter as witnesses and our cheering section. We are to use them as our examples. We are compared here to runners in a race and the thought goes on into the next verse.

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.

Jesus is the example we are to follow. He has done His job and now it is up to us to do ours. When you think about all those that followed, and learned from, Jesus, consider what they did. For the most part they did not start churches, nor go on mission trips, nor do any other noticeable work. So, what did they do? They told others about Jesus.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

It is contrary to all human logic that the Creator of the universes would allow

himself to go through what Jesus did when all He had to do was decide that mankind wasn't worth the trouble.

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.

Every born again Christian is chastened ,by God, when he ,or she, sins. There are different levels of punishment not depending on the sin but on the knowledge of the sinner. In other words,the more you know how you are to behave the more severe the punishment.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

If you have no chastening from God,when you sin deliberately,or continue in sin when you know better,then you had better check on your salvation. This verse could not possibly be any plainer. If God loves you He will do what is necessary to keep you straight.

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?

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.

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.

It is hard to praise the Lord when you are under the rod of correction yet that is just what we should do. Chastening let's us know that He is there and that we are His.

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.

Verses 12 and 13 deal with the Christian who goes around complaining, with their lower lip stuck out and a slumped over posture. God says “endure the chastening, get over it and move on. Quit feeling sorry for yourself”.

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

One of the reasons for chastening is to bring peace to the Christian community. Peace is not something that occurs naturally. It must be learned. Believers are to make every effort to live peacefully with other Christians.

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;

We may need this verse tattooed on our foreheads so we see it every time we look in a mirror. A Christian should do all they can to live a holy life and

16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Notice that fornicators, that is any who have sex outside of marriage, and profane persons are lumped together here. You all remember Esau, one of the two that God hated, was so into instant gratification that he sold his birthright for a plate of food.

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.

That blessing that Esau so willingly gave up was important. It conferred rights on the firstborn that other children did not have. Esau later repented and wept bitterly but the damage could not be undone and the blessing went to Jacob.

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,

When the Israelites came to Mt. Sinai in the wilderness, there was a storm going on there with smoke, fire, lightning etc. Their mountain could not be touched and since ours is spiritual it can not be touched

either. In spite of all that visible evidence that God was on Mt. Sinai the Israelites turned away from God and had one big party.

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:

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:

These are tough rules. Even the animals could not touch the mountain. Death was the punishment for man or beast. There was no mercy there. Our system is so much better that the two do not even compare. Now we have God's mercy available to us continually.

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

Interestingly enough, this is not recorded in the Exodus account of the giving of the law. Since it is not in Exodus, some have asked, "on what authority did the writer put this into his account". I could have answered that one for them; the authority of the Holy Spirit.

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,

The Israelites at Mt Sinai had to go to God through Moses. As saved people, our position is so much better. We can come boldly to the throne of grace. Figuratively speaking, we are free to come into the presence of God.

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,

This probably means the saints on earth as a body, who were born again according to the Gospel of Christ, his firstborn Son. We are now joint-heirs to the inheritance because our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The meaning is, that by becoming Christians we are now identified with that Christ's church, and that this is a powerful motive not to fall away, or as we would say, backslide.

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of

sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

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:

God now speaks to us through His word.

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.

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.

Things that can be moved, or shaken, are man, anything made by man, our present universe, and our present world system.

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:

We receive a kingdom by salvation. BUT, inheritance, that is rewards in heaven, are received by faithful service. Things that cannot be moved are God, the word of God, salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ, etc.

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

This goes with the last two words of verse 28, godly fear. It's very simple. Be afraid of God and what he can do. It isn't all love.

HEBREWS CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1 Let brotherly love continue.

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Our hospitality is to extend to others outside our group. The writer points out that people we do not know could even be angels on a mission from God. This seems like a good place to say, once again, that angels do not have wings but appear as young men any time they appear in the bible. Cherubim do

have wings and this is probably where the whole “angels with wings” error comes from.

3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

We tend to remember how often Paul was in prison but the fact is that many of the early Christians, especially those who preached, were often in prison. The emphasis here is that we are all part of one body.

4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Marriage between man and woman is honorable because God instituted it. Absolutely no other form of sex is allowed by God.

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.

Be content with what you have. In other words, you are to thank God for what you have. It is a blessing from Him. This does not mean that we are not to work for something better but that we should never let that striving for something better get in the way of God nor His business.

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

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.

Of course this is speaking of pastors and assistant pastors of your own church. It is specifically speaking of remembering them in prayer. You are not under the authority of people like deacons and evangelists though the bible does say to “render them due regard”. Your pastor is your spiritual leader and adviser. He does not dictate other areas of your life unless some area of your life brings a bad reflection on the church.

8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

This is a short verse but it contains a real nugget. The Lord Jesus Christ did not become the savior of mankind when He showed up in a manger in

Bethlehem. He has always been that, otherwise it could not be said that he is the same yesterday, and today and for ever.

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.

I look at this a little differently from some others. To me it is a warning against spending too much time on the “meaty” doctrines at the expense of the simpler things that the new converts need. Concentrate on salvation, grace and mercy etc.

10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

We who are Christians, by our trust in Jesus, share what he did when he died on the cross. His sacrifice was for us and God accepts us in him.

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.

This is speaking of the blood, from the animal sacrifices, which was sprinkled on the mercy seat. Most of the remains of the animals was taken outside the “camp” and burned.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

“Outside the gate” is another way of saying “outside the camp”. Golgotha was outside the city or “outside the camp”.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

If you are a true, practicing, obvious Christian then the world has taken care of this problem for you. As far as business, education, politics and religion go you are already outside the camp.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

This is to remind us that, like Abraham two chapters back, we are also looking for a city not made with hands. Both cities have similarities but also some differences.

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.

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Notice that we are still to sacrifice but our sacrifices are now spiritual. Doing good works and spreading the gospel are the sacrifices required of us.

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.

God has given us leaders in the church. It is their responsibility to help us to grow as Christians. One day they will have to give an account to God for how well they have done this. We should obey what they teach and follow as they lead. There is also a warning in this verse. Do not be a pain in the neck

18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

19 But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

This gives the reason for the prayer request in verse 18. Something, probably Satan, was hindering this man from coming to 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,

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.

Notice that the writer, like many other preachers, has more than one closing. He closes here with an Amen then goes on for four more verses and closes again.

22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

23 Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he

come shortly, I will see you.

It now appears that Timothy had been imprisoned and was now out until “the next time”. Life was tough for these early preachers. This is one of those things that make some say Paul is the writer of Hebrews. Timothy is mentioned by Paul, in his letters, about fifteen times. No other writer, except this one, mentions Timothy. I believe this book was written by more than one writer and put together by the Holy Spirit.

24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

The author has given his readers a lot to think about. This last chapter has been an instruction sheet on Christian living. Peace and harmony within the church is one of the high points. Always keep in mind that these early Jewish Christians had a hard time giving up the temple with all its fancy trappings and rituals. There was always pressure to turn back.

25 Grace be with you all. Amen.