

# **The Everlasting Covenant**

A verse by verse commentary  
on the epistle to the Hebrews

by **Leroy Surface**



# **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT**

*(A verse by verse commentary on the  
Apostle Paul's epistle to the Hebrews)*

**By Leroy Surface**

*“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead  
our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through  
the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect  
in every good work to do his will, working in you that  
which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus  
Christ...”* Hebrews 13:20-21

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# Introduction

The book of Hebrews was written within a decade of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Many of those Jews who had believed “Jesus is the Christ” during the great outpouring of the Spirit in Jerusalem were now in danger of turning from Christ to trust once more in Moses and the Law. They had suffered great persecution from the Jews at the beginning, but now the “revival” was over, and they enjoyed relative peace among the Jews as they returned to worship at the temple. Perhaps it was the persecution against the Christians that began in 64 A.D. by the Roman Emperor Nero that caused many of the Hebrews to “draw back” from Christ. Whether they were “destroyed by peace” with the unbelieving Jews or “persecution” from Nero, I do not know, but it is certain they were in grave danger of falling away into apostasy when the apostle felt it necessary to write this epistle to the Hebrews.

Paul’s message to the Hebrews was that Christ is an eternal High Priest who offered an eternal sacrifice to establish an eternal covenant. He warned that those who drew back from Christ to trust in the Law of Moses would find only the wrath of God at the end of their journey.

The apostle uses much detail to show the superiority of this eternal covenant of Christ over the Law of Moses in every way. At the very heart of this epistle he reveals how the blood of Christ purges sin from the conscience of the believer and makes them complete in every good work to serve God. He extends a heavenly invitation to all who trust in Christ, saying, *“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.”*

# Table of Contents

<b>The Majesty of Christ .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Made a Little Lower .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Christ: Our High Priest .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Christ: Our Rest .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Christ: The Better Hope.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Christ: Our Better Covenant .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice .....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Christ: Our New and Living Way .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Christ: Our Better Thing .....</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Christ: Our Mediator .....</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>Christ: The Same ...Forever .....</b>	<b>169</b>

Chapter One **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 1:1-14  
**The Majesty of Christ**

## **“The Majesty of Christ”**

**1 “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners...”** In different times and in many different ways.

**“...spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,”** The Greek text says He spoke *“in the prophets.”* Peter said of the prophets, *“...the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ...”*

I Peter 1:11.

**2 “Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...”** The Greek text says God has *“...spoken unto us in His Son.”* Just as God spoke through the prophets *“in many different ways,”* so He has spoken to us through His Son, Jesus Christ. His words, as He ministered to the people, were the words of His Father John 14:10, but the greatest message ever spoken to man was when God gave His only begotten Son to suffer and die on the cross to *“take away our sin”* John 1:29. This is confirmed as we are reminded in the latter part of this epistle that we are come *“...to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”* Hebrew 12:25.

**“...whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;”** The Greek text says *“through whom He made the worlds.”* Paul confirmed this in his epistle to the Colossians when he said, *“For by (in) him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by (through) him, and for (to) him”* Colossians 1:16. The Greek text actually says *“all things”* were created *“in”* Him, *“through”* Him, and *“to”* Him. Certainly as the one who was *“in the beginning with*

## The Majesty of Christ

God,” and who “*was God*” John 1:1, He is the “*creator of all things*” and as “*The only begotten Son of God*” He is “*...the heir of all things.*”

**3 “Who being the brightness of his glory...”** Verses one and two reveal what God has done through Christ. This verse reveals Him as “*the brightness of God’s glory,*” and begins to reveal the “*nature*” of His Son, Jesus.

**“...and the express image of his person...”** Jesus was in every way a perfect image of His Father, manifested in flesh and blood. He was not the Father, but He told Phillip, “*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father...*” John 14:9. In this first chapter of Hebrews, if you want to know what God is, look to Jesus. He was “*God manifest in the flesh*” I Timothy 3:16.

**“...and upholding all things by the word of his power...”** The word “*upholding*” in this verse was translated from the Greek word “*phero,*” which means “*to bear or carry.*” Paul tells us God created all things “*in*” Christ, “*through*” Christ, and “*to*” Christ Colossians 1:16. The next verse says “*And he is before all things, and by (in) him all things consist.*” The greatness of Christ our redeemer is revealed in the fact that “*all things,*” that is, the entire universe was created “*in Him*” and “*through Him,*” and without Him it would cease to exist. He “*upholds all things by the word of His power.*”

**“...when he had by himself purged our sins...”** The apostle will tell us in the ninth chapter of this epistle that Christ “*...appeared (was manifest in flesh and blood) to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*” Hebrews 9:26. Peter says of Jesus, “*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed*” 1 Peter 2:24. Seven hundred years before Christ died on the cross, the prophet Isaiah said “*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his*

## **The Majesty of Christ**

own way; *and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*” Isaiah 53:6. Jesus fulfilled everything that was spoken of Him through the Law and prophets when “*by the sacrifice of Himself*” He “*purged our sins.*”

**“...sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;”** A thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary, David, speaking by the Holy Ghost, said “*The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*” Psalms 110:1. Notice that David spoke of both “*The LORD*” and “*my Lord.*” David’s “*Lord*” is revealed to be “*the Christ.*” Jesus confirmed this in the following discourse with the Pharisees:

*“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?”* Matthew 22:41-45

Notice in the context of this verse our sins were purged **before** Jesus ascended and sat down at the right hand of His Father. Salvation was finished at Calvary and was accomplished by Jesus Christ alone. The one sacrifice of His body and blood was sufficient to sanctify Hebrews 10:10 everyone who believes the truth and comes to God through Him.

**4** **“Being made...”** Paul said to the Galatians, “*When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law...*” Galatians 4:4. The word “*made*” in this verse is translated from the Greek word “*ginomai*,” which Strong’s Greek dictionary defines as “*to cause to be*” (“*gen*”-erate), that is, (reflexively) *to become* (come into being).”

## **The Majesty of Christ**

Herein is a mystery. Christ is eternal. He was neither “*made,*” nor “*born.*” He did not “*come into being*” because He was eternally “*with God,*” and “*was God,*” Notice the root word “*gen,*” as in “*genesis*” and “*generate.*” The one of whom John said “*all things were made by Him,*” was “*made flesh*” John 1:14 in the womb of Mary, and thus the Son of God was born. This is the manner of “*the incarnation,*” when He who was “*with God*” and “*was God*” became “*the only begotten Son of God.*”

**“...so much better than the angels...”** In the beginning, Christ created the angels, but being “*made flesh*” as a man He was still “*...so much better than the angels.*” The angels worshiped Jesus when He was “*wrapped in swaddling clothes,*” and “*lying in a manger.*” He did not “*become*” better than angels; He was “*made*” better than they. From the moment of His conception in the womb of Mary, Jesus was “*the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world*” John 11:27.

**“...as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”** Jesus was born into this world with a “*more excellent name*” than the angels. It was His “*birthright.*” The angel of God announced His birth to the shepherds, saying, “*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*” Luke 2:11. The “*more excellent name,*” however, refers to the fact that when He was “*born this day in the city of David,*” He was “*born*” the Son of God. Jesus is “*The only begotten Son of God.*” It is as such that He is the “*heir of all things*” verse 2.

**5 “For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?”** In this verse Paul quotes David from Psalms 2:7. He understood these words to foretell the birth of the Son of God. The apostle shows the great superiority of Jesus over the angels. God has

## **The Majesty of Christ**

never, “*at any time,*” said that an angel is His Son. While not the purpose of this verse, it clearly shows that the “*sons of God*” who married the “*daughters of men*” Genesis 6:1-4, could not have been angels, but rather men of the godly lineage of Seth intermarrying with the ungodly lineage of Cain.

**“...And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?”** The apostle provides evidence upon evidence of the great superiority of the man Jesus over the angels of heaven. The evidence will continue through the end of this chapter.

Jesus is “*the only begotten Son of God*” John 3:16. God has never said of an angel, “*I will be to him a Father.*” The prophet Nathan spoke these words to David concerning one who would be “*of thy sons,*” whom God said would “*build me a house*” 1 Chronicles 17:11-14. David misunderstood this to speak of Solomon, who was not yet born, but God was speaking of Jesus, who would be called “*the son of David.*” God has never “*adopted*” an angel to be His son. The scriptures clearly say that Jesus is “*Christ, the Lord.*”

**6** “**And again, when he bringeth in...**” The Greek word that is translated “*bringeth in*” means “*to introduce.*” Jesus was “*introduced*” to the world by the angel of the Lord, saying “*Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*” Luke 2:10-11.

**“...the firstbegotten into the world...”** John 3:16 says God gave His “*only begotten Son.*” Jesus was the Son of God from His mother’s womb. There was never another, nor will there ever be another like Him. He is, however, also the “*first-begotten*” Son of God. Peter said God has “*...begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the*

## The Majesty of Christ

*dead*” I Peter 1:3. , Jesus died on the cross to reconcile man to God, and in His resurrection He became the “*firstborn among many brethren*” Romans 8:29.

**“...he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.”**

Angels do not worship mortal man, but the angels worshiped the baby Jesus, and unclean spirits trembled in the presence of the adult Jesus, saying, “*I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God*” Luke 4:33-34.

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

Paul quotes David from Psalms 104:4 to show the exalted position of the angels, which are “spirit” without the restrictions of flesh, and yet Christ when He was “*made flesh*” was “*made so much better than the angels*” verse 4. Paul will quote the Psalms of David often in the remainder of this chapter to show by the scriptures how exceedingly above the angels the Son of God is.

**8 “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever:”**

According to the apostle Paul, the words “*thy throne O God,*” which he quoted from Psalms 45:6, were spoken to “*the Son,*” which speaks of Jesus. The “*truth of the gospel,*” which Jesus said would “*make you free,*” was very simply preached by the apostles as “*Jesus is the Christ.*” Jesus was born of Mary, but “*Christ*” was eternally “*with God*” and “*was God.*” It is as such that Jesus, “*the Christ, the Son of God*” could rightly be referred to in this verse as “*O God.*”

**“...a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.”**

His “*kingdom*” is unlike any kingdom that has ever existed on earth. It is “*righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*” Romans 14:17. Speaking to those who have been “*born of God,*”

## **The Majesty of Christ**

Paul says we have been “*delivered from the power of darkness,*” and “*translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son*”

Colossians 1:13.

**9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God...** Notice the words “...*God, even thy God*” in this verse. The words “*O God*” in verse 8 refer to Christ, who was eternally “*with God*” and “*was God*” John 1:1. The words “*God, even thy God*” in this verse refer to the Father of Jesus Christ. This does not in any way indicate the existence of two Gods. The apostle explains this to the Corinthians, “...*there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him*” I Corinthians 8:6.

David wrote in another Psalm, “***The LORD*** *said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*” Psalms 110:1. The Jews believed their messiah, “*the Christ,*” would be “*the son of David.*” Jesus quoted David to prove that Christ is, in fact, David’s Lord Luke 20:41-44, whom David saw in his prophecies as ascending into heaven to sit at the right hand of God. After Jesus was raised from the dead, He sent word to His disciples, whom He now called “*brethren,*” saying, “*I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God*” John 20:17.

**“...hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.**

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

These words, which David wrote a thousand years before the birth of Jesus Psalms 102:25, speak for themselves concerning the divinity of the Son of God. Christ is the one the apostle John spoke of, saying, “*In the beginning was the Word (Christ), and*

## **The Majesty of Christ**

*the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made”* John 1:3. He is David’s “*Lord*” Psalms 110:1.

**11-12 “They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; 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.”**

The “*heavens and the earth*” were not created for “*time,*” but for “*eternity.*” The entrance of sin, which came through Adam’s disobedience, brought a curse upon everything God had created. Time began its countdown, and the heavens and the earth, and everything that is in them began to age. David said, and Paul quoted, that the heavens and earth will “*wax old as a garment,*” and the Lord who created them will “*fold them up, and they shall be changed.*” Many people believe the heavens and earth shall only be “*renovated,*” but Peter said they shall “*pass away*” II Peter 3:10. Jesus said, “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*” Matthew 24:35. In John’s “*revelation,*” he said, “*I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away*” Revelation 21:1. Christ, however, is forever the same.

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

This entire first chapter to the Hebrews is written to prove the superiority of Jesus of Nazareth over the angels. It was to the baby Jesus in the manger that God said, “*Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*” Psalms 2:7. It was to “*Christ-crucified,*” who was “*...declared to be the Son of God with power ...by the resurrection from the dead*” Romans 1:4, that God said “*Sit*

Chapter One **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 1:1-14  
**The Majesty of Christ**

*thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool”*

Psalms 110:1.

**14** “**Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?**” Peter tells us that angels are “*greater in power and might* II Peter 2:11 ” than a natural man. Paul reveals in this verse that they are but servants, sent forth by God to serve those who are the heirs of salvation. The “*heirs of salvation*” speaks of those who are “*born of God,*” the children of God. It is God, however, who dispatches the angels for the sake of His sons and daughters. We are forbidden to either “*pray to angels,*” or to “*worship angels*” Colossians 2:18.

Everything Paul has said in this first chapter is to prove Jesus of Nazareth is “*the Christ*” from eternity. He is the one of whom John said, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*” John 1:1 “*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth*” John 1:14.

Jesus testified of Himself in the Apostle John’s Revelation, “*I am the root and offspring of David*” Revelation 22:16. He who was David’s creator (Christ), was “*made flesh*” and became “*the son of David* (Jesus).” He is both “*the root,*” and the “*offspring*” of David. Oh what a beautiful mystery, and what a delight to those who have eyes to see. These are things which cannot be understood by the wisdom of man.

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

**“Made a Little Lower...”**

**1** **“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard...”** This must refer to the first verse of this epistle; *“God...hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son”* Hebrews 1:1. The greatest message God has delivered to the world at any time was spoken from the cross of Christ, which declares *“the righteousness of God”* Romans 3:25 to save sinners *“from their sin”* Matthew 1:21. Jesus Christ suffered the death of the cross as *“the Lamb of God”* to *“take away the sin of the world”* John 1:29.

**“...lest at any time we should let them slip.”** It is the gospel of Christ, the message of *“Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”* that we must not *“let slip”* lest it be lost to our generation, and we lose our own souls. Paul spoke of the gospel he preached to the Corinthians, saying, *“...by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you...how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures”* I Corinthians 15:2-3.

**2** **“For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast...”** This is a reference to the Law of Moses, which Paul explains *“...was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator (Moses)”* Galatians 3:19.

**“...and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;”** When the children of Israel refused to hear the voice of God at Sinai Exodus 20:19, God refused to go with them to Canaan, which was the land of promise. Instead, he told Moses to tell the congregation, *“Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him”* Exodus 23:20-21.

## Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18 **Made a Little Lower...**

The Apostle Paul confirmed this warning in this same epistle, saying, “*He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses*” Hebrews 10:28. This is what was considered “*just recompense of reward*” for those who ignored the Law of Moses.

The phrase “*recompense of reward*” will be used three times in this epistle, first in this verse, then in Hebrews 10:35 and in Hebrews 11:26. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines “*recompense*” as “*To give something to by way of compensation (as for a service rendered or damage incurred).*” The scripture says, “*The wages of sin is death*” Romans 6:23, which is the “*just recompense*” for those who live their lives in sin. “*...but the gift of God is eternal life*” Romans 6:23, which is just recompense for those who trust in Jesus Christ.

**3** “**How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation...**” The Greek text actually asks “*How shall we escape if we are **disinterested in salvation so vast as this?***” The language is much like that used for Esau, who “*despised his birthright.*” Our “*salvation*” is so much more than “*saved from hell*” as many believe, and more than “*saved from sin*” Matthew 1:21 as we preach. “*Salvation so vast as this*” is our inheritance, the “*birthright*” of those who are “*born of God.*” To be “*disinterested*” in that for which Christ suffered and died is a grievous sin before God, and for this there is no escape.

The apostle asks the question of “*How shall we escape*” early in this epistle. He gives the answer near the end of the epistle, in another warning; “*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***” Hebrews 12:25. There is no escape for those who “*neglect so great salvation.*”

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

**“...which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord...”**

The message Jesus preached “*at the first*” was “*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel*” Mark 1:15. “*The time is fulfilled*” is a reference to the prophecy in Daniel of “***The Messiah, the Prince***” Daniel 9:25 who would come “*...to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness...*” Daniel 9:24. Jesus is “*The Christ*” (the Messiah). He is “*The Son of God*” (The Prince). The apostle John said, “*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*” I John 5:1. When Christ the creator came into the world and died on the cross as the Son of God to “*make reconciliation for iniquity*” Daniel 9:24, every promise of redemption was fulfilled, and the “*Kingdom of God*” was ushered in on the Day of Pentecost.

**“...and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;”**

The hundred and twenty who received the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost were a confirmation of the “*so great salvation*” which was “*spoken by the Lord.*” They were the “*New Creation in Christ.*” What they were and the works they did were proof that Jesus of Nazareth is “*the Christ,*” and that God raised Him from the dead. The message they preached was simple; “*Jesus is the Christ.*” John said, “*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*” I John 5:1. The radical transformation of those who believe the message is the proof of their message

**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?”**

Notice this verse, which begins with a statement, ends with a question mark. It is part of the question of “*how shall we escape*” that began in verse three. The “*signs and wonders, and*

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

*divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost,*” with which God confirmed the message of the apostles, are all part of the “*so great salvation*” which we must not neglect.

If “*so great salvation*” was merely forgiveness of sins, which would leave us in sin with the continuous struggle of trying to “do better,” such “*salvation*” would not be confirmed by the miraculous works of God. Salvation in itself is the greatest of miracles, because of the miraculous transformation which takes place in “everyone who believeth” Romans 1:16. This alone is greater confirmation than any sign or wonder that may follow the minister of the gospel. If salvation were to come without the miraculous transformation, it would be no more than was available to David under the Old Covenant. When David repented of his great sin Psalms 51:1-19, he received forgiveness from God, but he could not receive the “*clean heart*” and “*right spirit*” for which he pleaded Psalms 51:10. Only the blood of Christ can take sin out of the heart of a person.

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

The purpose of “*so great salvation*” continues to be the theme in this verse, as it will through most of this chapter. The “*original*” creation, including the angels, was under subjection to the first man Adam, who was made in the image and likeness of God. All this was lost to man in the transgression, but in our “*so great salvation*” all things are restored to the redeemed. The “*redeemed*” will have the greater authority in the “*new heavens and new earth,*” and not the angels.

“*The world to come*” speaks of “*The New heavens and new earth,*” which the prophet Isaiah saw seven hundred years before Jesus was born to Mary Isaiah 65:17, and the Apostle John also saw in his visions from the Lord Revelation 21:1. Notice however

**Made a Little Lower...**

that “*the power of the world to come*” Hebrews 6:4 is for this present time in the kingdom of Christ. These are the “*signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost*” spoken of in the previous verse.

**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?”**

The full context of David’s question is found in Psalms 8:3-4; “*When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?*” David was considering the greatness of God’s power who created the universe, and the weakness and insignificance of fallen man when this question arises in his heart. The gulf between God and fallen man was so great; why did God continually involve Himself in the affairs of man? The answer is quiet simple; God didn’t make man to be what we see him to be.

**7 “Thou madest him a little lower than the angels...”**

The word “*madest*” in this verse was translated from the Greek word “*elattoō*,” which is defined by Strong’s Greek Dictionary as “*to lessen (in rank or influence)*.” According to the meaning of the English word “lessen,” man was “*diminished*,” which would certainly refer to the fall of man through Adam’s disobedience. No one knows the exact nature of what Adam was when he was created except that he was made in the “*image and likeness of God*,” and given dominion over all things, including the angels of God. The “man” David described in Psalms 8:3-8 had been lessened from his original estate in creation. After his fall, man still held dominion over the beasts of the field, but was “*diminished*” to a position a little lower than the angels. Peter tells us the angels “*...are greater in power and might...*” II Peter 2:11.

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

**“...thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:”** When God created man *“in His image and after His likeness”* Genesis 1:26-27, He clothed him with his presence and set him in a place of authority over all the works of His hands. This authority was not given to the angels. In this way God *“crowned him with glory and honor.”*

**8 “Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet...”** Before Adam disobeyed God, there was absolutely nothing in the creation that was not subject to him. David, however, could see only the dominion which fallen man retained after the entrance of sin, hence, *“all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas”* Psalms 8:7-8.

**“...For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.”** At this point in the middle of the verse, Paul ceases to quote David and actually seems to correct David when he said *“...He left nothing that is not put under him.”* David, by the furthest stretch of his imagination, could not comprehend what God had prepared for man in the original creation. The prophet Isaiah said, *“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him”* Isaiah 64:4.

The *“world,”* as we know it, began with the entrance of sin. From that time until Jesus Christ, what God had prepared for man whom He created in His image was *“the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God”* Ephesians 3:9. It was a mystery which was revealed to Paul through *“revelation of Jesus Christ”* Galatians 1:12.

**“But now we see not yet all things put under him.”**

**Made a Little Lower...**

We can see that fallen man still has dominion over “...*sheep and oxen...the beasts of the field...the fowl of the air...and the fish of the sea,*” which is a very limited dominion. We do not see “*all things*” under the dominion of man in this present time. The words “*not yet*” apply to “time,” and not “eternity.” Time began with the entrance of sin, and will end with the creation of “*a new heaven and a new earth*” Revelation 21:1. That which God created before the entrance of sin is His “*eternal purpose which he purposed (made) in Christ Jesus our lord*” Ephesians 3:11. It is what He will have in the new heaven and the new earth.

If God’s eternal purpose was for man to be in His image and have dominion over the works of His hands, then David’s words were not speaking only of a promise which was lost, but of a promise yet to be fulfilled. Therefore “...*we see not yet all things put under him.*”

**9** “**But we see Jesus...**” In the first chapter of Hebrews, if you want to see the likeness of God, look to Jesus. He is “*the brightness of God’s glory, and the express image of His person*” Hebrews 1:3. In this second chapter, if you want to see what God purposed man to be, “*look to Jesus!*”

**“...who was made a little lower than the angels...”** The Greek word which was translated “*made*” means to “*to lessen,*” which means “*to diminish.*” Christ, who in the beginning “*was with God and was God,*” willingly “*diminished*” himself to be made in the likeness of men. The Apostle Paul said Christ “*made himself of no reputation (emptied Himself), and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.*” Philippians 2:7, thus He “*diminished Himself.*”

When Christ diminished Himself to be “*made in the likeness of men,*” He remained “...*so much better than the angels*” Hebrews 1:4. Angels worshiped Him at His birth, and ministered to

## Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18 **Made a Little Lower...**

Him in His life Matthew 4:11, Luke 22:43. He lived thirty three years, and exercised absolute authority over principalities and powers for three years of ministry, at which time He willingly diminished Himself a second time to be made *“a little lower than the angels.”* Paul explained it thus to the Philippians; *“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”* Philippians 2:8. It was His *“obedience to death”* that made Christ *“a little lower than the angels.”*

If Christ had not made himself *“a little lower than the angels,”* He could not have died on the cross. He who was born *“...so much better than the angels”* Hebrews 1:4 was also *“made a little lower than the angels for (through) the suffering of death.”*

**“...for the suffering of death...”** The Greek word *“dia,”* which was translated *“for”* in this phrase, means *“through.”* The angels do not die! It was through Jesus’ *“obedience to death”* Philippians 2:8 that He was made *“a little lower than the angels.”*

**“...crowned with glory and honour...”** The first man, Adam, was *“crowned (adorned) with glory and honor”* verse 7 until he disobeyed God. It was only when the “glory” departed from Adam that he knew he was naked Genesis 3:7. Jesus was *“crowned with glory and honor”* during the years of His ministry. It was the *“glory of His Father”* upon Him that the Apostle John spoke of when he said, *“...and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father”* John 1:14. Jesus, however, came into a *“greater glory,”* which is spoken of in this text.

**“...that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”** The word *“that”* in this phrase is translated from the Greek word *“hopos,”* which means *“in the manner that.”* It is in this we can understand His greatest glory. He was

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

“...crowned with glory and honour *in the manner that He*, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.”

James and John were two of the apostles of Jesus who made a special request of Him one day. “Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.” But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask...

Mark 10:37-38. They could not comprehend that His “greatest glory” would be that He who was “with God” and “was God,” would so humiliate Himself to become a man, “in the likeness of sinful flesh” Romans 8:3, and willingly suffer and die at the hands of His enemies for the purpose of “reconciling” even His “enemies” to God Romans 5:10.

It was His greatest “glory” and “grace” when Jesus “tasted death for every man.” He not only “tasted death;” He “swallowed it.” It was “through death” that Jesus Christ destroyed “he that had the power of death” Hebrews 2:14. Paul referred to this when he wrote, “**Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ**” 1 Corinthians 15:54-57.

**10** “**For it became him...**” The word “for” at the beginning of this verse is a “causative word,” and is better understood as “because.” It is used to explain why “the grace of God,” in the previous verse, required Christ to “taste death for every man.” The words “it became Him” declare that it was entirely “proper and fitting” to do what was necessary to bring reconciliation for fallen man.

**“...for whom are all things, and by whom are all things...”**

These two phrases explain who is spoken of in this verse. Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” John 1:1-3 speaks of Christ as “The Word of God,”

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

and says, “*All things were made by (through) Him, and without Him (The Word) was not anything made that was made*”  
verse 3.

In Colossians 1:15-17, Paul speaks of “Christ,” and according to the Greek words he used, “*all things*” were created “*in Him...through Him...and to Him*”  
verse 16.

We often refer to Christ as “the creator of all things” because “*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...*” through His Word, which is Christ. Understand it in this way; “*God said*”  
Genesis 1:3, and His Word (Christ) “*created.*” It is obvious that God Almighty is the original cause of all things, and He created all things “*by His Word*” (Christ).

**“...in bringing many sons unto glory...”** The apostle Paul wrote in another epistle, “*God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”  
II Thessalonians 2:13-14. God’s purpose in sending Christ to suffer the death of the cross was to “*bring many sons unto glory.*”

**“...to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”** Jesus is “*the captain of our salvation.*” When He was born to Mary and laid in the manger in Bethlehem, the angel Gabriel announced Him to the shepherds in the field, saying, “*Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*”  
Luke 2:11. Gabriel spoke to Joseph before Jesus was born, saying, “*thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins*”  
Matthew 1:21. Jesus was our savior from the moment of His birth, but he could not “*save His people from their sins*” until the day He shed His precious blood and died the horrible death of the

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

cross. It was on the cross that He was “*perfected*” as our savior. Jesus spoke of this when He said, “*I do cures to day and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected*” Luke 13:32.

There was never a time that Jesus was anything less than “*perfect*,” as men understand perfection. To be “*made perfect*” (complete) as the captain of our salvation, however, He must suffer everything that was prophesied of Him and die on the cross. If He is the “*lamb*” that “*God will provide*” Genesis 22:9, he must be slain. If He is “*the Messiah*,” He must “*be cut off*.” Daniel 9:26. If He is a “*High Priest*,” He must be able to have compassion upon the people. Hebrews 5:2. Each of these required His sufferings. Jesus said to two of His disciples on the day of His resurrection, “*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*” Luke 24:26. The apostle Paul, preaching the gospel in Thessalonica for the first time, said, “*Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead*” Acts 17:3. It was “*necessary*” for everything the prophets had prophesied of Him to be fulfilled in Him before He was “*perfected*” as the “*savior of the world*” I John 4:14.

**11** “**For both he that sanctifieth...**” Who is “*he that sanctifieth?*” Many erroneously believe the Holy Ghost is our sanctifier. They are wrong in this belief, and it is their error that causes them to continually struggle with sin, waiting for the “*Holy Ghost*” to give them power over sin, which He does not do. In this verse Paul will clearly tell us who our sanctifier is.

**“...and they who are sanctified...”** These words speak of the children of God who have been sanctified by the precious and holy blood of Jesus Christ. Paul speaks of this, saying, “*...wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate*” Hebrews 13:12.

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

**“...are all of one...”** Both Jesus and those He has sanctified have the same Father. The Apostle John spoke to those who were newly born again when he said, *“Ye are of God, little children...”* <sup>1 John 4:4</sup>, which means, *“You are born of God.”* The Apostle Paul calls Jesus *“...the firstborn among many brethren”* <sup>Romans 8:29</sup>.

**“...for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,”** The Holy Ghost, which Jesus said is *“the Spirit of our Father”* <sup>Matthew 10:20</sup>, cannot call us *“brethren,”* because the Holy Ghost is not *“born of God.”* Jesus Christ has sanctified us *“with His own blood”* <sup>Hebrews 13:12</sup>, and He is not ashamed to call us brethren, because we are those He has sanctified.

**12 “Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee”** <sup>Psalms 22:22</sup>.

**13 “And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me”** <sup>Isaiah 8:18</sup>.

**14 “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood...”** The *“children”* spoken of in this verse must refer to *“the children which God hath given me”* in the previous verse. They are all *“partakers of flesh and blood.”*

**“...he also himself likewise took part of the same...”** Christ, the eternal *“Word of God,”* was *“made flesh, and dwelt among us”* <sup>John 1:14</sup>.

**“...that through death...”** He partook of flesh and blood *“in order that”* He might die. Without the incarnation, Christ could not have died, but His death was *“necessary”* to our salvation. It is *“through His death”* that we are reconciled to God <sup>Romans 5:10</sup>.

**Made a Little Lower...**

**“...he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;”** In this we see again the necessity of the death of Christ. It is *“through death”* that He *“swallowed up death in victory”* I Corinthians 15:54 and destroyed the one who held the power of death, *“that is, the devil.”*

**15 “And deliver them who through fear of death...”**

Through His death on the cross, Jesus has delivered those who trust in Him from *“Sin, Satan, and the Law of Moses.”* Paul revealed *“redemption from the Law”* when he wrote, *“...God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law ...”* Galatians 4:4-5. He confirms this when he says, *“But now we are delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter”* Romans 7:6.

**“...were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”** The Law of Moses used *“the fear of death”* to retain absolute control over the people. Paul said, *“He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses”* Hebrews 10:28. The *“fear of death”* held the Jews in bondage to Moses for almost fifteen hundred years after he had died. Almost two thousand years after Jesus Christ died to *“redeem us from the Law”* Galatians 4:4-5, there are those in the church who are still held in bondage to the Law of Moses because of their *“fear”* of being lost. Sadly, they remain among those who said to Moses, *“Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die”* Exodus 20:19.

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

The Apostle John said, *“...and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us”* John 1:14. Christ did not come into the world as an angel, but as a man, the *“seed of Abraham.”* Paul makes it very clear, *“...to*

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

*Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to **thy seed, which is Christ.***” Jesus Christ is the promised “*seed of Abraham,*” of whom God said to Abraham, “*...in thy seed (Christ) shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*” Genesis 22:18.

**17 “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren...”** The word “*behoved*” is translated from the Greek word “*opheilo,*” which means “*to owe,*” or “*to be under obligation.*” This continues to confirm the things which were “*necessary*” for Christ to do for the redemption of the people. He was “*made like unto His brethren.*” This must refer to verse 11, which says, “*both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.*” Christ calls those “*brethren*” who are both “*sanctified*” and “*born of God.*” This is somewhat of a mystery, because He had no “*brethren*” until His death and resurrection, at which time He became “*the firstborn among many brethren*” Romans 8:29. Peter said God has “*begotten us again (we are ‘born again’) unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...*” 1 Peter 1:3.

Paul said, “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, **being in the form of God,** thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men***” Philippians 2:5-7. Paul said in his epistle to the Romans, “*God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh*” Romans 8:3. He was not a sinner; He had no sin nature; but He suffered in His flesh everything the curse of sin brought upon this earth. It was not only “*fitting*” verse 10 that He should do so, it was also “*necessary.*”

**Made a Little Lower...**

**“...that** (in order that) **he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God...**” The word “*merciful*” in this verse actually means “*compassionate*.” Paul will explain this statement in this same epistle; “*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: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that* (since) **he himself also is compassed with infirmity** (feebleness)” Hebrews 5:1-2.

Those who live in mansions cannot minister with compassion to those who live under a bridge unless they are willing to leave the mansion and spend time under the bridge. Even so, Christ, the creator of all things, emptied Himself of deity to be “*made in the likeness of men*.” He lived among men with the same limitations of the flesh as any other man. His prayer in Gethsemane the night before His sufferings and death on the cross confirms His limitations in the flesh. Paul wrote of this, saying; “*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*” Hebrews 5:7. Yet, with all the fears and limitations of flesh, He was a “*merciful and faithful high priest*” to offer His own body and blood to “*redeem us from all iniquity*” Titus 2:14.

**“...to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”** Reconciliation was made on the cross when Christ died for us. Due to the fact of who our “*great high priest*” is, He was able to “*...put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*” Hebrews 9:26, and He did it perfectly by “*one offering*” Hebrews 10:14.

**18 “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted...”** The Greek word “*peirazo*,” which is translated “*tempted*” in this verse, means “*to test*.” Jesus was never

Chapter Two **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 2:1-18  
**Made a Little Lower...**

“tempted to sin” as the modern usage of the word seems to indicate. He was, however, “*tested*” just as every person is tested who lives in this present life. His great test was to suffer the same “*infirmities*” as every person in this “*sin-cursed world,*” and to do so without sin.

**“..he is able to succour them that are tempted.”** Certainly this entire eighteenth verse is fully understood in Hebrews 4:15, which says, “*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted (tested) like as we are, yet without sin.*”

## “Christ: Our High Priest”

**1** “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling...” For the first time in this epistle, Paul identifies those to whom he is writing; “*holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling.*” These are those Jews who have believed Jesus is their Messiah (the Christ). Their hearts were “*purified by faith*” Acts 15:8-9 in the holy blood of Jesus Christ which He shed on the cross Hebrews 13:12, and they were truly holy Ephesians 4:24. The Jews were often called “*the holy people*” because of their calling, even though they had no “true holiness” whatsoever. Paul addressed his epistle to those Jews who were partakers with Paul of the “*heavenly calling.*” Being “*partakers,*” they were “truly holy.”

**“...consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”**

Paul introduces Jesus in this epistle not only as the Son of God, but as “*the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.*” From this point forward, this epistle will be very much a comparison of the two covenants, the “*old*” and the “*new.*” A key word in this comparison will be the word “*better.*” Everything is “*better*” in the “*New Covenant.*” Paul begins with a comparison between “*Christ Jesus*” and “*Moses,*” who were the “*mediators*” of the two covenants.

Notice that Paul speaks of our Lord in this verse as “*Christ Jesus*” rather than “*Jesus Christ.*” He is called by His name “*Jesus*” 698 times in the scripture. He is called “*Jesus Christ*” 198 times, and “*Christ Jesus*” 61 times. When His name “*Jesus*” is used alone, it is simply His given name, and tells nothing more about Him. It was only after His resurrection and ascension that He became known as “*Jesus, the Christ,*” which was soon shortened to simply “*Jesus Christ.*” This was used

Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19  
**Christ: Our High Priest**

only by those who believed, as the apostles said, “*Jesus is the Christ*” <sup>1</sup> John 5:1, whom the angel Gabriel told Daniel would come into the world “*to make an end of sins*” Daniel 9:24-25. When Jesus is identified as “*Christ Jesus*,” however, the emphasis is on His divinity. Forty four out of sixty one times the words Christ Jesus are used it speaks of “*in Christ Jesus*.” In this particular verse, Paul emphasizes the divinity of Christ as compared to the humanity of Moses.

**2** “**Who was faithful to him that appointed him...**” Christ was “*appointed*” to be “*the High Priest of our profession*” a thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary. “*The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*” Psalms 110: 4. A thousand years later, when “*The Word was made flesh*” John 1:14, He became the man “*Christ Jesus*,” who was “*faithful to Him (The LORD) that appointed Him.*”

**“...as also Moses was faithful in all his house.”**

This phrase is a reference to Numbers 12:7; “*My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.*” This “*house*,” which is the first of two houses the apostle will speak of, is “*the house of Israel*,” which was under the charge of Moses as long as he lived. The “*house of Israel*” is spoken of 147 times in the Old Testament, and 5 times in the New Testament. Both Christ Jesus and Moses were faithful to God who had appointed them.

**3** “**For this man (Christ Jesus) was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house...**” The apostle John referred to the eternal nature of Christ when he wrote, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by (through) him; and without him was not any thing made that was made*”

## **Christ: Our High Priest**

John 1:1-3. Everything God created, He created through His “*Word*” (Christ), thus Christ is He who hath “*builded the house.*”

**“...hath more honour than the house.”** Christ built the house; certainly His “*honor*” is far above the house He built.

**“For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.”** With these words, Paul establishes “*the divinity of Christ*” in the minds of the Jews.

**5 “And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;”** Moses was appointed by God to serve in the house which Christ had built. He “served” to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness to the land of promise. He was a member of the house in which he served. Moses was the greatest among the children of Israel, but in his greatness, he was only a shadow of our great High Priest, Christ Jesus.

**6 “But Christ as a son over his own house...”** The “*house*” spoken of in this verse is “the New Testament Church.” Jesus said, “...*upon this rock* (the revelation that Jesus is ‘the Christ’ Matthew 16:16) *I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*” Matthew 16:18. Jesus Christ has established His church, and is building into it Ephesians 2:21-22 everyone who will “*believe the truth*” and “*trust in Christ*” Ephesians 1:12-13. According to the apostle Paul, God has given Christ “...*to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all*” Ephesians 1:22-23.

**“...whose house are we...”** We who trust in Him are His house. As He is “*over His own house,*” so we are “*under*

Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19  
**Christ: Our High Priest**

*Him.*” Oh what cause for rejoicing. The children of Israel labored for over fifteen hundred years in the “*house*” which was under the rule of the “servant” Moses. Oh what joy to be “*under*” Christ Jesus, “*the Son of the living God*” Matthew 16:16. Paul wrote to the Romans, “...*sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the Law* (Moses), *but under grace*” Romans 6:14 (Christ Jesus).

“**...if...**” The little word “*if*” is a “*conditional particle*,” we are “*His house*” upon the condition that we “*hold fast, etc.*”

“**...we hold fast the confidence...**” In the Greek text, the Greek word “*per*,” which speaks of “*abundance*,” is an untranslated word at the beginning of this phrase. We are “*His house...if we abundantly hold fast the confidence etc.*” There are many who “*hold fast*” to a “*dogma*” which can become a “*dead letter*,” but those who continually “*rejoice in hope*” Romans 5:2 do so because of their “*abundance of confidence.*”

“**...and the rejoicing of the hope...**” Again, Paul tells the Romans, we “*stand in grace* (the source of our confidence)” and “*rejoice in hope of the glory of God*” Romans 5:2. The word “*rejoice*” in each of these scriptures means “*to boast.*” All boasting is in Christ Jesus as “*a son over His own house*,” because we are “*His house.*”

“**...firm unto the end.**” Neither the end of time nor the end of your life on earth is intended in this verse. The words “*the end*” speak of the “*goal*” or “*purpose*” that is to be received in our present existence through our confidence and rejoicing in Christ.

**7** “**Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith...**” The parenthesis that begins after the word “*wherefore*” will continue through the eleventh verse. The correct usage of a parenthesis is to explain the subject matter on either side of the parenthesis.

## **Christ: Our High Priest**

In this case, the word “*wherefore*” is the beginning of a warning to the Hebrews which professed to believe in Jesus. It connects with verse twelve to say, “*Wherefore take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.*” Normally the word “*wherefore*” would refer to what was spoken before, but in this case the cause for the warning is given in the parenthesis.

**“...Today...”** Whenever the Holy Ghost says “*today*,” He always speaks of the present day in which He speaks. Notice, however, that the apostle will move back and forth between his present generation and the generation in which Moses led the children of Israel to the land of Canaan.

**“...if ye will hear his voice...”** The word “*will*” is not in the Greek text and should not have been used in this verse. The word “*if*,” however, was translated from two Greek words, one of which indicates a “*wish*.” Understand this phrase to say, “*If you wish to hear His voice....*” This verse is a warning against hardening our hearts “*when*” we hear His voice.

Hold a tender heart toward God and when He speaks, you will hear. Christ will speak to you because you are “*His house*.” He will speak to you as sons, and not as servants. He will set every spiritual blessing before you as He did the children of Israel when He said, “*...if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation*” Exodus 19:5-6.

**8 “Harden not your hearts...”** The children of Israel heard the voice of God speaking out of Mount Sinai and drew back, saying to Moses, “*Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die*” Exodus 20:19. Thus, they heard the voice of God in their generation, and hardened their

Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19  
**Christ: Our High Priest**

hearts against Him. The Spirit exhorts every person of every generation, “... *if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts.*”

**“...as in the provocation...”** According to the words of God in Ezekiel 20:6-8, the children of Israel began “*provoking God*” even before they left the land of Egypt. When God finally “*swore in His wrath*” they would not enter “*His rest*” (the land of promise), it was the tenth time they had provoked Him Numbers 14:22. The “*provocation*” spoken of in this verse, however, speaks of the day the children of Israel refused to hear the voice of God, and promised to obey the voice of Moses. Within six weeks they had turned from Moses to worship a golden calf, for which God would have destroyed them if not for the intercession of Moses Exodus 32:1-10. The exhortation to us is, “*If you hear His voice, harden not your heart. Hear and obey His voice.*” No one has ever been saved who has not first “*heard His voice,*” calling them to “*repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*” Acts 20:21. It is those who hear and obey who are saved.

**“...in the day of temptation in the wilderness:”** The word “*temptation*” in this verse actually speaks of “*testing.*” The term, “*the day of temptation in the wilderness*” actually speaks of the times in which God “*tested*” the children of Israel. Such times of testing always ended up with another “*provocation*” against God. Rather than trusting God when they were tested, they responded by “*testing God.*”

**9 “When your fathers tempted me...”** The word “*tempted*” is translated from the Greek word “*peirazo,*” which means “*to test.*” David wrote of them, “...*they tempted (tested) God in their heart by asking meat for their lust. Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread*

Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19  
**Christ: Our High Priest**

also? *can he provide flesh for his people?*” Psalms 78:18-20. With these words, they actually used their unbelief to entice God to prove Himself to them.

**“...proved me...”** Amazingly, God did for them everything they required, *“proving”* Himself to them by His mighty works.

**“...and saw my works forty years.”** Even after seeing his wonderful and miraculous works in the wilderness, they still did not believe God.

**10 “Wherefore I was grieved...”** The word *“grieved”* speaks of *“vexation.”* Their continual provocations over a period of time turned the heart of God from great love for them to great wrath against them.

**“...with that generation...”** The term *“that generation”* speaks specifically of the generation of Israel who came out of Egypt and refused to enter into Canaan. They had provoked Him ten times before He swore in His wrath, *“They shall not enter my rest.”*

**“...and said, They do alway err in their heart...”** When people err, it is always in their heart. The Greek word which was translated *“err”* means *“to roam.”* Such are those who continually make the wrong decisions in life. This was a *“heart problem,”* which was discovered when they refused to hear Gods voice at Sinai, and God said to Moses, ***“O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”*** Deuteronomy 5:29.

**“...and they have not known my ways.”** The Greek word which was translated *“ways”* speaks of *“a road.”* Those who take the wrong *“road”* always end up somewhere they do not want to be. The children of Israel never learned the *“ways of*

## Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19 **Christ: Our High Priest**

God.” Had they believed God at Sinai, they would have been His “*kingdom of priests*” and “*holy nation*,” and would have entered the land of promise at Kadesh Barnea. Instead, they wandered in the wilderness forty years. They never understood that God took them out of Egypt to bring them into the land of promise, and if they trusted Him, He would not forsake them along the way.

**11** “**So I swear in my wrath...**” When God gave the covenant promises to Abraham, He “*swore by Himself*,” and the promises became immutable to everyone who would believe God. To these who did not believe, however, God “*swore in His wrath*.” Just as the promises of God are steadfast and sure to the believer, so the wrath of God is just as certain to those who refuse to believe. God “*swore in His wrath...*”

**“...They shall not enter into my rest.)”** The day God “*swore in His wrath*” marked the beginning of forty years the children of God would wander in the wilderness. This was the tenth time they provoked God when they refused to enter into the land of Canaan Numbers 14:22. If they had believed God, they would have immediately entered the land of promise; instead they wandered in the wilderness until all those who were over 20 years of age perished.

The words “***They shall not enter into my rest***” are not an exact translation from the Greek text. An exact word for word translation says, “**Whether...to enter...into...my...rest.**” When I first discovered this, I wrestled with it. I thought the KJV translators must have made a grievous error in Hebrews 4:3 which says, “*As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest....*” I knew the Psalm of David from which Paul repeatedly quoted, which says:

“*Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.*” Psalms 95:11

Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19  
**Christ: Our High Priest**

It was here that I was convinced of a great truth which is concealed in these scriptures. Notice the word **“that”** which I have placed in bold. It was translated from the Hebrew word “im,” which means *“whether.”* There was no Hebrew word for **“not”** which I have also placed in bold. God spoke through David to say...

*“Unto whom I swear in my wrath **whether** they shall enter into my rest.”*

It is in this word *“whether”* that we see the justice of God. God did not get angry and doom an entire generation to perish in the wilderness. It is God who will determine who will enter, and who will not. It is His discretion to do so. This is seen in the events of that day at Kadesh-Barnea when the children of Israel refused to enter the land of Canaan out of fear and unbelief;

*“Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: **But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land** whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it”* Numbers 14:22-24

**12** **“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief...”** Notice how quickly Paul moves from one generation to the other. He speaks of *“that generation”* as *“they,”* but now he speaks to his present generation, saying *“any of you.”* He speaks of the past generation to warn the present generation against the *“evil heart of unbelief.”*

Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19  
**Christ: Our High Priest**

The word “*evil*” does not speak of the “character” of their heart, but of the “effect” of their decisions. Their heart was stricken with unbelief, which is a “spiritual disease” of the heart. The children of Israel “*erred in their heart*” <sup>verse 10</sup> because they did not “*know His ways.*” The warning to us is to “abide in Christ” and “trust in Him.” Those who do otherwise always end up in error, without the “*rest*” which God has provided for His children.

**“...in departing from the living God.”** With these words, Paul takes us back to the “*root*” of Israel’s problem. It began when God came down on Mount Sinai to speak to His people, promising to bless them beyond measure if they would “*obey His voice, and keep His covenant*” <sup>Exodus 19:5-6</sup>. When God spoke to them from the burning mountain, however, the scripture says “*...they removed, and stood afar off* (they departed from the living God). *And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die*”

Exodus 20:18-19.

**13 “But exhort...”** The Greek word that is translated “*exhort*” means “*to call near.*”

**“...one another...”** The words “*one another*” are mistranslated from the Greek word “*heautou,*” which should be understood as “*yourselves.*”

**“...daily...”** At this point in the verse we should understand it to say, “*Call yourselves near daily.*” It speaks of our personal need to draw near to God every day of our lives. Jesus tells us to pray, “*...give us day by day our daily bread.*” More than we need food and drink to sustain our physical body, we need to “*eat and drink*” of the Spirit, and be “*renewed*” in the Holy Ghost every day that we live.

**“...while it is called To day...”** Paul says, “*...though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day*”

## **Christ: Our High Priest**

II Corinthians 4:16. This is not automatic! We must draw near to the Lord every day of our life “*while it is called today.*”

**“...lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”** It is important to note that the “*deceitfulness of sin*” was not drawing these Hebrews into idolatry, but back into the Law of Moses, which would bring equal damnation upon them. Each of us must accept responsibility for our own self to “*draw near*” daily to “*hear His voice,*” and “*live by Him*” John 6:56-58. The “*deceitfulness of sin*” will always cause the people to “*draw back,*” and not “*draw near.*”

**14 “For we are made partakers of Christ...”** The Greek word “*metochos,*” which is translated “*partakers,*” actually means “*participants.*” This phrase should be understood as “*...we become participants with Christ....*”

**“...if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;”** Once again, as in the sixth verse, the words “*the end*” speak of the “*end result,*” which is to be a “*participant with Christ.*” The apostle Paul says we are “*...joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together*” Romans 8:17. If we, by faith, have become “*participants with Christ*” in His death, burial, and resurrection, we are also participants with Him in His glory.

**15 “While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice...”** This verse is correctly understood from the Greek text to say “*...if you wish to hear His voice...*” It gives a warning against hardening our hearts when we hear His voice. Many people think they would believe if they could only hear the voice of God, but they have already hardened their heart against what He says.

**“...harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.”** Paul is quoting David, who speaks of the day God spoke audibly to the children of Israel, and they refused to even listen to His

## Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19

### **Christ: Our High Priest**

voice. Exodus 20:1-21. They drew back from God and turned to Moses, promising to obey his voice. This event was only one of ten times that the children of Israel provoked God in the first two years after leaving Egypt. Notice once again how the apostle has used the words of David to move the conversation from “today” to “that generation” which God was grieved with. He will continue through the remainder of this chapter with the thought of how the children of Israel continually provoked God.

**16 “For some, when they had heard, did provoke...”** The word “some” is not the best translation in modern day usage. Both “Adam Clark” and “Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown” in their commentaries show the correct translation to be “Who, when they had heard, did provoke,” explaining the word “provocation” in the previous verse, and indicating that all but a very few were caught up in the provocation.

**“...howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.”** There were only two whom we know for certain never provoked God. These were Joshua and Caleb, the “faithful witnesses,” who also entered into the land of promise at the end of the forty years. The sons of Levi did not worship the golden calf, and stood with Moses against those who did. It was for this reason they were chosen to be a tribe of priests to Israel under the Law of Moses.

**17 “But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?”** Notice that the words “was it” are italicized in the scripture, indicating that they are not in the original Greek text. In verses seventeen through nineteen Paul will show the root cause of the provocation was unbelief. Those who sinned did so because they did not believe God.

## **Christ: Our High Priest**

Jesus said when “*the comforter (the Holy Ghost) is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin because they believe not on me ...*” John 16:8-9. The only reason any person continues in sin is because they do not believe Jesus is the Christ; that is, they do not know who He is, what He was sent by God to do, and they do not trust in Him. The reason the children of Israel “*perished in the wilderness*” is they “*did not believe God.*”

**18** “**And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?**” They did not believe God when He spoke to them at Sinai. They did not believe Him when they worshiped the golden calf. They did not believe Him when they refused to enter the land of promise at Kadesh-Barnea. This was their tenth “*provocation,*” and the day God “*swore in His wrath that they would not enter into His rest.*”

This is an absolute statement concerning those who do not believe God. “*They shall not enter!*” God will never use His “discretion” to accept any of those who continue in unbelief.

The land of Canaan was only a symbol of the rest which God prepared for His people. Joshua and Caleb believed God when He spoke to them from Mount Sinai. It was there they entered into “*rest.*” They believed God while the multitudes worshiped the golden calf, and they “*believed God*” when they spied out the land with the twelve spies and returned with a good report. They “*believed God,*” and they possessed the land of promise forty years later. To these, the “wilderness experience” was one of rejoicing in hope. They ate manna from heaven, drank water out of a rock, and were sustained day by day by the mighty power of God, while the sinners and unbelievers perished in the wilderness.

Chapter Three **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 3:1-19  
**Christ: Our High Priest**

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

This epistle to the Hebrews was written about A.D. 65. It was written to persuade the Hebrew Christians to continue in the grace of God and not turn back to Judaism. In this chapter, the apostle uses the wilderness experience, which lasted forty years, as a warning against “*unbelief.*” When Jesus sent His apostles to “*preach the gospel to every creature,*” He said, “*He that believeth shall be saved ...he that believeth not shall be damned.*” Those who “hear the truth” and refuse to believe it are not merely “unbelievers;” they are “disbelievers.” There are billions of people in this world who do not believe simply because they have never heard. They are lost because no one has given them the truth of the gospel. Those who hear the truth and refuse to believe it are “*damned*” in this life as well as in the world to come.

Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed by the Roman army about five years after this epistle was written. This was forty years after the Jews denied Jesus before Pilate, and said, “*His blood be on us, and on our children*” Matthew 27:25. Jesus, while describing the destruction of Jerusalem, said, “*These be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ...for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people*” Luke 21:22-23. Some have believed this chapter shows a parallel between the generation that rejected God at Sinai and the generation that rejected Christ before Pilate. Certainly, the warning is not to the Jew only, but to all who have professed Christ; “*If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*” Hebrews 10:38.

## Christ: Our Rest

### “Christ: Our Rest”

**1** “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.” Our greatest fear should not be anything of this present world, but that we, through unbelief, should fail to enter the rest which is prepared for us in Christ.

**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.” The gospel of Christ is “...*the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth*” Romans 1:16. It must be “*mixed with faith*” in them that hear it. Simply stated, we must believe everything God has said, whether through the prophets, through His Son, or through the apostles of Jesus concerning what Christ came into the world to accomplish. He came “...*to make an end of sins*” Daniel 9:24-25. He alone is “*The lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” John 1:29.

**3** “For we which have believed do enter into rest...” Paul told the Romans, “...*we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand...*” Romans 5:2. “*Faith* (believing what God has said)” is our access into “rest” in Christ. Paul concluded the previous chapter saying, “...*they* (the children of Israel) *could not enter in because of unbelief*” Hebrews 3:19, but those who believed God (Joshua and Caleb) did enter into rest.

The rest which God has promised is not a “*place*” a carnal person can enter. Jesus said, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*” Matthew 11:28. Those who believe the gospel of Christ and trust in Jesus have the rest which He promised. The translators should not have used the word “do” in this verse, because it seems to indicate

Chapter Four **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 4:1-16  
**Christ: Our Rest**

something we must “do” after we have believed. Faith (believing what God has said) is our entrance into rest.

The human struggle to “be” or “do” something great is a snare many believers fall into. The apostle Paul, who was without question the greatest among the apostles, saw himself as “*less than the least of all saints*” Ephesians 3:8, and “*...the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle...*” I Corinthians 15:9. Paul “rested in Christ” while the Spirit of God worked mightily through him.

**“...as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if (whether) they shall enter into my rest...”** In the Greek text, these words are an exact quote of the Hebrew text of Palms 95:11, which says, “*Unto whom I swear in my wrath **that** they should **not** enter into my rest.*” It is actually in the translation of the Old Testament Hebrew text that an error was made. The word “*that,*” which I have placed in bold, was translated from the Hebrew word “*im,*” which is properly defined as “*whether.*” In the same verse, there is no word for “*not*” in the Hebrew text. These verses, one from Psalms and the other from the book of Hebrews, are better understood to say, “*As I have sworn in my wrath, **whether** they shall enter into my rest....*” Even in His wrath, God reserved to Himself the discretion to be the judge of who shall enter, and who shall not enter.

Paul has shown in the previous chapter that not everyone who came out of Egypt with Moses provoked God in the wilderness Hebrews 3:16. Joshua and Caleb are the classic examples of those who did not. God was angry at Kadesh-Barnea when the children of Israel refused to enter Canaan, yet even in His wrath, He used righteous judgment to determine who would enter and who would not.

It was at Kadesh-Barnea that God “*swore in His wrath*” Numbers 14:28-30 against those who refused to enter the land of Canaan.

## **Christ: Our Rest**

They had actually sealed their fate a year before when they refused to hear God's voice at Sinai <sup>Exodus 20:19</sup> and chose to obey Moses instead <sup>Deuteronomy 5:27</sup>. God had promised they would be His "*peculiar treasure above all people,*" His "*kingdom of priests,*" and His "*holy nation,*" if they would simply "*obey His voice and keep His covenant*" <sup>Exodus 19:5-6</sup>. This would have been their rest if they had believed God. Within six weeks they had forsaken Moses to worship a golden calf <sup>Exodus 32:4-6</sup>. God would have destroyed them that same day except for Moses' intercession in their behalf <sup>Exodus 32:10-14</sup>.

If the children of Israel had believed God at Sinai, they would have entered God's "*rest*" that same day, and would have believed to enter Canaan a year later at Kadesh-Barnea. Unbelief concerning what God has said has forever been the reason the people have no rest.

**"...although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."** With these words, the apostle reveals exactly what is the "*rest*" which God has prepared for the people. These words prove that our "*rest*" is neither a twenty-four hour Sabbath, nor the real estate which God covenanted with Abraham to give to his descendants forever <sup>Genesis 15:18</sup>. The children of Israel would have entered into rest with God at any time they "believed God" and "trusted in Him," because "*the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*"

When God created the heavens and the earth <sup>Genesis 1:1</sup>, He knew what they would be before He created them. When in six days of creation, God took the earth, which was "*without form, and void*" <sup>Genesis 1:2</sup>, and turned it into something of great beauty and value, God knew what it would be before He made it. When God said, "*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*" <sup>Genesis 1:26</sup>, He knew what man would be before He created him. These things are what God "*foreknew*" and "*predestined.*"

## Chapter Four **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 4:1-16

### **Christ: Our Rest**

They are what the apostle Paul called “*the eternal purpose*” Ephesians 3:11. In that God never changes, Malachi 3:6, His “*eternal purpose*” has never changed. What God “*foreknew*” and “*predestined*,” He will have. These are “*the works*” which were “*finished from the foundation of the world.*”

*“And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.”* Genesis 2:2

The first chapter of Genesis gives the record of six days of creation. Whether these were six 24 hour days I will not argue, but on the seventh day, God “*ended His work*” and “*rested on the seventh day.*” I will point out that this “*seventh day rest*” would have lasted for all eternity if Adam had not disobeyed God. Everything God had created, and everything He had made man to be was His “*eternal purpose*,” which He “*purposed (made) in Christ Jesus*” Ephesians 3:11. The Greek word which was translated “*purposed*” in this verse is “*poieo*,” which means “*to make or do.*” Literally, what God “*purposed*” from the beginning, He “*made (created)*” in Christ.

The Greek text in Colossians 1:16 says, “*For in him were all things created....*” Everything God created in six days of creation were created “*in Christ.*” In fact, according to the Greek text “*...all things were created through Him, and into Him: and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist*” Colossians 1:16-17.

God’s purpose in creation was thwarted by the entrance of sin, and the entire creation came under the curse of sin. Yet, what God created in the beginning is still His “*eternal purpose.*” The “*rest*” which Adam lost through his disobedience remains in Christ for those who will believe God. Enoch is an example of a man who rested with God. The scripture says

## **Christ: Our Rest**

he “*believed God*” and “*walked with God*” for three hundred years until God took him Genesis 5:22-24, Hebrews 11:5.

Joshua and Caleb are another example of those who believed God and rested in Him. They were among the multitude that wandered in the wilderness for forty years. They drank water out of a rock and ate manna from heaven, and rejoiced while others murmured. The “*rest*” which God promised has never been a twenty four hour day, or a piece of real estate. It is instead what God predestined, what He created, and what remains in Christ for those who believe God and trust in Jesus Christ.

**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.”** The “*Sabbath*” is only a shadow of our rest in Christ Colossians 2:16-17. God “*worked*” for six days to take the earth, which was “*without form and void*” Genesis 1:2, and transform it into a paradise. God completed His work of creation on the sixth day when He created man, and He rested from all His works on the seventh day. Man was created to rest with God, and the “*rest*” was beautiful until it was interrupted by Adam’s disobedience.

**5** **“And in this place again, If (whether) they shall enter into my rest.”** The words “*in this place again*” indicates the apostle is revisiting the scriptures which tell of the children of Israel’s refusal to enter the land of Canaan at Kadesh-Barnea. He establishes Canaan as a second example and shadow of the rest which God has prepared for His children. The children of Israel failed to enter because of an “*evil heart of unbelief*” Hebrews 3:12.

**6** **“Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:”** Keep in mind that the land of Canaan

## **Christ: Our Rest**

was not the “*rest*,” but was only a “*shadow*” of rest. Joshua, Caleb, and Moses “*rested*” in the wilderness, even as those who did not believe God “*struggled*.”

**7** “**Again, he limiteth** (appointed) **a certain day, saying in David, To day** (the appointed day of salvation is always ‘*today*,’ II Corinthians 6:2), **after so long a time** (about five hundred years from Moses to David); **as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**” Pharaoh hardened his heart and perished in the Red Sea; the children of Israel hardened their hearts at Sinai and perished in the wilderness. Oh, do not harden your heart when He speaks.

**8** “**For if Jesus** (Joshua) **had given them rest...**” Joshua took the children of those who came out of Egypt across the Jordan River to possess the land of Canaan, but even in Canaan they did not receive the rest which God had promised. David lived his entire life in the land which God promised to Abraham, yet he heard God speak of a “*rest*” that remained for the people of God. It became obvious to David that the land of Canaan was only a shadow, and not the fulfillment of the “*rest*” which God has prepared for His people.

**“...then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.”** Adam did not continue in the seventh day rest; the children of Israel would not hear the voice of God at Sinai, and thus could not enter God’s rest. Forty years later, Joshua led the younger generation into the land of Canaan, but could not give them rest. Five hundred years later, God offered “*rest*” to the children of Israel in the days of King David Psalms 95:7-11, but they would not hear. None to whom the rest was offered could enter because of “*an evil heart of unbelief*.”

**9** “**There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.**” Paul draws this conclusion from the fact that from Adam until Christ, there had been none who had believed God

## **Christ: Our Rest**

to enter His rest. If neither Joshua nor David could give the people rest, it remains, there is a rest to those who “*hear His voice*” and trust in Jesus Christ.

The children of Israel could not enter God’s rest because of unbelief. The apostle John said, “*He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son*” I John 5:10. God gave this “*record*” through His prophets, through the apostles of Christ, and through Jesus Christ Himself. Those who do not believe the “*record*” which was given, do not believe God, and hath “*made Him a liar.*” God will not speak to us from the mountain again, as He did at Sinai. He speaks to us from the cross of Christ. The precious blood which the Son of God shed is called “*the blood of sprinkling which speaketh...*” Hebrews 12:24. It speaks of “*cleansing from all sin*” I John 1:7; “*washing us from our sins*” Revelation 1:5; and of “*sanctifying the people*” Hebrews 13:12. This is the voice that “*speaks*” from Mount Zion Hebrews 12:22-24. The apostle Paul said, “*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*” Hebrews 12:25. Do not turn away! Do not harden your heart! The scripture has previously told us, “*For we which have believed do enter into rest...*” Heb. 4:3.

**10 “For he that is entered into his (God’s) rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”** The creation of all things was God’s work. When His work was finished, He rested, because everything He had created was “*very good*” Genesis 1:31. Fallen man’s efforts to be righteous are futile; they are all as “*filthy rags*” Isaiah 64:6. No one can enter God’s rest until they cease from their own efforts.

The “*rest*” which God has promised us is the “*so great salvation*” Hebrews 2:3, which Christ has prepared for us through His

## **Christ: Our Rest**

death on the cross. We were slaves to sin and Satan, but God has “...*delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son*” Colossians 1:13. This “*great salvation*” is God’s “*grace*” toward us, and cannot be received by our works or efforts. “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast*” Ephesians 2:8-9.

### **11 “Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest...”**

The use of the English word “*labor*” in the translation of this verse actually conceals the meaning the apostle intended. The Greek word Paul used was “*spoudazō*,” which means “*to use speed*.” Rather than trusting in God who promised to give them the land, the children of Israel paused just outside of Canaan at Kadesh-Barnea while the twelve spies searched the land. They hesitated for forty days until the spies came back with a report that the land was “*too great*” for them, and they could not possess it. It would have been far better to have immediately entered, believing that the same God who opened the Red Sea for them while destroying the army of Pharaoh, would also give them this land of promise without their abilities in the flesh. Paul’s message to us is “*Don’t hesitate; believe God; trust in Him who has promised, and you will enter into His rest.*”

### **“...lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”**

The last verse of the previous chapter says, “...*they could not enter because of unbelief.*” They were paralyzed with unbelief when they heard the evil report of the ten spies, and they could not move forward, but could only retreat. After God “*swore in His wrath*” that they would not enter, they decided to enter through human efforts, and suffered a horrible defeat. Such it is with those who do not trust in Christ.

## Christ: Our Rest

**12** “**For...**” Translated from the Greek word “gar,” the word “for” is used to “assign a reason,” and is best understood as “because.” Paul will explain in much detail why we should immediately believe God to enter into His rest.

“...the word of God...” There are two principal Greek words which were translated into English as “word.” The first of these, which was used 70 times in the New Testament is “*rhema*:”

**Rhema:** “*An utterance (individually, collectively or specifically); by implication a matter or topic (especially of narration, command or dispute); with a negative naught whatever.*”

Strong’s Greek Dictionary

The Greek word “*rhema*” is “an utterance,” whether spoken by God or man. It can be words of creation as spoken by God Hebrews 11:3, or it can be the idle chatter of men and women Matthew 12:36. It was variously translated, according to Strong’s Greek Dictionary, as “*evil, nothing, saying, and word.*”

The second Greek word, which was used 330 times in the New Testament, is “*logos*,” which was translated into 27 different English words and phrases, too numerous to show in this message.

**Logos:** “*Something said (including the thought); by implication a topic (subject of discourse), also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive; by extension a computation...*” Strong’s Greek Dictionary

At first glance these words seem to be very similar, with “*rhema*” meaning “an utterance” and “*logos*” meaning “something said.” It is actually in the origin of the word “*logos*” that we see a great distinction. It was a philosopher known as “Heraclitus of Ephesus” in the sixth century BC who gave us the word “*logos*,” which he defined as “divine reason.” To Heraclitus, the universe itself gave evidence of some

Chapter Four **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 4:1-16  
**Christ: Our Rest**

universal principle which causes all things to work in harmony, and not in chaos (my words, not his). It was Plato, who in 380 B.C. coined the Greek word “*theologia*” by connecting the words “*theo*” (god) and “*logos*” (divine reason). From this, we received our English word “*theology*.” We should keep in mind, however, that the Greek philosophers believed in many gods, and their “theology” was nothing more than “mythology.”

When the apostle Paul found in Athens an altar with the inscription “*To the Unknown God*,” He immediately took the opportunity to preach Christ to them, saying, “*Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you*” Acts 17:23. The Apostle John did the same thing in the first words of His gospel; “*In the beginning was the Logos (divine reason), and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God*” John 1:1. The words may seem strange to us, but to the Greek who understood and believed, they found in Jesus Christ everything for which their philosophers had long searched.

*“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”* 1 Corinthians 1:21

The Greeks sought for wisdom; the apostles preached Christ crucified, which was foolishness to the Greeks, but to those Greeks who believe, Christ is the wisdom of God 1 Corinthians 1:23-24. It is obvious that most of us who read this are not Greeks, therefore it is a mistake to exalt the Greek word “logos” beyond proportion, as many have done to the word “*rhema*.” The word “logos” is simply “*something said*,” and the word “*rhema*” is only “*an utterance*.” In the case of “logos,” it is only in certain places where the apostles (John, Peter, and Paul) added the definite article to give us “*The Logos*,” which

## **Christ: Our Rest**

is *“the divine expression,”* and speaks of Christ. In every other place, *“logos”* is simply *“something said.”*

**“For the word of God is quick (alive), and powerful...”** In this twelfth verse, *“the word (logos) of God”* must refer to the *“gospel of Christ”* when preached in its simplicity. When the people first hear *“who Christ is,”* and the truth of *“what He came into the world to do,”* it is a message that is *“sharper than any two edged sword.”*

The apostle Peter used the word *“logos”* to define the *“incorruptible seed”* through which we are *“born again”* I Peter 1:23. By this we understand that the eternal Spirit of Christ is the incorruptible seed, and He is *“the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”*

**“...and sharper than any twoedged sword...”** We should notice that Paul did not call the Word (logos) of God a two edged sword; instead, he said it is *“sharper than any two edged sword.”*

**“...piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...”** The apostle Paul said, *“And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam (Jesus Christ) was made a quickening (living) spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual”* I Corinthians 15:45-46.

The soul of man is descended from Adam, and is sometimes called *“the spirit of man”* I Corinthians 2:11. It is also that which Jesus called *“flesh”* when He said, *“That which is born of flesh is flesh”* John 3:6, and relates to the fallen human nature. Jesus continued in the same verse to say, *“...and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* Only those who are *“born again”* of the Spirit of God are *“spirit.”* Even those who have been *“born again,”* however, can become so involved in religious activity they confuse that which is of the soul (Adam) with that which

## **Christ: Our Rest**

is of the Spirit (Christ). They sometimes confuse their own thoughts with God's thoughts Isaiah 55:8. When God "*pours out of His Spirit*" Acts 2:17, however, and begins to speak to the hearts of the people, He quickly and powerfully separates between that which is of the soul from that which is of the Spirit.

**"...and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."** When the gospel is preached under the anointing of the Holy Ghost, even the thoughts and intents of the hearts are made manifest. The source of a person's walk will be discovered by the content of their heart.

**13** **"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight..."** Notice that the things spoken about "*the Word (the logos) of God*" in the previous verse, are referring to a person ("*...in his sight, etc.*") in this verse. When the gospel of Christ is preached "*...with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven*" 1 Peter 1:12, Christ is present, and He is the "*discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*"

**"...but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."**

Verses twelve and thirteen are given as the reason we must "*believe God*" verse 3, and "*cease from our own works*" verse 10, to enter "*His rest.*" If we do not, we also will "*fall after the same example of unbelief*" verse 11. There are many who profess to believe but have never entered into the "*rest*" of those who do believe. They struggle continually with the content of their own heart, and have never "*believed*" to enter into "*rest.*" They seek to possess the promise through their own works. In the next verses, Paul gives the answer for all who are in such straits.

**14** **"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God..."** The

## **Christ: Our Rest**

third chapter began with the admonition to “...*consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.*” It is important to notice that He is the “*High Priest of our profession.*” Without our true “*profession,*” we have no “*High Priest.*”

Our “*great high priest*” is Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus is “*the Christ, the Son of the living God*” Matthew 16:16. “*The Christ*” is eternally “*the Word (divine expression) of God,*” who was “*in the beginning with God, and was God...*” John 1:1. Our great high priest is not just a man, “*taken from among men*” Hebrews 5:1; He is “*Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God*” Matthew 16:16.

**“...let us hold fast our profession.”** Our “*profession*” cannot be about us; it must be about Him. He is our savior, our sanctifier, and our baptizer. He is the Son “*over His house,*” and we are His house. We can do nothing without Him, for He is our life. Our profession is what we believe about Jesus Christ. If it should be that you are still struggling with unclean things in your heart, do not lose your profession. Without your “*profession*” you have no savior, no sanctifier, no provider, and no High Priest.

**15** “**For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities...**” The use of a “*double negative*” in this verse indicates that there were high priests under the Law who could not sympathize with the weakness and infirmity of the people. In the parable of “*The Good Samaritan,*” it was a priest that first passed by the man who was wounded and dying on the roadside without giving help or assistance. It was the high priest that plotted the death of Jesus. Under the Law of Moses, the priests could not show mercy on those who broke the Law. The Pharisees who brought the adulterous woman to Jesus said, “*Moses commanded that such should be stoned, but what sayest thou?*”

Chapter Four **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 4:1-16  
**Christ: Our Rest**

Jesus said to the Pharisees, “*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*” John 8:7. To the woman, He said, “*Neither do I condemn thee (cast the first stone): go, and sin no more.*”

**“...but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”** Jesus was “*tested*” as we are. He suffered everything that is common to man. The prophet Isaiah said of Jesus, “*He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*” Isaiah 53:3. Thus was He tested for 3 ½ years of ministry, even as He “*went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil*” Acts 10:38. The scripture does not say, nor does it teach, that Jesus was “*tempted to sin,*” which is something that can take place only in an unregenerate heart. The Pharisees did not commit the act of adultery, but they were tempted when they “*looked on a woman to lust after her*” Matthew 5:27-28. Jesus said they “*have committed adultery with her already in their heart.*” Those who are “*tempted to sin*” are guilty of sin, according to the words of Jesus.

Jesus was “*tested*” as every person is tested. It is because of the things He continually suffered in this life that He can be “*touched by the feeling of our infirmities.*” It was necessary that He should first suffer **with** the people if He were to be “*a merciful and faithful high priest*” Hebrews 2:17 to suffer **for** the people, “*to make reconciliation*” for their sin.

Regardless of what our circumstances in this present world may be, we must “*hold fast our profession.*” The last words of Jesus to His disciples in the last full day of His life with them were words of encouragement; “*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*” John 16:33. He is our great high priest. Regardless of our circumstance in this world, He has promised, “*...that in me*

## **Christ: Our Rest**

*you might have peace.*” Paul says “...hold fast your profession” of a savior and sanctifier in our great high priest, Jesus Christ. If we are tested beyond measure...

**16 “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace...”** It is at the “*throne of grace*” that we will the help that we need.

**“...that we may obtain mercy...”** The word “*mercy*” is translated from the Greek word “*eleos*,” which means “*compassion*.” “*Mercy*” is only one of many words that are misunderstood in the scripture, and is best understood by the way it is used. When someone is twisting your arm and will not stop until you plead for “*mercy*,” that is not mercy. Neither is mercy defined as “*forgiveness*.” When the blind man cried for mercy, Jesus gave him his sight. When the leper cried for mercy, Jesus cleansed him from his leprosy. When the lame man cried for mercy, Jesus made him whole, and he began to walk. The correct understanding of “*mercy*” is to “*do for another what they cannot do for themselves*.” Paul says, “...come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy.” Jesus did for us at Calvary what we can never do for ourselves. We need only to believe and trust in Him to do in us what He finished on the cross. It is there we shall find “*rest for our soul*” Matthew 11:28.

**“...and find grace to help in time of need.”** Paul sought the Lord three times for deliverance from the “*messenger of Satan*” that “*buffeted*” him continually with persecutions and tribulations. The only answer he received was, “*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in thy weakness*” II Corinthians 12:9. To Paul, grace was not a “*covering for sin*,” he understood grace as “...*grace wherein we stand*” Romans 5:2, and “...*grace whereby we serve God acceptably*” Hebrews 12:28. “*Grace to help in time of need*” is “*His strength made perfect in our weakness*.”

**Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation**

**“Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation”**

**1 “For every high priest taken from among men...”**

The tribe of Levi, which was the priestly tribe, was separate from all other tribes in Israel. The “house of Aaron” consisted of direct descendants from Aaron, the brother of Moses and the first high priest of Israel. Every high priest was of the “house of Aaron,” and those who were chosen were “*taken from among men,*” meaning they were separated from their brethren for the service of God.

**“...is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:”**

While being placed in a position “*over men,*” the ministry of the high priest was given “*for the sake of men, in things pertaining to God....*” Being “*taken from among men,*” he would have a common background with fallen humanity to whom he must minister the things of God. His ministry was to offer both “*gifts,*” which were the free will offerings of the people, and “*sacrifices*” which were required of the people by the Law of Moses.

**2 “Who can have compassion...”**

The word “*compassion*” is translated from the Greek word “*metriopatheo,*” which is used only this one time in the bible. It means “*moderate in passion,*” and by extension, to have a “*gentle nature.*”

**“...on the ignorant...”** The “*ignorant*” speaks merely of those who have never been taught.

**“...and on them that are out of the way...”** This phrase speaks of those who have strayed from the right path.

**“...for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.**

The high priest, being taken from among men, was one who was subject to the same tests and trials as every man. The word “*infirmity*” speaks of the “*physical feebleness*” and “*moral*

## **Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation**

*frailty*” that is common to every fallen man. The apostle Paul instructed the saints at Galatia, “... *if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted*” Galatians 6:1. If the high priest of the Old Covenant, who was “*taken from among men*” would consider his own frailty, he could be gentle when dealing with those who are “*ignorant and out of the way.*”

**3** “**And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.**” Due to the fact of his own frailty, the high priest must first offer sacrifice for his own sins before he could offer for the sins of the people. The apostle will tell us of the high priest under the Law, that he had no righteousness of his own. Even when offering the blood of goats and bullocks behind the veil on the Day of Atonement, he “...*stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation*” Hebrews 9:10.

**4** “**And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.**” The “*honor*” spoken of was the office of the high priest. It was the highest office that could be given to any man under the Law. The greatest honor that can be bestowed upon any person is to be called by God to be His minister in the New Covenant church. Many have tried to bestow this honor upon themselves, but it is God who must call and ordain His ministers.

**5** “**So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest...**” Jesus could not have been a high priest under the Law because He was born of the tribe of Judah, and the house of David. The Law of Moses dictated that every priest must be born of the tribe of Levi, and every high priest of the house of Aaron.

**Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation**

**“...but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.”** It was God, the Father of Jesus Christ who glorified His Son to be a high priest. Christ, who was eternally “*with God*” and “*was God*” John 1:1 WAS “*made flesh*” John 1:14 when He was born into this world through the womb of Mary. The day He was “*wrapped in swaddling clothes*” and “*laid in a manger*” was the same day God said to the eternal Christ, “*Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.*”

**6 “As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”** This is the first mention in the New Testament of an obscure man named Melchisedec, who was “*a priest of the most high God*” Genesis 14:18 in the midst of the heathen tribes of Canaan. Everything we know about this man is given in only three verses of scripture Genesis 14:18-20, and his importance as a priest would have never been considered if David had not mentioned him in his 110<sup>th</sup> Psalm. David was not only the King of Israel and a writer of many psalms, but he was also a “*prophet*” of the Christ who was to come. A thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary, David wrote, “*The LORD (God almighty) said to my Lord (Christ Jesus), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*” This could be fulfilled only after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the exact middle of this same Psalm, David wrote, “*The LORD (God almighty) hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou (Christ Jesus) art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*” Psalms 110:4.

The angel Gabriel told the shepherds in the field about the birth of “*a saviour, which is Christ **the Lord***” Luke 2:11. He was the one David had called “*my Lord,*” and as surely as He was “*David’s Lord,*” He was also “*a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*” Jesus could not have been a priest under the Law of Moses because He was born to the tribe of Judah, and was not of the order of Levi. It was not by his birth, but by the

## **Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation**

“oath of God” that Jesus Christ was made “*a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.*” He would become our “*great high priest*” when He offered His “*one sacrifice for sins forever*” Hebrews 10:12, which was His own body and blood, offered to take away our sin John 1:29.

**7** **“Who in the days of his flesh...”** This speaks of Jesus of Nazareth.

**“...when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death...”** This describes His passion in the Garden of Gethsemane just before Judas betrayed Him into the hands of those who hated Him Matthew 26:45.

**“...and was heard in that he feared;”** The scripture says, “*There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him*” Luke 22:43.

Jesus was afraid when He entered Gethsemane because he knew the horrible sufferings that awaited him. He told His three disciples which were with Him, “*My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*” Matthew 26:38. He prayed to His Father, “*If it be possible, let this cup pass from me...*” Matthew 26:39. He said to His disciples, “*The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak*” Matthew 26:42. At all times, however, His prayer was, “*...nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt*” verse 39.

Luke described His passion in the garden with these words; “*And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground*” Luke 22:44. Had not His Father sent an angel to strengthen Him, it is possible that Jesus would not have survived the night of sorrow to suffer the cross the next day. It is not a sin to sometimes be afraid when evil circumstances seem to close in on us. Such times may be our “*Gethsemane,*” but

## **Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation**

if our cry of submission comes up to “*He that is able to save us from death,*” He will always strengthen us.

**8** “**Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;**” If we make the mistake of viewing this verse in the terms of our experience as the children of men, we can only see the chastisement we received for disobedience, and thus we learned to obey “*by the things we suffered.*” We, however, came up from disobedience to learn obedience, but this was not the case with Christ. Paul speaks to the Philippians of the “obedience of Christ;”

*“Who, being **in the form of God**, thought it not robbery to be **equal with God**: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And **being found in fashion as a man**, he humbled himself, and **became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**”* Philippians 2:6-8

Notice the words I have placed in bold; Christ “*in the form of God*” for all eternity until the incarnation. He was “*equal with God,*” thus He was neither “obedient” nor “disobedient” because He was one with God, having the mind of God. Notice that Christ “*made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.*” This speaks of the incarnation of Christ, who was the creator of heaven and earth. “*Being found in fashion as a man,*” He humbled Himself a second time, and “*became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.*” Mere men suffer because of disobedience; Christ suffered and died **because of obedience**. He did what He came into the world to do, and He did it through His “*obedience*” to the death of the cross.

**9** “**And being made perfect...**” The term speaks of completion. Jesus was the savior from the moment of His birth. The angel confirmed that He was the savior when announcing

Chapter Five **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 5:1-16  
**Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation**

His birth to the shepherds in the field. The old man of God, Simeon, gave a wonderful confirmation when he saw the baby Jesus in the temple. *“Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation...”* Luke 2:28-30. In the words of the angel Gabriel, the baby Jesus was *“a saviour, which is Christ the Lord,”* but it would be His sufferings and death on the cross at thirty three years of age that perfected Him as our savior. It was also through these same sufferings that He experienced what it means to obey even in the most trying of circumstances. This *“completion”* qualified him as our compassionate and faithful High Priest. Hebrews 2:17-18.

**“...he became the author of eternal salvation...”** The word *“author”* is translated from the Greek word *“aitios,”* which is defined as *“a causer.”* Jesus was *“the cause”* of our salvation.

**“...unto all them that obey him;”** The word *“obey”* is translated from the Greek word *“hupakouo”* which means *“to hear under (as a subordinate), that is, to listen attentively.”* To *“obey Christ”* is not fulfilled in obedience to laws, creeds, ordinances, or ceremonies; to *“obey Christ”* is to *“hear His voice as a subordinate.”*

God had made a promise to the children of Israel when they stood at Mount Sinai to hear the voice of God. God had said, *“If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation”* Exodus 19:5-6. The children of Israel refused to hear God’s voice, and they did not receive the promise. They chose to hear Moses instead Exodus 20:19. The call to salvation brings the same promise to those who will *“hear His*

## **Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation**

voice” and “believe” what He says. This is what it means to “obey His voice.”

**10 “Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.”** It is of great significance that Jesus is called “*an high priest*” in this verse, because in David’s prophecy He was called only a priest: “*Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec*” Psalms 110:4. A “*high priest*” must have many other priests under Him. The promise to Abraham included the promise of a “*kingdom of priests*” Exodus 19:5-6, which could not be fulfilled until Christ, our “*great high priest,*” offered His sacrifice to “*take away our sins*” 1 John 3:5. This is the second mention by Paul of Melchisedec in this epistle.

**11 “Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.”** It is easy to preach the precious things of Christ when the people are hungry, but when they are not, it is very hard indeed. Paul interrupts his line of thought to bring a slight reproof to the congregation.

**12 “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers...”** These Hebrew “*Christians*” had professed Christ long before this time. In the mind of Paul, each and every one of them should have been teachers. Instead...

**“...ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God...”** The word “*oracles*” is translated from the Greek word “*logion,*” which means “*an utterance.*” The Ten Commandments were called oracles because God spoke them from Mount Horeb to the entire nation. The prophetic utterances of the prophets were also oracles, as well as the prophets themselves, because they spoke the words of God. Peter writes, “*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*” 1 Peter 4:11. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers were all oracles of God, because they

## **Christ: The Author of Eternal Salvation**

were called and anointed to speak the words of God. The apostle was speaking to those who professed to know Christ, but they had forgotten what manner of person it is that God will use to bring glory to Himself.

**“...and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”** Jesus told His disciples, *“I have meat to eat that ye know not of”* John 4:32. When the disciples questioned as to who it was that had given him food to eat, Jesus responded, *“My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work”* John 4:34.

**13 “For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.”** Peter speaks of the *“sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby”* I Peter 2:2. Milk is what causes children to grow. When a child of God is weaned from the milk, they should be ready for strong meat, which is *“to do the will”* of Christ who has saved us.

**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.”** Spiritual maturity does not come with the years of time, but through the full use of those things God has given to us. The natural senses are *“seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching.”* There are also spiritual *“senses”* which God gives to His children by the Holy Ghost and which are made sensitive to the Spirit as they are used. These are those who are ready for *“strong meat,”* that is, *“to do the will of God.”*

## “Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul”

**1** “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ...” The apostle does not tell us to leave the doctrine of Christ and go on to other things. Unto this point in his epistle, he has laid the foundation of first principles, but now he will begin to reveal the “*perfection*” (completion) that is in Christ for the believer.

“...let us go on unto perfection...” At this point in this epistle, Paul will begin to reveal the “perfect salvation” Christ has provided through His “perfect sacrifice” at Calvary. As we enter this chapter we should understand the full meaning of the word “*perfection*” as used by the apostle. The Greek word which was translated perfection is “*teleiotes*,” which is defined by “*Strong’s Concordance and Greek Dictionary*” as “*completeness*” and speaks of “*the state of completion.*” This “*completion,*” or “*perfection*” as Paul calls it, is not the result of man’s “*striving for perfection*” as many have taught in times past. Neither is it a lifetime process of “growing into perfection.” Instead, it is the fullness of what Christ accomplished through His death on the cross.

Paul will use the word “*perfect*” in all its tenses (perfect, perfected, perfection) seven times from this verse through verse 14 of the tenth chapter, which says “*For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*” Hebrews 10:14. This verse destroys many of the misconceptions of modern teachers. It is not good enough to teach, “*There’s no such thing as perfection*” when the apostle Paul dedicates five chapters to the discovery of it. “*Perfection,*” (whatever it is), came in with the “*one offering*” of Jesus Christ.

## **Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

We will deal more thoroughly with this subject in the commentary on chapter ten. In the meantime, whenever you see the words “*perfect, perfected, or perfection,*” know that Paul will show the complete work of the gospel, which was finished at the cross, is a heart that has been purified from sin. Jesus said, “*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God*” Matthew 5:8. This is what God calls “*perfection.*”

The apostle will show repeatedly in the next several chapters that “*perfection*” is not obtained by any work of man, nor is it received by any religious ceremony or ordinance. It is the work of Christ alone on the cross.

**“...not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works...”** This epistle to the Hebrews was written to those who either were or had been “*under the Law.*” When Paul speaks of “*repentance from dead works,*” he is referring to all the works of the Law of Moses. In his view, which is the correct gospel view, the ceremonial law and the sacrificial law, along with all the ordinances of the Law, including the “*new moons, feast days, holy days, and the Sabbaths,*” were all dead works, which could do absolutely nothing for the one who did them. As surely as a sinner among the Gentiles had to repent and turn away from sin, the devout Jew must “*repent*” and “*turn away*” from the “*dead works*” of the Law of Moses.

**“...and of faith toward God,”** Repentance and faith are the “*first principles*” of the doctrine of Christ. No one can be saved either from “*sin*” or “*the Law*” without turning from them and trusting solely in Jesus Christ for salvation. When Paul departed from the churches in Asia for the last time, he told the elders of the church in Ephesus, “*I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, **repentance toward God,***

## **Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

*and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*” Acts 20:20-21. These “*first principles*” of the doctrine of Christ must be fulfilled before any person can go further.

**2** “**Of the doctrine of baptisms...**” Notice the word “*baptisms*” is plural. Most think of baptism in water, which is known as “*John’s baptism*” when they read these words. More important, however, is “*baptism into death*” Romans 6:4, 6-7 and the baptism of which Jesus is the baptizer, the “*baptism with the Holy Ghost*” Matthew 3:11, Acts 1:5.

**“...and of laying on of hands...”** Jesus told us of the “*signs*” which would follow the believer; “*In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; ...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover*” Mark 16:17-18. Only one “*baptism*” will cause a believer to “*cast out devils,*” to “*speak with new tongues,*” and to “*heal the sick*” in the name of Jesus, and that is “*the baptism with the Holy Ghost*” Acts 1:8.

**“...and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”** Paul said in this same epistle, “*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*” Hebrews 9:27. Jesus spoke of both the resurrection of the “*just*” and the “*unjust*” John 5:29. Paul said, “*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*” II Corinthians 5:10. Some erroneously teach that a “*believer*” will never be judged for their sins. Why then did Paul continue in the next verse to say, “*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...?*” II Corinthians 5:11. His belief in the resurrection and judgment was the driving force behind the apostle, seeking to reach everyone with the good news of salvation from sin through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**3** “**And this will we do, if God permit.**” With these words, Paul returns to “*let us go on to perfection.*”

**Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

**4** **For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened...**” He does not speak of those who have only “heard” the truth, but of those whom “*the light of the glorious gospel of Christ*” has shined into their hearts II Corinthians 4:4. They had received the revelation of Jesus Christ, and they had understood the truth.

**“...and have tasted of the heavenly gift...”** The “*heavenly gift*” is our “*so great salvation*” Hebrews 2:3 which is received only through faith in Christ. It is an error to think these only “*tasted*” but did not “*eat*.” The same Greek word that was translated “*tasted*” was used in this same epistle to say of Jesus, “*...that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man*” Hebrews 2:9. Jesus Christ not only “*tasted*” of death, but He “*swallowed it up*,” as Paul also said to the Corinthians, “*Death is swallowed up in victory*” I Corinthians 15:54.

**“...and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost...”** They were filled with the Holy Ghost as on the day of Pentecost. More than simply being filled, however, they were “*made partakers*,” which from the Greek text means they were active “*participants*” in the wonderful works of God.

**5** **“And have tasted the good word of God...”** The Word of God had been their “*daily bread*.” They did not only “*taste*,” but they “*swallowed*.” They understood who Christ was by the word of God spoken through the prophets. They knew who Christ was, what He came into the world to do, and that He did it through His death on the cross. They had partaken of “*the glory*” which came after “*the sufferings*” of Christ I Peter 1:11.

**“...and the powers of the world to come,”** The “*world to come*” speaks of “*the new heavens and the new earth*” which God said He will “*create*” Isaiah 65:17 when the present heavens and earth “*passes away*” Revelation 21:1 along with all the evil

## **Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

which sin has brought into them. The “*powers of the world to come*” began with the ministry of Jesus Christ, and expanded to those whom Christ baptized with the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost. Without that “*baptism*,” we cannot fully comprehend the glory and power of that world to come, but those children of God who have been made “*partakers of the Holy Ghost*” Hebrews 3:14 have certainly tasted of the powers of the world to come.

**6** “**If they shall fall away...**” Paul did not say those in verses 4 and 5 had fallen away, but “*If they shall fall away....*” These words do not speak of a backslider; instead they speak of an apostate who cannot return. These have not returned to a life of sin for the sake of sin, but they have denied Jesus Christ to trust once more in the Law of Moses from whence they came. These are those of whom the apostle speaks in chapter ten, who have “*trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace*” Hebrews 10:29.

**“...to renew them again unto repentance...”** An apostate sees no need for repentance, believing they have found a “*better way*” than “*Jesus Christ, and Him crucified*” 1 Corinthians 2:2.

**“... seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”** They have denied Jesus as surely as those who denied Him at Pilate’s judgment hall. Their sin, however, is worse, because they have tasted the reality of Christ. Their sin is as the sin of Judas who betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.

**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:**” Here the apostle gives a short analogy with the “*Word*” and “*Spirit*”

## **Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

being represented by the rain that waters the earth to bring forth good fruit.

**8** **“But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.”** The same rain falling upon different soils brings forth different results. That which brings forth only thorns and briars is burned over with fire. The same gospel was preached in every place to every people by the apostle, but some brought forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, while others brought forth the evil *“fruit”* of apostasy

**9** **“But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you...”** Paul quickly leaves the warning against apostasy, letting them know he was not speaking of any one of them in particular.

**“...and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.”** There are necessary things which do accompany salvation. A *“new heart”* and a *“new spirit”* Ezekiel 36:26 are foremost among these. Those who *“abide in Christ”* and *“trust in Him”* will bring forth out of their *“pure heart”* the good fruit of true holiness unto God Romans 6:22.

**10** **“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love...”** Their *“work and labor of love”* is the good fruit of those who know the truth, abide in Christ, and love the brethren.

**“...which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”** James said, *“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world”* James 1:27. God will not forget those who do so.

## **Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

**11** “**And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence ...**” They have been very diligent to do the outward works of religion.

**“...to the full assurance of hope unto the end.”** The apostle expresses their need to be just as diligent in the inward things of the Spirit of God.

**12** “**That ye be not slothful...**” These were very diligent to attend to the things in the outward form of religion, but they had a tendency to neglect the more important and eternal things of the Spirit of God.

**“...but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”** The epistle to the Hebrews was written about five years before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD. It was written to Jewish believers wherever they were found. Many were scattered throughout the cities of Asia because of the great persecution that had come upon them from the unbelieving Jews at Jerusalem. Most of these had believed as a result of the great outpouring of the Holy Ghost that had begun on the day of Pentecost. As time went on and the fervor of revival waned, there were those who were returning to Judaism because of a new wave of persecution. Paul was calling on them to exercise “*faith and patience.*”

**13** “**For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,**” When God “*swears by Himself,*” He gives Himself to be the collateral guarantee of the promise, which then becomes “an immutable promise.” Abraham had offered his son on the altar to God. When God could not fulfill His promise to Abraham’s “*seed*” (the children of Israel) at Sinai, He must “give Himself,” which He did through the incarnation and death of Christ at Calvary. “*...He gave His only begotten Son...*” John 3:16.

## **Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

**14** “**Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.**” When God “*swore by Himself*” to Abraham, the “*blessings of Abraham*” became an immutable promise.

**15** “**And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.**” The “*promise*” Abraham obtained was Isaac, the “*son of promise.*” The promise that he saw “*afar off*” Hebrews 11:13 was Christ.

**16** “**For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.**” Again, Paul uses a natural analogy. When men make contracts with one another and confirm it with an “*oath,*” there is no more striving over the terms of the contract.

**17** “**Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:**” Not only did God swear by Himself to bless Abraham, but also to “*bless his seed,*” and even more so, He promised “*in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*” Genesis 22:18. Paul said to the Galatians, “*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ*” Galatians 3:16. With that immutable promise, we who were Gentiles are made to be “*the heirs of promise*” through Jesus Christ.

**18** “**That by two immutable things...**” The two immutable things are those things which God “*swore by Himself*” to do. The first is the promise to Abraham of a “*seed*” (Christ), in whom “*all the nations (Gentiles) of the earth shall be blessed*” Genesis 22:18.

The second “*immutable thing*” is the “*oath*” which God “*swore*” to Christ; “*Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.*”

## **Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

**“...in which it was impossible for God to lie...”** When God “*swears by Himself,*” there is no circumstance in which He will not do that which He has promised.

**“...we might have a strong consolation...”** The promises that God confirmed with an “*oath*” to both Abraham and Christ are just as certain to us today.

**“...who have fled for refuge...”** Christ is our “*refuge;*” our “*secret place of the most high*” Psalms 91. “*While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” Romans 5:8. Sinners that “*flee to Him*” are “*saved from sin*” Matthew 1:21 and made partakers of the promise.

**“...to lay hold upon the hope set before us:”** The “*hope*” that is “*set before us*” is the promise of complete salvation and deliverance from sin which Christ came into the world to accomplish for all who will believe Daniel 9:24-25. Those who, by faith, “*lay hold on the hope*” find that the promise was fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for “*everyone that believeth*” Romans 1:16.

### **19 “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul...”**

When the promise was given to Abraham, it was a promise of “*salvation to come.*” In Acts 13:32-33, the apostle Paul says, “*The promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again.*” The promise to us is of “*salvation accomplished;*” it is not a “*future hope,*” but a “*hope fulfilled*” in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our faith and trust in Jesus Christ is the anchor of our soul.

**“...both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;”** “*Both sure and steadfast*” refers to our “*anchor.*” An old sailing vessel needed a strong anchor in the time of storm. The ship would survive the storm if its anchor held to the solid rock in the depths of the sea. The “*anchor of our*

Chapter Six **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 6:1-20

**Christ: The Anchor of Our Soul**

*soul*” is Jesus Christ, who is “*at the right hand of the Father.*” Those who “*abide in Him*” are safe from every storm.

**20** “**Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus,**” Jesus entered within the veil to purge our sins with His own blood. Hebrews 9:12. We also are invited to enter with boldness “*...by the blood of Jesus.*” Hebrews 10:19.

**“...made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”** This is the third time in this epistle that the apostle makes mention of Melchisedec. He will reveal much more in the next chapter.

**Christ: The Better Hope**

**“Christ: The Better Hope”**

**1** “**For this Melchisedec...**” in this lengthy sentence, **Melchisedec** is the subject. The verb and object, “*abideth a priest continually,*” are not found until the end of the third verse. Everything between the subject and the verb defines who the historic Melchisedec is, of whom we know so little. Everything the apostle Paul tells us about Melchisedec is from what was said, or not said, in only three verses in the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis:

*“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.”* Genesis 14:18-19

**“...king of Salem...”** Melchisedec was probably the founder of the ancient city of “*Salem,*” which later became Jerusalem, which means “*city of peace.*”

**“...priest of the most high God...”** Melchisedec was a priest of God several centuries before the Levitical priesthood was established by Moses.

**“...who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;”** By blessing Abraham, Melchisedec was shown to be greater than Abraham, as verse 7 will explain, “*the less is blessed of the better.*”

**2** “**To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all...**” Abraham knew that Melchisedec was a priest of God, and gave tithe of all the spoils of battle to him.

## **Christ: The Better Hope**

**“...first being by interpretation King of righteousness...”**

Paul derived this information from the Hebrew definition of the name “*Melchisedec*,” which is “*king of righteousness*.”

**“...and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;”** The word “*Salem*” for which the city of Jerusalem was named, means “*peace*,” thus Melchisedec was “*the King of peace*.”

**3 “Without father, without mother...”** This statement by Paul is based upon what the Genesis record did not say. There is no record in all the books of lineage of who his parents were.

**“...without descent...”** Every priest under the Law of Moses had a pedigree record of his ancestry. His lineage must be unbroken back to Levi. Every high priest under the Law must prove his direct lineage from Aaron. Even in thoroughbred animals there is a pedigree kept for many generations, but a “cur dog” has no pedigree. This does not mean the “cur dog” has no parents, but no record is kept of who they are. Melchisedec had no pedigree to prove who he was. What he was, was from God alone.

**“...having neither beginning of days, nor end of life...”** Again, there is nothing in the Genesis record to tell his date of birth or time of his death. These records were kept meticulously on every person of note, but on Melchisedec, they are not to be found.

The record of the “*generations of Noah*” through his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth are found in chapters 10 and 22 of Genesis. Due to the fact of the destruction of all living in the flood except for Noah and his sons with their wives, this record must contain every family of importance from Noah to Abraham. There is no mention of Melchisedec in any of these records. I am reminded of the words of Paul to the Corinthians;

**Christ: The Better Hope**

*“God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence”* I Corinthians 1:27-29. It is obvious that God chose an unknown man to glorify Himself in.

**“...but made like unto the Son of God...”** Jesus of Nazareth was a *“man,”* but He was the *“Son of God”* who was *“born of a virgin,”* thus God was His father, and Mary was His mother. As it is *“appointed unto men once to die”* Hebrews 9:27, Jesus also died, but God raised Him from the dead. The term, *“made like unto the Son of God”* must refer to Melchisedec’s priesthood, and not his birth. Ministers of God are not *“made”* by men, but by God only.

When Jesus of Nazareth appeared in Galilee preaching the kingdom of God and doing the works of God, His fame immediately reached the far corners of the land. Who is this man? Some said He was Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Peter said, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* Such a thing had never been since the beginning of the world, but it was so. God’s Son was born of a woman to *“destroy the works of the devil”* I John 3:8. If people did not believe, yet it was so.

Melchisedec, *“made like unto the Son of God,”* was made by God to be the first priest of an everlasting order. When David prophesied of Christ, *“Thou are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec,”* this meant Christ would be a priest even though He did not have the required credentials under the Law of Moses to be a priest. His descent was from Juda rather than Levi, which meant He could not be a priest in the Levitical order. He was made by the oath of God to be a priest *“after*

## **Christ: The Better Hope**

*the order of Melchisedec,*” thus the priesthood of Melchisedec “*abideth forever.*”

**“...abideth a priest continually.”** Aaron was the first “*high priest*” under the Law of Moses. Aaron came to his time of death exactly as every person does, but his priesthood continued for about fifteen hundred years. The priesthood of Melchisedec is eternal, it “*abideth forever.*”

Everything we know for certain about Melchisedec was written in three verses in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. If he had not been mentioned in a prophetic Psalm by David, we would have never had a second thought about Melchisedec, because there is so little said about him in the Genesis record. That changed when the Spirit of Prophecy spoke of Christ through David, “*The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*” Psalms 110:4. The mystery of who this man was has captured the imagination of scholars and students alike for thousands of years.

**4 “Now consider how great this man was...”** The mystery of Melchisedec is settled with two words in this verse; “*this man.*” Melchisedec was a man, and just as all other men, he had a “*father and a mother,*” and he had a “*beginning of days (birth)*” and an “*end of life (death).*” There simply was no record of these for Melchisedec. For it to be otherwise would require that Melchisedec was a created being, as was the first man Adam. Paul will use the next 6 verses to show the greatness of Melchisedec.

**“...unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.”** Melchisedec is shown to be greater than Abraham in that he received tithe from him.

**5 “And verily they that are of the sons of Levi...”** Levi was the great grandson of Abraham, the son of Jacob, and the father of one of the tribes of Israel. They were set apart as a

**Christ: The Better Hope**

priestly tribe when they refused to worship the golden calf, and took the part of Moses against those who did.

**“...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:”** The tribe of Levi had *“a commandment to take tithes of the people.”* The fact that the other eleven tribes gave tithe to the Levites proves that the tribe of Levi was the greatest among the tribes of Israel. By this same rule, Melchisedec will be proven to be greater than the sons of Levi.

**6 “But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.”** Melchisedec was *“the priest of the most high God”* in the midst of the idolatrous tribes of Canaan hundreds of years before the children of Israel came into existence. Abraham became the father of many nations, and was chosen to be a blessing to all nations Genesis 12:3, but Melchisedec is proven to be greater than Abraham by virtue of the tithe and the blessing.

**7 “And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.”** Without contradiction, Melchisedec was proven to be greater than Abraham.

**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, paid tithes in Abraham.**

**10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.”** This is a strange analogy as the apostle stretches the point to show the superiority of Melchisedec over Abraham, and his priesthood over the Levitical priesthood. Without a doubt, his conclusion is correct. Melchisedec’s

## **Christ: The Better Hope**

priesthood is far superior to Levi's in that it is eternal. Exactly as God promised David to establish his throne forever, it is Christ who sits on the throne of David to fulfill the promises to David. In like manner, it is Christ who fulfills the eternal priesthood of Melchisedec.

There are those who believe Melchisedec was Jesus. There are others who believe he was Shem, the son of Noah, who lived a total of 598 years and would have been alive in the time of Abraham. We know Melchisedec was not Jesus, and most probably was not Shem. We know who Shem's father and mother were, as well as the year of his birth and the year of his death. The greatness of Melchisedec was not in "who" he was, but "what" he was. This entire reference to the greatness of Melchisedec is concerning his priesthood. He was not in any lineage of priests, yet he was "*a priest of the Most High God.*" He was not appointed by man to be a priest, but his priesthood was of God, and would have no end. Christ was and is a priest forever "*after the order of Melchisedec.*" He was made a priest by the oath of God, who "*...swore, and will not repent...*" Psalms 110:1.

**11** "**If therefore perfection...**" keep in mind that "*perfection*" as used in this epistle speaks of "*a pure heart.*" That is the "*completion*" the Law could never give.

**"...were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the Law,)..."** The Levitical priests were the ministers of the Law of Moses. The apostle Paul said to the Galatians, "*If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law*" Galatians 3:21. The Law of Moses was weak verse 18 in that it could kill sinners, but it could not save them because it could not take away their sin, and give them a pure heart.

**Christ: The Better Hope**

There were those in the days of Jesus who kept the Law of Moses so blamelessly that Jesus said *“If I had not spoken to them, they had not had sin”* John 15:22. He said to them only days before His death on the cross, *“Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity”* Matthew 23:28. The Law, through *“fear of death”* Hebrews 2:15, could restrain a person from unclean actions, but it could never purify the heart of man.

**“...what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?”** The weakness of the priesthood was not so much in the priest, but in the sacrifices they offered. Paul will tell us, *“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”* Hebrews 10:4, yet the priests stood daily, *“ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins”* Hebrews 10:11.

This ministry under the Law continued daily for fifteen hundred years, yet in all those years there was never a sacrifice offered that could do anything of value for either the priest or those for whom he offered. After those fifteen hundred years under the dominion of the Law of Moses, Paul asked the question, *“Are we (Jews) better than they (Gentiles)?”* Romans 3:9. The only possible answer is that which was given; *“No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.”* During those centuries under the dominion of the Law of Moses, it became obvious that something had to change. There is a saying, *“If nothing changes, nothing changes.”* There had to be a change in the priesthood if anything was to change for the people.

The *“perfection”* Paul speaks of is that full and complete salvation which Christ came into the world to bring. Embodied in

Chapter Seven **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 7:1-28

**Christ: The Better Hope**

Christ was the fulfillment of everything the Law of Moses “could not do.”

*“For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”* Romans 8:3

Christ came into the world as “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” John 1:29. His blood is “holy blood,” and has the power to “*sanctify the people*” Hebrews 13:12 and “*wash them from their sins*” Revelation 1:5.

**12 “For the priesthood being changed...”** The Greek word “*metatithēmi*,” which was translated “*changed*” actually means “*to transfer*.” The Levitical priesthood was not changed; it was abolished, and the priesthood itself was “*transferred*” to the one whom God had sworn to be “*a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec*,” which is Jesus Christ.

**“...there is made of necessity a change also of the Law.”**

The Law of Moses was not “*changed*.” The Greek wording indicates that it was “*disestablished*” or “*removed*.” From the moment Christ was “*made flesh*” John 1:14 in the womb of Mary and placed in a manger, it became impossible that the Law of Moses could continue its rule over the people. In Galatians 3:19, Paul says, “*Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.*” When Jesus was born, the “*seed*” had come. When He died on the cross, the “*great high priest* (the eternal Christ)” had offered His “*perfect sacrifice*” (His own flesh and blood), which He offered “*once for all*” Hebrews 10:10, and the Law of Moses was “*disannulled*” verse 18 and “*abolished*” Ephesians 2:15.

**13 “For he of whom these things are spoken...”** (Jesus of Nazareth) “**...pertaineth to another tribe...**” Jesus was

**Christ: The Better Hope**

born of the tribe of Judah and could not have been a priest under the Law of Moses

**“...of which no man gave attendance at the altar.**

**14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda...**” Jesus Christ was “*made of the seed of David according to the flesh*” Romans 1:3, which proves He was of the tribe of Juda.

**“...of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.**

**15 And it is yet far more evident...**” While it was “*evident*” that Jesus could not be a priest under the Law of Moses because He was born of the tribe of Judah, it was also “*far more evident*” that He was in fact a priest. This presented a dilemma for those who honored the Law while also expecting the appearance of their Messiah, the Christ. There was nothing in the Law of Moses to allow such a contradiction, but yet it existed. Only the words of David would explain the priestly ministry of Jesus; “*The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool*” Psalms 1:1.

*“The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”* Psalms 1:4

**“...for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,”** Melchisedec was made a priest by God. He was not descended from a long lineage of priests as were the Levites. He had neither father nor mother who were priests, nor children who became priests after him, yet Melchisedec was a priest of God of an eternal order. Jesus was not descended from priests, yet it was very evident that He was a priest, just as Melchisedec had been to Abraham, “*a priest of the most high God*” Genesis 4:18.

Chapter Seven **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 7:1-28  
**Christ: The Better Hope**

**16 “Who is made, not after the Law of a carnal commandment...”** The Levitical priesthood came in with the Law of Moses, which the apostle Paul said “...*was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made*” Galatians 3:19. When Christ, our great high priest, offered His one sacrifice forever, the Old covenant was abolished, the New Covenant was established, and the priesthood was forever changed after the eternal order of Melchisedec.

**“...but after the power of an endless life.”** Any question about the eternal priesthood of Christ must be erased by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

**17 “For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.** It was God almighty who gave this testimony of Jesus Christ.

**18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before...”** There were two laws given; the first, “*The Law of God,*” which Paul said was “*spiritual*” Romans 7:14, and the second, “*The Law of Moses*” which Paul will call “*carnal ordinances*” Hebrews 9:10. The Law of God was “*established*” Romans 3:31 and the Law of Moses was “*disannulled*” and “*abolished*” Ephesians 2:15 when Christ died “*to take away our sin*” I John 3:5.

**“...for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.”** Paul said, “...*if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law*” Galatians 3:21. The Law of Moses was weak and unprofitable in that it could not give life to those who trusted in it, nor could it take away their sin.

**19 “For the Law made nothing perfect...”** This verse further defines the “*weakness and unprofitableness*” of the Law; it could not bring anything to completion. The Law, with its two sacrifices every day, with its Sabbaths, its new moons,

## Chapter Seven **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 7:1-28

### **Christ: The Better Hope**

holy days and seven feast-days every year; with the tens of thousands of lambs and bullocks sacrificed at Passover, could not purify the heart of the worshipers. Even those men and women of the Old Testament who were “*blameless*” according to the righteousness of the Law, had not been “purified” in their heart. Paul spoke of those mighty men and women of faith, whose exploits are recorded in the eleventh chapter of this epistle, saying, “*These all died in faith, not having received the promises...*” Hebrews 11:13. Paul brings the conclusion of the matter in the last two verses of the eleventh chapter; “*And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having **provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect***” Hebrews 11:39-40. The “*perfection*” which the Law could not give was a “*pure heart.*”

. “**...but the bringing in of a better hope did...**” A thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary, the Spirit of prophecy came upon David, and he wrote these words; “*The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool ... The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*” Psalms 110:1, 4. This was four hundred years before God gave the promise of a “*New Covenant*” Jeremiah 31:31-34 through the prophet Jeremiah. Jesus Christ, our “*great high priest*” at the right hand of the Father is our “*better hope.*” He is able to “*save them to the uttermost who come to God through Him*” Hebrews 7:25.

Notice the impact of this verse. “*The Law **made nothing perfect,***” but “*the **better hope did.***” Keep in mind that the word “*perfection*” in the scriptures means “*completion,*” which is proven by a “*pure heart.*” Jesus Christ brought the “*completion*” that neither Abraham nor any of the Old Testament saints could possess. He shed His own precious and holy blood to

## **Christ: The Better Hope**

purify our hearts. He “*loved us, and washed us from our sins with His own blood.*” Revelation 1:5

**“...by the which we draw nigh unto God.”** There is no way to God other than through Jesus Christ John 14:6. The apostle will show it is our heart, being “*purified by the blood of Jesus*” Hebrews 10:19-22, that gives us boldness to enter into the presence of God.

**20 “And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:”** The priests under the Old Covenant became priests for no other reason than they were born to the tribe of Levi. Nadab and Abihu were the eldest sons of the first high priest, Aaron, who was the brother of Moses. While they were “*priests,*” in line to be “*high priests,*” they were also pretenders, who offered “*strange fire*” on the altar of God and were destroyed by God because of their pretense Leviticus 10:1-2. The two sons of Eli were priests who were chosen to carry the Ark of the Covenant, but the scripture says they were “*sons of belial,*” which means “*worthless children,*” who “*knew not the LORD*” I Samuel 2:12. Even Samuel had two sons who were Levites and thus qualified to be priests, but were proven to be ungodly men when Samuel made them to be judges over Israel I Samuel 8:1-3. It was the High Priest of Israel and the chief priests of Jerusalem who plotted the death of Jesus. Ungodly men could be made priests by carnal ordinances, but only Christ Jesus was made a priest by the oath of God Psalms 110:4.

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

**22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.”** The birth of Jesus Christ guaranteed the end of Moses Law and the introduction of a better covenant, because, as

## **Christ: The Better Hope**

the angel announced to the shepherds in the field, “*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is CHRIST THE LORD*” Luke 2:11. It was “*Christ, the Lord*” that God swore to be a “*priest forever.*”

If this child in the manger at Bethlehem is “*Christ the Lord,*” He is also a “*priest of God,*” and destined to become our “*great high priest*” when He offers His sacrifice to God. It is the “*oath of God,*” and not “*earthly lineage*” that has made Him to be a priest. The apostle has already shown in verse 12 above, if the priesthood is changed, “*...there is made of necessity a change also of the Law.*” The baby Jesus is the guarantee that “*change*” is coming.

**23** “**And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death...**” This verse points out the obvious. The Levitical priesthood had many high priest because the priesthood of each High priest was limited by his mortality. Over and over, the priestly “*reign*” of one high priest would end with his death, and the “*reign*” of another would begin.

**24** “**But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.**” The resurrection of Jesus from the dead proves that He is “*The Christ, the Son of the living God*” Romans 1:4. In that Christ “*dieth no more*” Romans 6:9, His eternal priesthood “*continues forever.*”

**25** “**Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost...**” The word “*uttermost,*” translated from the Greek word “*pantelēs,*” means “*completion*” when used as a noun. It speaks of the “*full salvation*” that the Law could not provide, which Paul repeatedly speaks of as “*perfection (completion),*” which is proven by a “*pure heart.*”

**“...that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”** It was not only the length of

## **Christ: The Better Hope**

life that hindered the Old Testament priests; it was the “quality” of their life. “*Eternal life*” is more than “eternal existence.” It is the “*life*” that Christ is, which the Old Testament priests did not possess; therefore, they, with all their ceremonies, sacrifices, and ordinances, could not save a single soul.

**26** “**For such an high priest became us...**” Literally, “We needed such a high priest...” The apostle speaks of that “quality of life” that is eternal.

**“...who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;**

**27** “**Who needeth not daily, as those high priests...**” Again if the Old Covenant priest could have lived a thousand years to offer up daily sacrifices, not one soul would have been saved by those sacrifices. Not only was the blood of the sacrifices unholy, but the priest himself was also “unholy” by nature.

**“...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.”** The blood of animals was offered as a covering for sins. The high priest under the Law had to first offer a sacrifice to cover his own sins before he could offer for the sins of the congregation, and even then, his sacrifice could not “*take away sin.*”

**28** “**For the Law maketh men high priests which have infirmity...**” According to Strong’s Greek Dictionary, their “*infirmity*” was “*feebleness of body or mind.*” They were “mortal,” which simply means they would grow old and die, and their priesthood would pass to another. As mortals, they were no different than the ones they ministered to, which is given as the reason they could “*have compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way*” Hebrews 5:2. They were



Chapter Eight **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 8:1-13  
**Christ: Our Better Covenant**

## **“Christ: Our Better Covenant”**

**1** **“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest...”** The words *“such an high priest”* refer to verse 26 of the previous chapter where the apostle defines the kind of high priest we need. He begins this verse by saying, literally, *“This is the point I am making; We have such an high priest which is who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's.”*

**“...who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;”** This fulfills the words of David, *“The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thy enemies thy footstool”* Psalms 110. Our great high priest sits at the right hand of our Father and fulfills His ministry from the throne in heaven.

**2** **“A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle...”** The tabernacle that Moses made was only a carnal imitation of the spiritual pattern he saw in the mountain with God <sup>verse 5</sup>. It was a *“shadow”* of that which was to come.

**“...which the Lord pitched, and not man.**

**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 ministry of the high priest under the Levitical order was fulfilled in the sacrifices they offered continually. If Christ was in the world as a priest of God, He must also have a sacrifice to offer. The apostle will clearly explain His sacrifice in the tenth chapter of this epistle.

**4** **“For if he were on earth...”** These words indicate that Christ was *“a priest forever”* even before Jesus was born to

Chapter Eight **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 8:1-13  
**Christ: Our Better Covenant**

Mary. The “*oath*” that made Him a priest was revealed a thousand years before the incarnation.

**“...he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the Law:**

**5** **Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things...**” Those earthly priests had only ceremonial duties, offering daily sacrifices of animal blood, observing new moons and feast days and Sabbaths, which were only shadows of the heavenly things. Their entire service was in fleshly obedience to carnal ordinances. There was no life in it.

**“... 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.”** The tabernacle that Moses built with all its wonders and the temple that Solomon built in all its splendor were not worthy of comparison with the reality of things in heaven, which have neither fabric nor stones in them. The ministry of the Levitical priests was the same; not worthy of comparison to the priesthood of Christ. The eternal priesthood of Christ was before the Levitical priesthood; therefore Christ is the reality of which the Levitical priests were only a shadow.

**6** **“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry...”** The eternal priesthood of Christ was forever more excellent than that of Moses and Aaron. He obtained for Himself a “*more excellent ministry*” when He offered the perfect sacrifice, which was His own flesh and blood upon the cross.

**“...by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant...”** The “*better covenant*” was given to Abraham and “*his seed*” Galatians 3:16 four hundred and thirty years before the Law was given by Moses, but it had to be confirmed by the blood of Christ before it came into effect.

Chapter Eight **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 8:1-13  
**Christ: Our Better Covenant**

**“...which was established upon better promises.”** The “*better promises*” were first given when God “*swore by Himself*” to Abraham a covenant of blessings, concluding with “*...and in thy seed (Christ) shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*” When God sought to bestow this blessing upon the children of Israel, He said to them, “*If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation*” Exodus 19:5-6, they rejected both God and His promises when they refused to listen to His voice Exodus 20:19. The apostle Paul explains, “*The Law (of Moses) was added because of transgressions til the seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise was made* Galatians 3:19.

**7 “For if that first covenant had been faultless...”** First, the Law was “*weak.*” The apostle said, “*For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, CONDEMNED sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*” Romans 8:3-4. God sent Christ into the world to “*do*” what the Law could not do; He “*condemned sin in the flesh.*”

The Greek word “*katakrimō*,” which was translated “*condemned,*” literally means “*to try, condemn, and punish.*” The Law could destroy the sinner, but it could not destroy the sin that was in the sinner. This is what Christ came to do through His death on the cross. “*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that (in order that) the body of sin might be destroyed...*” Romans 6:6.

**Second,** the Law could not give life to those who trusted in it. “*...for if there had been a law given which could have given*

Chapter Eight **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 8:1-13  
**Christ: Our Better Covenant**

*life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law”* Galatians 3:21. These are only two of the many faults found in the Law of Moses.

**“...then should no place have been sought for the second.**

**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:”**

The Law of Moses was in force for about fifteen hundred years. It was about six hundred years before Christ that God gave the promise of a “*New Covenant*” through the Prophet Jeremiah Jeremiah 31:31-34. The Old Covenant was “*term limited*” in the day it was given. It would be in force “*till the seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise was made*” Galatians 3:19.

**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...”** Though it may seem confusing to some, this is not a reference to the Law of Moses. The covenant God made with the fathers is revealed in His words to them in Exodus 19: 5-6: “*If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.*”

Three days later, God spoke His law to them audibly, and when they refused to hear it, He wrote it upon two tables of stone for Moses to deliver to them. It was because of their transgression of this covenant of blessing that God commanded Moses to give them a covenant filled with curses, which we call “*The Law of Moses.*”

**“...because they continued not in my covenant...”** It was the covenant of blessing they refused to continue in.

## **Christ: Our Better Covenant**

**“...and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.”** The Law of Moses was not intended to bless them, but to punish them for their transgression, thus God *“regarded them not.”*

**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...”**

The *“laws”* that God spoke from Mount Sinai to the children of Israel, and later wrote on tables of stone, are the same laws that He has written in the *“new heart”* <sup>Ezekiel 36:26</sup> of the children of God. This is the *“New Covenant of grace,”* which is given to those who trust in Christ.

**“...and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:**

**11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord...”** Due to the fact that God’s laws are written in the heart of the children of God, no one needs to tell them what is sin and what is not sin. It is not in their new heart to continue in sin.

**“...for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.”**

The apostle John says, *“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments”* <sup>1 John 2:3</sup>. We *“keep His commandments”* not because they are *“written in stone,”* but because they are written in our heart. The apostle continues to say, *“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him”* <sup>1 John 2:4</sup>.

**12 “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness...”**

This speaks of forgiveness and pardon of *“sins that are past”* <sup>Romans 3:25</sup>.

**“...and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”** The apostle explains this in the tenth chapter of this epistle; *“But in those sacrifices (which were offered under the*

Chapter Eight **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 8:1-13  
**Christ: Our Better Covenant**

Law) *there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*” Hebrews 10:3-4. Due to the fact that it is impossible for the blood of animals to “*take away sins*,” the worshipers continued in sin, and there was “...*a remembrance again made of sins every year.*” Under the law, it was on the “*Day of Atonement*” that the high priest had to enter behind the veil into the “*holiest of all*” with the blood of bulls and goats, which could never “*take away sins*”, thus another “*remembrance*” followed year after year. Christ shed His precious blood as “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*” His blood was not that of a “*bull*” or a “*goat*,” as on the Day of Atonement. Christ was offered as our “*Pass-over Lamb*” 1 Corinthians 5:7. He is “*The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” John 1:29. When sin is “*taken away*,” there is no need for another sin offering, and thus no more remembrance of sin.

**13** “**In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old.**” It was six hundred years before Jesus was born to Mary that God first mentioned a “*New Covenant.*” At that moment, the Law of Moses became the “*Old Covenant,*” and the people labored under a covenant which was decaying and soon to vanish away.

**“Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”**

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

## **“Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice”**

The apostle Paul, whom most scholars believe wrote this epistle, considered the Law of Moses to be a curse upon the people Galatians 3:10. He saw the purpose of Christ was to redeem those who were under the Law Galatians 4:5 just as He also died on the cross to redeem the world from sin. As beautiful and splendid as the service of the Law was, there was nothing in it but “*dead works*,” which could do nothing for the congregation or even for those priests who did the service.

**1** **“Then verily...”** The Greek word “*men*,” which is translated “*verily*,” indicates a concession, usually followed by a “*contrasted clause*” (see Strong’s #3303).

**“...the first covenant...”** In verse 8 of the previous chapter, Paul reminds us of God’s promise of a “*New Covenant*” Jeremiah 31:31, and concludes in verse 13, “*In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old.*” The term “*first covenant*” refers to the Law of Moses, which is “*the Old Covenant.*”

**“...had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.”** These are the “*contrasting clauses*” which are indicated by the use of the Greek word for “*verily*.” The contrast is between the use of the words “*divine service*” and “*a worldly sanctuary*,” the one being “*divine*,” and the other “*worldly*.” The Law of Moses was a contradiction in itself. It was a law of blessings and curses. It prescribed a lifestyle, but it could not give “*life*.” The apostle Paul, speaking of the origin and purpose of the Law of Moses, said “*...it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made...*” Galatians 3:19.

The “*ordinances of divine service*” must speak of the daily ministry of those priests who were appointed to serve in the tabernacle. Their service consisted in offering two lambs every

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

day, one in the morning, and the other in the evening. There was a certain ritual the priests were given to follow, which included what Paul called the “*divers washings and carnal ordinances*” <sup>verse 10</sup>. They had to wash their hands and feet every time they approached the brazen altar of sacrifice or entered the tabernacle. They could not be defiled by even the dust of the earth, but they had nothing with which to cleanse the sin from their hearts. Their ministry, which continued from generation to generation for almost fifteen hundred years, was an exercise in futility due to the fact that the blood of the animals which they sacrificed every day could not take away sin. The apostle Paul spoke of the futility of this ministry when he said, “...*every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins*” Hebrews 10:11. Sadly, this is what was called “*divine service.*”

The “*worldly sanctuary*” refers to the tent tabernacle, which was called “*the tabernacle of the congregation.*” It was called a “*worldly sanctuary*” because it was built by the hands of corruptible men of tangible materials that would eventually decay and fade away. It was only an earthly imitation of a heavenly reality; a “*shadow*” of something wonderful yet to come. It was also a “*worldly sanctuary*” because its ministers, the priests, including the high priest, were all sinners who had to offer sacrifice for their own sins before they could offer for the sins of the people <sup>verse 7</sup>.

**2 “For there was a tabernacle made; the first...”** These words reveal there were actually two “*tabernacles*” which were under the cover of a tent made of goat and badger skins.

**“...wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.”** This “*first tabernacle*” is more commonly called “*the holy place,*” where

## **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

the priests performed their daily ministry, which was to offer the two lambs daily, to keep the candlesticks burning to provide light, to provide a fresh supply of bread on the “*table of shewbread*” for every Sabbath, and to sprinkle incense on the golden altar. The congregation was forbidden to enter the “*holy place,*” which was separated from the outer court by a “*veil,*” and from the holiest of all by a “*second veil.*”

**3** “**And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;**” This “*second tabernacle*” was actually an area partitioned off from the holy place by a second veil. The “*veil*” served as a separation between the Levitical priests and the place where God promised to meet with the high priest one day every year on the Day of Atonement.

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

**5** **And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.”** Both of these tabernacles, the “*holy place,*” and the “*holiest of all,*” were a single edifice built of shittim wood, and separated by a veil. The dimensions of the wooden structure was about 45 feet long, 13½ feet wide, and 18 feet high. The interior walls were overlaid with sheets of pure gold. It took about six months to prepare the materials, instruments, and vessels for the tabernacle, but it was erected for the first time in one day, on the first day of the first month of the second year from their departure from Egypt. The record of that great event is given as follows: “*And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars. And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of*

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

*the tent above upon it; as the LORD commanded Moses”* Exodus 40:18-19.

In the Hebrew language used in the book of Exodus, there were actually two different words which were translated “*tabernacle*;” one was the Hebrew word for “*tent*,” and the other was the word for “*residence*,” which spoke of the wooden structure that was under the tent. Notice, the “*tent*” was spread abroad over the “*tabernacle*,” which was called in the Hebrew tongue, “*the residence*.” What happened next would have been wonderful to see, for the scripture said, “*So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle* (the residence). *And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle”* Exodus 40:33-35.

There are two distinctions made in these verses, first between “*the tent*” and “*the tabernacle* (the residence).” The second is between “*the cloud*” and “*the glory of the LORD*.” Very often people believe these are the same, but the scripture draws a distinction. The “*cloud*” was on the tent, which in verse one was called “*a worldly sanctuary*,” but “*the glory of the LORD*” was in the “*tabernacle*,” which was “*the residence*,” and later called “*the house of God*.” The “*cloud on the tent*” was not an invitation; it was rather a “*do not enter*” sign. Not even Moses could enter when the cloud was on the tent, because “*the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle*.”

**6** “**Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.**” The phrase “*The priests went always into the first tabernacle...*” is set in contrast to the second tabernacle, which was visited but once a year by the high priest. It

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

was in this “*first tabernacle*” they accomplished the “*divine service*” verse 1.

**7** “**But into the second went the high priest alone once every year...**” It was on the “*Day of Atonement*” that the high priest entered the holiest of all with the blood of a goat and a bullock. It was the one day in a year that one man, the high priest, could enter behind the veil into the presence of God.

**“...not without blood, which he offered for himself...”** Even the High Priest, who went alone into the holiest place once a year was a sinner by nature. The blood of the goat and bullock which he sprinkled was for himself as well as for the congregation. This was the offering the apostle referred to when he said, “*For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*” Hebrews 10:4.

**“...and for the errors of the people:”** The daily sacrifices were for the sins of the people. This sacrifice was said to be offered “*for the errors (omissions) of the people.*” This covered every shortcoming which may have been missed in the administration of the daily sacrifices.

**8** “**The Holy Ghost this signifying...**” It was God who gave Moses the pattern for the tabernacle. It was not designed to bring the congregation into the presence of God, but to separate them from the presence of God. Everything about the Law of Moses worked toward that same end, not to “*reveal God,*” but to “*conceal God*” from the sight of this rebellious people who had not only refused to hear God’s voice at Sinai, but also had built and worshiped a golden calf.

There were actually two veils separating between the children of Israel and the presence of God. The Law of Moses would keep the people from mingling with the heathen nations around them, but it would also keep them from the presence of

## Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28 **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

God. Paul described this separation to the Galatians; “*But before faith came, we were **kept** under the Law, **shut up** unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed*” Galatians 3:23. This is prison language; “...*kept*” and “*shut up.*” All these things were signified by the Holy Ghost...

**“...that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:”**

The congregation of Israel could not enter the presence of God as long as the tabernacle (*the worldly sanctuary*) remained. It should be remembered that the tent tabernacle was replaced with a temple made of stone by King Solomon, which was later destroyed by Babylon, and replaced by the second temple, which was destroyed by Titus of the Romans in 70 A.D. At no time was the way into the holiest of all “*made manifest*” to the children of Israel in these edifices. They were designed to conceal the presence of God rather than to reveal. In reality, for most of the years either of the two temples existed, the glory of God was not present behind the veil because of the abominations committed in the temple Ezekiel 8:6.

The “*first tabernacle*” was representative of the Law of Moses. It consisted of “*carnal ordinances*” <sup>verse 10</sup> which were fulfilled in a “*worldly sanctuary*” <sup>verse 1</sup>, and served to keep the congregation separate from the presence of God. The Law of Moses had to be abolished before the people could see the way to God. This was accomplished when Christ “*nailed it to His CROSS*” Colossians 2:14.

When Jesus died on the cross, it signified the end of the Law of Moses. Matthew’s gospel gives this record; “*Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, **yielded up the ghost.** And, behold, **the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom;** and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent*” Matthew 27:50:51. Mark gave this confirmation, “*And Jesus cried*

## Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28 **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

*with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom*” Mark 15:37-38. The apostle John reveals what Jesus said when He “*cried with a loud voice*” just before He died. “*When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost*” John 19:30.

These three records taken together reveal that Jesus “*cried with a loud voice*” saying “*It is finished,*” and bowed His head and died. At that very moment, the veil in the temple was “*rent in twain from the top to the bottom.*” In the moment Christ died, the “*worldly sanctuary (the Law of Moses)*” was destroyed, which was signified by the rending of the veil in the temple.

When Jesus Christ cried “*It is finished,*” it signified the works of salvation were finished. Everything the prophets had prophesied of the sufferings of Christ were accomplished. Jesus, who is “*the Christ,*” had “*finished the transgression, and made an end of sins*” Daniel 9:24-25. We were “*reconciled by His death*” Romans 5:10, and “*everlasting righteousness*” became the possession of everyone who would “*believe the truth*” John 8:32 and “*trust in Christ*” Ephesians 1:12 who “*finished the work*” on the cross.

When Moses “*finished the work*” Exodus 40:33 the glory of God entered the tabernacle to dwell “*behind the veil,*” hidden from the view of man. The congregation could see “*the cloud*” on the tent, but they could not see “*the glory*” in the tabernacle. When Jesus Christ “*finished the work,*” the way was made for “*whosoever will*” to enter the presence of God almighty. Just fifty days later on the Day of Pentecost God “*poured out of His Spirit*” upon the hundred and twenty whose hearts had been purified by the precious and holy blood of Jesus Christ.

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

Jesus had said, *“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God”* Matthew 5:8.

The record of the Day of Pentecost says, *“There **appeared unto them** cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them”* Acts 2:3. Their hearts were pure, and they could *“see God.”* They were filled with the Spirit of God, which was evident as they *“began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance”* Acts 2:4. Three thousand bystanders were saved that day because of the things they saw and heard when the Holy Ghost came to dwell in His people.

The way is open for the people to come to God through Jesus Christ. The New Covenant does not conceal God as did the Law of Moses, but God is revealed to the people in His Son. The apostle Paul wrote, *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh”* Hebrews 10:19-20. God still dwells *“behind the veil,”* which is the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Those who come to God can come freely, and without fear, but they must come through the body and blood of Jesus Christ, who *“loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood”* Revelation 1:5.

**9 “Which was a figure for the time then present...”**  
*“While the first tabernacle was yet standing”* verse 8, it served as a “figure (similitude)” of something better to come. It should be noticed, it was *“for the time then present.”* It has no meaning whatsoever for us, whether Jew or Gentile, who are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle will continue in this same verse to show clearly that the sacrifices and gifts offered in the tabernacle could do absolutely nothing for even the priests who daily offered them.

## **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

**“...in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices...”** This was the blood of animals and the incense of sweet odors.

**“...that could not make him that did the service perfect...”** Even the priests who offered the sacrifices found no relief from the sin in their heart, because the blood of animals could not *“take away sins”* Hebrews 10:4. The apostle will use the words *“perfected forever”* Hebrews 10:14, which means *“to complete,”* to describe the complete work of sanctification provided by the blood of Christ.

**“...as pertaining to the conscience;”** The apostle uses the word *“conscience”* to describe the *“inner man.”* Here he is speaking of the innermost thoughts and feelings of fallen man. There were many dedicated priests who *“walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless”* Luke 1:5-6. Among these were the parents of John the Baptist, Zacharias and Elizabeth, who were *“perfect”* as pertaining to the Law of Moses, but not *“as pertaining to the conscience.”* The blood of animals could not purify their hearts from the presence of sin. It was only their obedience to the *“carnal ordinances”* of the Law that kept them safe from the curses of the Law itself.

**10 “Which stood only in meats and drinks...”** The only standing either the people or their priests had before God was in continual obedience to the commands and ordinances of the Law.

**“...and divers washings, and carnal ordinances...”** The priest must continually be washing their bodies with pure water and ceremonially purifying themselves with the sprinkling of animal blood, which things could never purify their hearts from the presence of sin. These were called *“carnal ordinances”* because they served only to *“purify the flesh”* Hebrews 9:13.

**“...imposed on them ...”** Notice that *“carnal ordinances”* were *“imposed on them.”* They were a burden to be borne, and

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

part of their punishment for rejecting the voice of God when He spoke to them at Mount Sinai.

**“...until the time of reformation.”** The Law of Moses had its beginning in the same day the children of Israel refused to hear the voice of God at Mount Sinai Exodus 20:19. Its end was already determined when it began; it would serve only *“till the seed should come to whom the promise was made”* Galatians 3:19. According to the Apostle Paul, that *“seed”* was Christ Galatians 3:16. The birth of Jesus Christ gave a *“surety of a better covenant”* Hebrews 7:22. His death on the cross abolished the Old Covenant, and established the new. The scripture says, *“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself”* II Corinthians 5:19. This speaks of Christ’s death on the cross, which brought the entire world to *“the time of reformation.”*

**11 “But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come...”** When Christ came into the world, the end of the Law of Moses was guaranteed. He was a *“priest forever”* by the oath of God, but the Law of Moses rejected His priesthood. This conflict is what brought them to *“the time of reformation.”*

**“...by a greater and more perfect tabernacle...”** Christ Himself is the *“Tabernacle of God,”* the *“holiest of all”* into which we may enter by His precious blood.

**“...not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;”** The Temple was still standing in Jerusalem and the daily ministry of the priests continued when the apostle wrote this epistle.

**12 “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood...”** He is *“the Lamb of God,”* which *“taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29. Contrary to the Law of Moses, His blood was the blood of the *“Lamb of God,”* and not that

## **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

of “*a goat and a bullock*” which was required of the high priest in order to enter into the “*holiest of all.*”

**“...he entered in once into the holy place...”** Christ entered into heaven itself and appeared in the presence of God with His own blood, which He shed for us verse 24.

**“...having obtained eternal redemption for us.”** Herein is proof that when Christ died, the “*worldly sanctuary*” was destroyed, and the Law of Moses was abolished Ephesians 2:15. The veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom, exposing to public view that the way to God was now open “*through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*” Romans 3:24.

It is obvious that Christ, our great high priest, offered the sacrifice of His own body and blood during Passover. Under the Law of Moses, the high priest could enter behind the veil into the “*holiest of all*” only on the Day of Atonement, which was exactly six months after the Day of Passover. The high priest entered with the blood of a goat and a bullock, which he sprinkled on the mercy seat, but Jesus entered into heaven itself Hebrews 9:24 with His own blood. His blood was the blood of “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” John 1:29. He was our “*Passover Lamb*” I Corinthians 5:7, and the fact that He “*obtained eternal redemption for us*” without the blood of a goat or bullock, and not on the Day of Atonement is proof enough the Old covenant passed away, and the New Covenant was established by the precious and holy blood of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. He is our Passover Lamb Matthew 26:28.

**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:”** A “*hypothetical*” is offered in this verse; **“IF the blood of animals and the ashes of an heifer could cer-**

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

*emonially purify the outward parts of man....*” Cleansing under the Law was only a ceremony, which could do absolutely nothing for the person other than wash the dirt off their body.

**14** “**How much more shall the blood of Christ...**” Only the blood of Christ can purify the heart of a person.

**“...who through the eternal Spirit...”** Christ is “*the Word*” who was “*in the beginning with God,*” and “*was God.*” He is “*the eternal Spirit of Christ,*” who was “*made flesh*” John 1:14 in the womb of a virgin. When He was born of Mary, He was “*the only begotten Son of God*” John 3:16, whom God gave to “*wash us from our sins in His own blood*” Revelation 1:5. The flesh body Jesus is the sacrifice which was offered at Calvary, but Christ “*the eternal Spirit*” is the great high priest who offered the sacrifice.

**“...offered himself ...”** Jesus Christ was both the sacrifice, and the great high priest who offered the sacrifice. He “*put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*” verse 26.

**“...without spot to God...”** There was no sin in the sacrifice nor in the high priest who offered the sacrifice.

**“...purge your conscience...”** The apostle uses the word “*conscience*” to describe the “*inner man.*” This is speaking of your innermost thoughts and feelings. The Law could never purify the heart of a person.

The blood of Christ in this verse answers to the blood of those sacrifices in verse nine that “*...could not make him that did the service perfect (complete), as pertaining to the conscience.*” The blood of Christ washes the heart and nature of a believer from all sin, and makes them pure. This is what the apostle calls “*perfected forever (complete)*” in Hebrews 10:14.

**“...from dead works...”** It is in this matter of “*dead works*” that we must pause for a moment. For those of us who were

## **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

“*gentiles*” and “*sinner*,” our “*dead works*” were “*works of sin*.” For the Hebrew, however, it was not so. Were they sinners also? Yes, they were, but the “*dead works*” the apostle refers to in this epistle to the Hebrews (Jews) are the “*works*” of the Law of Moses. He refers to the keeping of new moons, feast days, holy days, and Sabbaths as “*dead works*.” The keeping of six hundred and thirteen carnal commandments and ordinances that made up the Law of Moses were nothing more than “*dead works*.” This was the “*worldly sanctuary*” that had to be destroyed before the people could come to God. The apostle Paul said, “*Therefore by the deeds (works) of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight*” Romans 3:20.

A “*dead work*” includes any and every ordinance or ceremony that a man can do and be no better for the doing of it. They are weak and futile, but they gain such dominance over the consciences of those who are under them that they live in continual fear of failing to obey the least of them. Dead works are just as damning to the people who trust in them as sin is to the unbeliever. Only the blood of Christ can purify the heart of a believer from sin; it takes the same work of the precious blood of Christ to deliver a heart from the darkness of religion, and make it free from the Law to “*serve God in newness of Spirit, and not in oldness of letter*” Romans 7:6.

**“...to serve the living God?”** It is impossible to please God through obedience to carnal ordinances.

**15 “And for this cause...”** The purpose for which Christ became a man was to die on the cross. His purpose through His death on the cross was to redeem us from both sin Titus 2:14 and the Law Galatians 4:5, and purify our hearts Acts 15:8-9 from both sin and dead works. In this verse we see that His “*cause*” is explained in the previous verse, which is to purify the conscience of the people from “*dead works*” to “*serve the living*

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

God. Even though the “*Law of Moses*” was nailed to the cross with Christ Colossians 2:14 and abolished in His death Ephesians 2:15, the consciences of the people were still slaves to the deeds of the Law until they were “*purged*” by the blood of Christ.

**“...he is the mediator of the new testament...”** Moses was the “*mediator*” of the Old Covenant, which had no remedy for the sin in the heart and nature of man. This means, however, that Moses stood between God and man with his Law that meted death to everyone who disobeyed it. Jesus is the mediator of the New Covenant, which is a covenant of life and blessing. He alone is “*The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*” He is the only “*way to God.*” No one comes to God except through Him John 14:6. He alone is “*the truth*”; it is He who “*makes the believer free*” and they are “*free indeed*” from sin John 8:31-36. He alone is “*the life*;” and He alone gives life to those who trust in Him. He *is* our life Colossians 3:4.

**“...that by means of death...”** It was through the “*death of Christ*” that sin Romans 6:6 and Satan Hebrews 2:14 were destroyed for the believer. It is also through His death alone that we are reconciled to God Romans 5:10.

**“...for the redemption (ransom in full) of the transgressions (violations) that were under the first testament...”** The “*first testament (the Law of Moses)*” was an oppressive covenant that was imposed upon the children of Israel when they refused to hear the voice of God at Sinai. Paul calls it both “*the ministration of death*” II Corinthians 3:7” and “*the ministration of condemnation*” II Corinthians 3:9. The first man to die without mercy Hebrews 10:28 for violating the Law of Moses was condemned to death for “*gathering sticks on the Sabbath*” Numbers 15:32-36. The death of Christ delivered millions of souls who lived their entire lives in fear under the oppression of that “*first testament,*” which was abolished at the cross Hebrews 2:14-15.

## **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

**“...they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.”** The “*promise*” is that which was given to Abraham and his seed <sup>Genesis 22:16-18</sup> over four hundred years before the Law of Moses was added.

**16 “For where a testament is...”** This speaks of the covenant which God gave to Abraham, which Paul previously spoke of in chapter six, verses 13-19. It is extremely important to understand that God did not make this covenant “*with*” Abraham. When giving the covenant of promise to Abraham, God said, **“By myself have I s worn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 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; And *in thy seed* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because *thou hast obeyed my voice*”** <sup>Genesis 22:16-18.</sup>

When God said, “*By myself have I sworn,*” He “*covenanted with Himself*” to bless Abraham and his seed, to multiply them, to give them victory over their enemies, and to make them a blessing to every nation on earth. In swearing by Himself, God has also given Himself as the guarantee the promise will be fulfilled. Abraham had already “*obeyed the voice of God*” before God swore by Himself; there was nothing more for Abraham to do but wait for the promise to be fulfilled, because it was both steadfast and sure.

Three days before God spoke to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai, He gave to them a covenant promise through Moses, saying, **“*If ye will obey my voice indeed...*”** (Abraham had obeyed the voice of God before the covenant was given. The promise is steadfast and sure to his descendants if they will obey His voice) **“...and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a**

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

*peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation”* Exodus 19:5-6.

When the children of Israel refused to hear the voice of God at Mount Sinai, it became painfully obvious that they were not the “seed” through whom God could fulfill His promise to Abraham. There was no other seed, however, and the terms of the covenant which God “swore by Himself” to Abraham required God to give Himself as the collateral of the promise. This would be fulfilled in His only begotten Son.

**“...there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.”** The Greek word “*diatithemai*,” which was translated as “testator” in this verse actually means “to put apart.” Just as every covenant under the Old Testament Law had to be confirmed by the death of a sacrifice victim, so must the covenant promise to Abraham be confirmed in the same way. The “put apart” in this verse speaks of the sacrifice victim which was “put apart” to confirm the covenant, which was Christ. The apostle Paul explains this clearly in his epistle to the Galatians:

*“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”* Galatians 3:16

Paul clearly establishes in this verse that the seed of Abraham, in whom “all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,” is Christ.

*“And this I say, that the covenant, that was **confirmed before of God in Christ**, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.”* Galatians 3:17

In this verse, he shows that Christ is not only “the seed” of promise, but He is also “the sacrifice victim” which would be

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

offered to confirm the covenant, and bring it into effect. The Law of Moses was *“added because of transgressions”* at Sinai some 430 years later, and would continue *“till the seed should come to whom the promise was made”* Galatians 3:19. When Christ died to *“confirm the covenant”* Daniel 9:27 KJV which God gave to Abraham, the Law of Moses was fulfilled and finished, and the *“covenant promises”* to Abraham became our *“New Covenant.”*

**17 “For a testament is of force after men are dead...”** The phrase, *“after men are dead”* was translated from two Greek words, which mean *“over a dead body”* (a corpse). There is no Greek word for *“men”* in this verse. The covenant promises to Abraham came into effect when the *“sacrifice victim,”* which God had *“put apart,”* was offered. *“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”* Romans 8:32

**“...otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.”** If Christ had not died for us, God could not have kept His promise to Abraham.

**18 “Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.”** The apostle uses a double negative to say, *“Not even the first testament was dedicated without blood,”* indicating that the New Covenant must also be dedicated with blood. At the *“last supper,”* the day before Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He took the Passover cup with His disciples and said, *“This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins”* Matthew 26:28.

**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,**

## **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

**20** **Saying, This is the blood of the testament** (the Old Covenant, the Law of Moses) **which God hath enjoined unto you.**

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

**22** **And almost all things are by the Law purged with blood...** Purification under the Law of Moses was only outward and symbolic through the sprinkling of blood mixed with water.

**“... and without shedding of blood is no remission.”** It must be understood that there was no *“remission of sin”* by the shedding of animal blood, but only a *“covering for sins”* for a season. We should also understand the meaning of the Greek word *“aphesis,”* which was translated as *“remission.”*

*“Aphesis: From G859; freedom; (figuratively) pardon”*  
*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance and Greek Lexicon*

This same Greek word was translated as *“deliverance, forgiveness, liberty, and remission,”* and in every place it is used it means *“freedom.”* Christ shed His holy blood to *“cleanse us from all sin”* 1 John 1:7, and thus *“make us free from sin”* Romans 6:7, 18, 22.

**23** **“It was therefore necessary that the patterns...”** The Greek word that was translated *“patterns”* is *“hupodeigma,”* which means *“an exhibit for imitation.”* Both the tabernacle and the vessels of ministry mentioned in verse 21 were only *“imitations”* or *“patterns”* of things in heaven, which Moses saw while in the mountain with God Hebrews 8:5.

**“... of things in the heavens should be purified with these...”** Animal blood is sufficient to symbolically purify the earthly *“symbols”* of things in heaven.

## **Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

**“...but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.”** Only the blood of the Son of God could purify the heavenly things themselves. This seems at first to be a mystery, that the *“heavenly things”* should have need of purification. The reality is that when the serpent beguiled Eve, and Adam ate the forbidden fruit, not only earth was defiled by sin, but heaven itself. In Revelation 12:7-11 a war in heaven is described, in which Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels. Neither prevailed until Christ shed His precious blood on the cross, at which time *“...the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him”* Revelation 12:9.

The apostle records the *“reason”* for the great victory in heaven over the dragon; *“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb...”* Revelation 12:11. There was great joy and rejoicing in heaven <sup>verse 12</sup> because the dragon and all his angels were cast out, thus heaven itself and all heavenly things were purified by the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb of God.

Consider the fact that man was made in the image and likeness of God. He breathed the breath of God and lived in perfect harmony with God until sin entered his heart and nature through the disobedience of Adam. Sin polluted the heart of man, and could not be cleansed or taken away by the blood of animals. Perhaps man himself was a *“heavenly thing”* that could only be purified by a *“better sacrifice.”*

**24** **“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the true...”** *“Holy places made with hands”* were only carnal imitations of things in heaven.

**“...but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:”** The true *“holiest place”* is in the presence of

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

God Himself. It is there Christ appeared with His own blood to take away the sin of as many as believe and trust in Him.

**25** “Nor yet that he should offer himself often as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;” Due to the fact that Christ was not an earthly priest ministering in a worldly sanctuary to offer the blood of mere animals that could never take away sin, He needed to offer only one sacrifice, which He did on the cross. It was His own precious and holy blood that He presented in the presence of God for us who would believe. His one offering is sufficient for everyone who will believe and trust in Him.

**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.” Why did Christ “appear?” The apostle John says, “*And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins*” I John 3:5. Paul tells us in this verse, “*He appeared to put away sin,*” and He did it “*by the sacrifice of Himself.*” It is very important that we understand why Christ came into the world. He came “*to make an end of sins*” Daniel 9:24-25.

**27** “And as it is appointed unto men once to die...” Death is appointed to every living person with the exception of those who are “*alive and remain*” I Thessalonians 4:15 when Christ returns.

“**...but after this the judgment:**” The apostle John said, “*I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God...*” Revelation 20:12. This is the great white throne judgment. The apostle Paul said, “*We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...*” II Corinthians 5:10. Paul continued in the next verse, “*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...*” II Corinthians 5:11. John heard the cries of those who said to the rocks and mountains, “*Fall on us, and hide us from the*

Chapter Nine **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 9:1-28  
**Christ: Our Perfect Sacrifice**

*face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb”* Revelation 6:16. Judgment will be a fearful thing for those who die in their sins. Jesus said to those Jews who rejected Him as their Messiah, *“if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins”* John 8:24.

**28** **“So Christ was once offered...”** The word “so” (in this way) connects this verse with the preceding verse; **“As it is appointed unto men once to die...so (in this way) Christ was once offered...”** Death entered into the world with sin Romans 5:12, and **“the wages of sin is death”** Romans 6:23. For this cause, God chose to redeem sinful man **“through death,”** that is, the death of His Son, Jesus Christ. He died once, but He died for every person. Those who believe and trust in Him have died with Him Romans 6:6.

**“...to bear the sins of many...”** He bore the sins of as many as will trust in Him. Peter says, **“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness...”** 1 Peter 2:24.

**“...and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”** Although it is clear in the scripture that Jesus Christ shall return in like manner as he ascended, the second coming of Christ is not the message of this verse. Peter said to those who gathered after the lame man was healed at the gate called “Beautiful”, **“Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.”** Acts 3:26. The same Christ who died **“to put away sin,”** comes **“without sin”** to live in those who believe upon him.

Chapter Ten **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 10:1-39  
**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

## **“Christ: Our New and Living Way”**

**1** **“For the Law having a shadow of good things to come...”** The sacrificial law in the Old Covenant was a foreshadow of Christ in the New Covenant.

**“...and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually...”** These sacrifices were offered for fifteen hundred years, yet they did nothing for the one who offered them.

**“...make the comers thereunto perfect.”** The “*comers*” in this verse are the “*worshippers*” in the next verse. These are the ones who brought the sacrifice to be offered by the priests. These were sacrifices that could not take away sin or purify the heart of the people. The words “*make ...perfect*” mean “*to complete*.” The message of “*completion*,” or “*perfection*,” in Hebrews reveals the “*weakness*” of the Law is that it can never take sin out of the heart of a person. Therefore it could never make anyone “*complete*.”

**2** **“For then would they not have ceased to be offered...”** The fact that daily sacrifices were offered for sin continually for many centuries is proof the Law was not the answer for sin.

**“...because that the worshippers once purged...”** If there had ever been a sacrifice offered that could take away sin and purify the heart of man, there would have been no need for another sacrifice to be offered.

**“...should have had no more conscience of sins.”** When the heart is pure, there is no more struggle with sin, because there is no more sin. **“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?*”** Hebrews 9:14. It is obvious that if the blood of animals

## **Christ: Our New and Living Way**

could have taken away sin, the one who brought the sacrifice would have no need to bring another, because his heart would be pure, with *“no more conscience of sins.”*

**3** **“But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.”** The *“remembrance again of sins”* was made every year on the *“Day of Atonement.”* It was a day in which the entire congregation of Israel was commanded to *“afflict their souls”* Leviticus 23:27 while the high priest entered behind the veil into the *“holiest of all”* to sprinkle the blood of a goat and a bullock. *“Atonement”* was made for sin, which according to the meaning of the word in the Old Testament, meant the sins of the people were covered for another year. Sin was not *“taken away,”* however, and the people would *“continue in sin,”* which was their nature to do. The blood of another goat and another bullock would have to be sprinkled on the mercy seat by another high priest, an endless cycle of ceremonies and ordinances that could not profit those who were occupied in them Hebrews 13:9.

**4** **“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”** This verse explains the purpose of the incarnation of Christ better than any other. The eternal Christ became a man to have a body of flesh and blood to offer for the sin of the world. His blood alone will *“purify the hearts”* of those who come to God through Him. This is what *“the blood of bulls and goats”* could never do. Christ is the one and only *“Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.”*

**5** **“Wherefore when he cometh into the world...”** This speaks of the night Jesus was born to Mary in Bethlehem, and placed in a manger. The Angel told the shepherds in the field, *“unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord”* Luke 2:11.

Chapter Ten **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 10:1-39  
**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

**“...he saith...”** It is Christ who “*came into the world.*” The baby Jesus was “*born of Mary,*” and was “*Christ incarnate,*” the Son of God. The words in the rest of this verse and in the next two verses were spoken by the eternal Spirit of Christ when He came into the world.

**“...Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:** In the thousands of years since the entrance of sin there had never been a sacrifice or offering that could “*take away sin.*” This is why the eternal Christ became a man. He would offer one sacrifice forever to take away sin. He would “be” that sacrifice.

**6 “In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.”** The prophet Isaiah saw God’s displeasure with burnt offerings and sacrifices.

*“Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.”* Isaiah 1:13-15

*“He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.*

Isaiah 66:3

**7 “Then said I (The eternal Christ), Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,)...”** The coming of Christ is written throughout the writings of Moses, beginning with the promise of the “*seed of the woman*” who would

**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

*“bruise the head of the serpent”* Genesis 3:15. His *“coming”* as a lamb is foreseen in the words of Abraham; *“God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering”* Genesis 22:8, and *“In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen”* Genesis 22:14. There are numerous other places *“in the volume of the book”* that His coming is spoken of.

**“...to do thy will, O God.”** It was the will of God that Christ, by whom God had created all things, should become a man to *“destroy the works of the devil”* I John 3:8. In doing so, He would destroy both sin Romans 6:6 and the devil Hebrews 2:14 through the sacrifice of Himself.

**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...”** The *“first”* speaks of the sacrifices and offerings which were offered under the Law.

**“...that he may establish the second.”** Christ fulfilled the Law and accomplished those things the Law could not do when He offered His body and blood as a sacrifice for sin on the cross at Calvary. It is there He fulfilled His own words, *“I come to do thy will O God.”*

**10 “By the which will...”** By the sacrifice of His body and blood;

**“...we are sanctified...”** Our hearts are purified;

**“...through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”** Notice His sacrifice was *“once for all.”* The blood of Jesus Christ is sufficient to do what the blood of animals could never do; He *“washed us from our sins in His own blood”* Revelations 1:5, and *“we are sanctified.”* Paul did not say (κλυ) we are “being sanctified” as some modern bibles say. Sanctification

Chapter Ten **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 10:1-39  
**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

is not, and cannot be, “a process.” Paul will say in the concluding chapter of this epistle, “*Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate*” Hebrews 13:12. The purpose of His sufferings was to “*sanctify the people with His own blood.*” If Christ suffered, and shed His precious and holy blood for us, we who know and believe the truth “*...are sanctified.*” This is not our “confession;” it is our “reality.”

**11 “And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:”** Under the Law, there had to be an unbroken lineage of priests to sacrifice two lambs every day for the sins of the people, because there was never a sacrifice found that could “*take away sins.*” Consider how futile it would be to spend your entire life doing religious ceremonies, and offering the same sacrifices that could do nothing for either you, or the one you ministered to. This was the plight of those priests under the Law.

What is even more futile, however, is to be a minister under the “*New Covenant,*” and preach a gospel that can never “*take away sins.*” Paul said the gospel of Christ is “*the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believeth*” Romans 1:16. Christ died to “*save His people from their sins*” Matthew 1:21. Why should we preach any less?

**12 “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever...”** The apostle began this epistle speaking of the Son of God, saying, “*...when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*” Hebrews 1:3. Christ purged our sins “*by the sacrifice of himself*” Hebrews 9:26, and He did it “*by Himself.*” He did not need our help to do so; he purified our hearts through the offering of His body “*once for all.*”

**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

**“...sat down on the right hand of God;”** It should be noticed that Jesus did not sit down at the right hand of God until “*after*” he had purged our sins. His place at the right hand of God is sufficient proof that His sacrifice was sufficient to “*take away the sin of the world*” John 1:29.

**13 “From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.”** This verse can only be properly understood in the light of the next verse.

**14 “For (because) by one offering he hath perfected forever...”** The thought of perfection was introduced in Hebrews 6:1. There is a thread running through the scriptures from the first mention of perfection to this verse, showing perfection cannot be obtained by any means under the Law. The Levitical priest could not cleanse their own hearts, certainly not the hearts of the worshipers with the sacrifices they offered. The search for “*perfection* (a pure heart)” is a futile search until we arrive at this verse. Christ by His “*one offering*” has “*perfected forever*” them that are sanctified.

**“...them that are sanctified.”** Perfection is properly understood to be completion. It is those who are “*sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*” that have been “*perfected,*” or “*made complete.*” Their hearts have been “*purified by faith*” Acts 15:9, and a “*pure heart*” is what God calls “*perfection.*” Sin and Satan have forever lost their place in those who are sanctified, thus “*His enemies*” are “*under His feet.*” They are His “*footstool*” Psalms 110:1.

**15 “Whereof...”** The word “*whereof*” was added by the translators to indicate that entire sanctification (a pure heart) is the fulfillment of a prophecy spoken by the Holy Ghost through the prophet Jeremiah.

**“...the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,**

Chapter Ten **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 10:1-39  
**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

**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;**” The Ten Commandments which God spoke from Mount Sinai were intended for the hearts of the children of Israel, but He had to write them in tables of stone because of the hardness of their hearts. Those same commandments are now written in the heart of every person who is *“born of God.”* It is the *“new heart”* and the *“new spirit”* Ezekiel 36:26 of the children of God. This is the *“New Covenant”* which God made.

**17** **“And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”** Under the Law of Moses there was always another *“remembrance of sins”* as referred to in the third verse of this chapter, because *“...it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”* Hebrews 10:4. From the moment Christ *“purged our sins”* Hebrews 1:3, 10:2 there was no more need for another sacrifice because there is no more sin. It is a gross error to believe the children of God are still sinners, who *“sin every day,”* but God will not remember their sins. Those who die in their sins will stand before God as a sinner, and will be lost forever.

**18** **“Now where remission of these is...”** The word *“remission”* is of great importance to the understanding of this verse. The definition of the Greek word *“aphesis,”* which was translated as *“remission,”* is *“freedom”* (see Strong’s Greek #859). Freedom from sin is the experience of those who *“know the truth”* John 8:32 that *“Jesus is the Christ”* Matthew 16:16, who came into the world to *“make an end of sins”* Daniel 9:24-25

**“...there is no more offering for sin.”** The reason there is no more offering for sin was given in verse 2 of this chapter; *“because that the worshippers once purged (their hearts purified) should have had no more conscience of sins.”* If the blood of

## **Christ: Our New and Living Way**

Christ only covered sins for God to forgive the sinner, Christ would have to suffer and die repeatedly, because His blood would have been no better than animal blood. Jesus did not merely “*cover our sins,*” He “*took our sin away*” John 1:29, I John 3:5.

**19** “**Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,**” The “*holiest*” was a place behind the second veil in the tabernacle where the high priest could come into the presence of God once a year with the blood of animals. It was a fearful time for the priest, who “*stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation*” Hebrews 9:10. If all these were not observed to perfection in preparation, the high priest would not be accepted by God. His own life was in the balance, as well as that of the people.

Before sin entered into the world through Adam’s transgression, Adam had great boldness in the presence of God. When sin entered, Adam was ashamed, and hid himself “*from the presence of God*” Genesis 3:8, because he was “*afraid*” Genesis 3:10. We have boldness to enter the holiest (the presence of God Himself) because the blood of Jesus Christ has “*cleansed us from all sin*” I John 1:7, and we are not ashamed.

**20** “**By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us...**” The “*new and living way*” was consecrated for us through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, which was accomplished on the cross. The “*old way*” was through much carnal religious activity for one man to enter behind a veil of cloth only one day a year. In the “*new and living way,*” every preparation was finished at the cross for those who believe to enter.

**“...through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;”** The “*veil*” of the Old Testament tabernacle was made of cloth by the hands

Chapter Ten **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 10:1-39  
**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

of man. The “*veil*” of the New Covenant is the flesh body of Jesus Christ which was “*broken*” for us I Corinthians 11:24.

**21** “**And having an high priest** (Jesus Christ) **over the house of God;**” In Hebrews 3:6, Christ is a Son over His own house, “*whose house are we.*” In this verse, He is the high priest over the house of God, and we are the house.

**22** “**Let us draw near...**” The invitation to “*draw near*” is from Christ, our great high priest.

“**...with a true heart...**” The “*true heart*” is the “*new heart*” of the children of God Ezekiel 36:26. It is a “*pure heart,*” with the Law of God written in it Hebrews 8:10.

“**...in full assurance of faith...**” We are not ashamed, and we need not be afraid if we trust in Him who has invited us to draw near.

“**...having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience...**” Paul tells us it is the “*blood of Christ*” that “*purges our conscience* (purifies our heart) *from dead works to serve the living God*” Hebrews 9:14. An “*evil conscience*” is a sinful conscience, or as stated in verse 2, a “*conscience of sin.*”

“**...and our bodies washed with pure water.**” Notice that both our hearts and our bodies are cleansed. This speaks of “*entire sanctification; spirit, soul, and body*” I Thessalonians 5:23, which is accomplished only by faith in the shed blood of Jesus. Under the Law of Moses, all things were “*cleansed*” by the sprinkling of animal blood and the washings in pure water. God spoke a “*New Covenant*” promise to us through the prophet Ezekiel; “*Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean*” Ezekiel 36:25. Those “*clean*” and “*pure*” waters flowed from the side of Jesus Christ when they “*pierced His side*” John 19:34. This “*blood and water*” from the

## **Christ: Our New and Living Way**

side of Jesus fulfils what Moses called the “*water of separation*” which were a “*purification for sin*” Numbers 19:9. These “*pure waters*” have nothing whatsoever to do with the waters of baptism.

**23** “**Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering...**” At the time this epistle was written, there was great persecution against those Jews who believed “*Jesus is the Christ.*” Paul wrote this epistle to encourage them to “... *continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard...*” Colossians 1:23.

The Greek word “*homologia,*” which was translated as “*profession,*” is properly defined as “*acknowledgement.*” We must not be ashamed of Christ even in times of great persecution. We must be vocal to acknowledge Jesus Christ as our savior, whether in good times or bad.

**“... (for he is faithful that promised);”** The Greek word that was translated as “*faith*” in the first phrase of this verse is most often translated as “*hope,*” and is properly defined as meaning “*to anticipate with pleasure.*” The reason the children of God have such great hope even in the time of great persecution is because “*He is faithful that promised.*”

**24** “**And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:**” While being provoked on every side by unbelievers, let us “*provoke one another*” with love and good works. The Greek word which was translated as “*provoke*” actually means “*to incite.*” Evil people can “*incite a mob*” to riot and violence. Let the children of God use “*love and good works*” to “*incite one another*” to love and good works.

**25** “**Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is...**” The word “*not*” was translated

Chapter Ten **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 10:1-39  
**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

from the Greek word “*mē*,” and is more properly to be understood as the conjunction “*lest*,” which connects this verse to the previous verse in this way; “*consider one another to provoke unto love and good works lest we forsake the assembling of ourselves together.*” Where there is not “*love and good works*,” there will be a great forsaking of the assembly.

**“...but exhorting one another...”** The Greek word which was translated “*exhorting*,” means to “*call near*.” It relates to the invitation in the twenty second verse above which says “*let us draw near.*” In our relationships one with another let there be such love and good works that others are drawn to Christ, to “*know Him, and abide in Him.*”

**“...and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”** This epistle was probably written about five years before the unbelieving Jews were slaughtered by the Roman armies in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. That was the “*day*” Jesus had warned would come upon that generation Luke 19:41-44.

**26 “For if we sin wilfully...”** The “*willful sin*” is defined in verse twenty-nine. It speaks of those who deny Jesus after they have once believed He is “*the Christ*” and trusted in Him. It is the sin of apostasy.

**“...after that we have received the knowledge of the truth...”** It is not that they have simply heard and not believed, but these are those who were “*once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come...*” Hebrews 6:4-5.

**“...there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,”** For those who sinned under the Law of Moses, there was always another sacrifice to be offered. Once Christ has come and offered the only sacrifice that can take away sins, there “*remaineth no*

**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

*more sacrifice,*” because Christ will not suffer and die a second time. Those who forsake Christ are such as Jonah spoke of; *“They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy”* *Jonah 2:8.* These are those who believe they can turn from faith in Jesus Christ to trust in something else without losing their salvation. This was a specific warning Paul gave to the Jews against returning to Moses and his Law. He said to all who did so, *“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace”* *Galatians 5:4.* These are those Paul spoke of in chapter six when he said, *“It is impossible...to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame”* *Hebrews 6:4-6.*

There are those Jesus spoke of who have been caught in *“the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches”* *Mark 4:18* to the extent they have been moved away from Christ, and sin has revived in their heart. These are backsliders who can return to Christ when *“godly sorrow”* *II Corinthians 7:10* gains control of their heart and does its perfect work. It is dangerous, however, to be one who *“continues in sin,”* believing they are forgiven even before they commit the sin, and that they are “forgiven” without repentance and godly sorrow. This modern doctrine, which has deceived many in this generation, seems to be in the category of *“willful sin”* also.

**27** **“But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”** The apostle introduced *“eternal judgment”* as one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ in Hebrews 6:1-2. Those who have once known Christ, but have drawn back and returned to their old way, whether it be dead religion or willful sin, have nothing to look forward to but *“judgment and fiery indignation.”* Peter said, *“For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn*

Chapter Ten **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 10:1-39  
**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

*from the holy commandment delivered unto them”* II Peter 2:21.  
Nothing remains for these but eternal damnation.

**28 “He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:”** Those who disobeyed or simply disregarded Moses' law were sentenced to death if condemned by two or three witnesses. We see that as very harsh punishment today, often forgetting that the harshest of penalties awaits those who simply *“neglect so great salvation”* Hebrews 2:3.

**29 “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy...”** Consider the punishment of the man who was stoned to death for *“gathering sticks on the Sabbath”* Numbers 15:32-36. This was an extremely harsh punishment for what seems to be such a light offense, but the man was put to death because he failed to *“keep the Sabbath day holy”* in the manner dictated by the Law of Moses. Is it not a far worse offense to offend Christ, who *“loved us, and gave Himself for us?”* Galatians 2:20. What should the punishment be for despising and rejecting the love of God, who gave His own Son to save us from our sin?

**“... 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?”** The three things listed in this verse define the *“willful sin”* spoken of in verse twenty-six above. **1.** They *“trod the Son of God under foot;”* **2.** They *“consider the blood of Christ to be no better than animal blood;”* **3.** They *“disregard the Spirit of Grace.”*

**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.”**

**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

The apostle is quoting from the Song of Moses, which foretold the judgment of God against the children of Israel if they would at any time turn from Him to serve idols: *“To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left. And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted, which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, and be your protection”* Deuteronomy 32:35-38.

The Hebrew Christians would have known the Song of Moses by heart. The apostle reminds them of the judgment which God had pronounced against those who turn away. His judgment supersedes that of the Law of Moses, which was administered by man. God’s judgment is eternal, with eternal consequences. Under the covenant of grace, the church is not given the authority to punish. That is reserved to God Himself. The temporal judgment of God against Jerusalem was fulfilled in 70 A.D., less than a decade after this epistle was written. His eternal judgment yet awaits those who reject Him.

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

**32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated...”** The apostle reminds them of the days when they first trusted in Jesus, and the *“light of the glorious gospel of Christ”* shined into their hearts II Corinthians 4:4-6.

## **Christ: Our New and Living Way**

**“...ye endured a great fight of afflictions;”** They were immediately subjected to rejection by friends and family, and suffered great persecution from the unbelieving Jewish community at large.

**33 “Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions...”** They were treated like heretics and blasphemers by the unbelievers.

**“...and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.”** Like young Moses before them, they had *“chosen the afflictions of the righteous...”* Hebrews 11:25.

**34 “For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods...”** For a Jew in that generation to receive Jesus as his Messiah could cost him the loss of his family, his friends, and all his earthly possessions. These had suffered such losses and took it joyfully, because like young Moses, they *“esteemed the reproach of Christ to be greater riches...”* Hebrews 11:26.

**“...knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.”** The apostle is still calling them *“to remembrance”* of how it had been in the *“former days,”* when they first believed. Years had passed, and some were weary of the constant rejection by their former friends. Persecution against the believers was on the rise again, and many were beginning to draw back. This was the reason Paul wrote this epistle, to encourage and confirm them in the midst of their time of trouble, and to warn them against turning back to the old religious way.

**35 “Cast not away therefore your confidence...”** Often-times when trials and tribulations seem to be never-ending, even the children of God grow weary along the way. At such times there is the danger of doubts and fears entering in to rob the believer of their joy and confidence. Their *“confidence”*

## **Christ: Our New and Living Way**

was in Christ to fulfill His word and keep His promises. There is a proverb that says “*Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life*” Proverbs 13:12. When confidence in Christ is “*cast away,*” all hope is gone.

**“...which hath great recompence of reward.”** The words “*recompence of reward*” are translated from the Greek word “*misthapodosiaur,*” which means “*requital.*” It is derived from the root word “*misthapodotes,*” which speaks of “*a remunerator.*” The English word “*requital*” is defined as “*something given in return, compensation, or retaliation*” Mirriam-Webster Dictionary. Those who do not “*cast away their confidence*” will certainly receive great compensation for their patience and faithfulness.

**36 “For ye have need of patience...”** The proper definition of “*patience*” is “*cheerful endurance.*”

**“...that, after ye have done the will of God...”** Certainly, to this point, these had “*done the will of God.*” In another epistle the apostle Paul says, “*we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it*” Romans 8:24-25.

**“...ye might receive the promise.”** Certainly, those who patiently endure persecutions for the sake of Christ will receive the greatest of rewards in heaven. Jesus assures us, “*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you*” Matthew 5:11-12.

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

Chapter Ten **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 10:1-39  
**Christ: Our New and Living Way**

**38** **Now the just shall live by faith...**” In verse thirty-seven to this point in verse thirty-eight, the apostle paraphrases Habakkuk 2:3-4, indicating that the righteous judgment of God was ready to fall upon that “*untoward (wicked and perverse) generation*” Acts 2:40. Those who “*live by the faith of Christ*” Galatians 2:20 will be kept in the day of God’s righteous judgment against the ungodly. The judgment of God on that generation of unbelieving Jews came in 70 A.D. with the destruction of Jerusalem. None of those who kept faith in Jesus Christ perished with the unbelievers.

**“...but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”** A solemn warning to those who would draw back from their confession of Christ to appease the ungodly. They will perish with the ungodly in the day of God’s judgment. Keep in mind that the utter destruction of Jerusalem was less than a decade in their future. Jesus had foretold it, and had instructed the believer concerning their “*way of escape*” Luke 21:20-23.

**39** **“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”** Those who cast away their confidence and draw back from Christ do so to their own damnation. Those who continue in faith and hope do so to their own salvation and eternal bliss.

## Christ: Our Better Thing

### “Christ: Our Better Thing”

#### 1 “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for...”

There are three words in this phrase that need to be defined for proper understanding of the verse:

1. Faith: “*believing God.*”
2. Substance: “*a setting under (support).*”
3. Hoped for: “*to expect.*”

This phrase is better understood to say, “*Believing what God has said is the basis we stand upon for the things we expect to receive.*” Faith is not a force unto itself. It is not a basis to receive those things which God has not promised.

“...the evidence of things not seen.” When we believe what God has said, that is all the evidence we need for the promised outcome.

2 “For by it the elders obtained a good report.” The elders “heard” God speak, “believed” what He said, “obeyed” His voice, and in every case they obtained the “*good report.*”

3 “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God...” This verse is erroneously used by many to teach that God used “*faith*” to create the universe. Such teaching is absurd. Our “*faith*” is in God and what He has said. For God to use “*faith*” in creation would require the existence of another and greater “*god*” for our God to trust in. Absolutely absurd!

In Genesis 1:3 we see the pattern of creation; “*And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*” When God spoke the universe into existence, there were no “*eyewitnesses.*” We understand that God created the universe with his “*Word*” because He told us so in His word, and we “*believe God.*”

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

**“...so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”** There was absolutely nothing until God began to speak “things” into existence. God is the creator; He didn’t need anything other than His Word to create everything.

**4 “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain...”** When we understand what faith is, we know that God must have revealed Himself to both Cain and Abel concerning the sacrifice they should bring. Abel believed God and Cain did not. *“Believing God,”* Abel offered the more excellent sacrifice.

**“...by which he obtained witness that he was righteous...”** The scripture says Abraham *“believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness”* Romans 4:3. This is the basis for the doctrine of *“justification by faith.”* Abel, however, was the first man to be justified by faith. He *“believed God”* and he *“obeyed God,”* and *“obtained witness that he was righteous.”*

Throughout this chapter we will see the testimonies of many men and women who both “believed God” and “obeyed God.” Every one of them, like Abraham, were *“justified by faith”* when they *“believed God.”*

**“...God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.”** Abel’s *“gifts”* were *“of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof”* Genesis 4:4. He brought a spotless lamb out of his flock.

**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 *“translation”* must have been a personal promise from God to Enoch, because it was through “believing God” that he was translated. It should be noted that

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

Enoch also “*walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years,*” Genesis 5:22, and he “*pleased God.*”

### **6 “But without faith it is impossible to please him...”**

If a person does not believe what God has said, it is impossible that they will be able to please Him. It is for that reason that a “believer” must also be a “seeker.”

**“...for he that cometh to God...”** True faith is revealed in those who “come to God.”

**“...must believe that he is...”** God is not just a “higher power.” He is the creator of Heaven and earth; He is the Father of Jesus Christ.

**“...and that he is a rewarder...”** The word “rewarder” was translated from the Greek word “*misthapodotes,*” which speaks of a “remunerator.” The English word “remunerate” is defined as “*To pay a suitable equivalent in return for goods provided, services rendered, or losses incurred. To recompense*” American Heritage Dictionary. God is the “remunerator” who gives “*the great recompense of reward*” Hebrews 10:35 to those who patiently endure in times of persecution. It is as He told Abraham; “*Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward*” Genesis 15:1. God is not only our “rewarder;” He is our “reward.”

**“...of them that diligently seek him.”** Another side of “faith” is “trust.” The devils believe God exists, James 2:19 but they do not have faith. The one who believes God, will also “trust” God, therefore they “seek” God. Jesus has assured us concerning all those who diligently seek Him; “*...every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened*” Luke 11:10.

**7 “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet...”** God spoke to Noah about the judgment that

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

was about to fall upon the inhabitants of the world. He “*believed God*,” and dedicated the next hundred and twenty years of his life to building a huge ship on dry ground.

**“...moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house...”** Believing what God said is what “*moved Noah*.” He was “*moved with fear*,” and he was “*moved*” into action, to “*obey God*.” He built the “*ark*” in obedience to God’s command, and “*saved his house*.”

**“...by the which he condemned the world...”** Every person on earth except for Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives, perished in the flood that covered the earth.

**“...and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”**

Noah was “*justified by faith*” when he “*believed God*.”

**8 “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed...”** God called Abraham, and he “*believed God*.” He also “*obeyed*” what God said to him. True faith always brings obedience to what God says. No one, however, should allow themselves to be brought into obedience to either dead religious forms, or their own “*imagination*s.” God is very well able to reveal Himself to those who diligently seek Him in both prayer and the scriptures.

**“...and he went out, not knowing whither he went.”** The person who believes God has no reason to fear the future if they also obey God.

**9 “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise...”**

This was the land God promised to give to Abraham and his seed forever Genesis 15:18. This is where God would make Abraham to be a “*great nation*” Genesis 12:2. To “*sojourn*” is to be a visitor in a foreign land and to move from place to place.

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

**“...as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob...”** Abraham would later be called *“the heir of the world”* Romans 4:13, but he did not seek greatness for himself in the land of promise. He lived all the days of his life in tents, moving from place to place.

**“...the heirs with him of the same promise:”** Abraham was about 160 years old when Jacob was born. Obviously, he was still living in the land of promise as a stranger in a foreign land.

**10 “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”** The things of this world have little enticement for those whose affection is set *“on things above”* Colossians 3:1. *“A city which hath foundations”* speaks of an eternal kingdom, which Christ is to all who believe.

**11 “Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed...”** Abraham’s wife Sara had been a barren woman all her life. When she was ninety years old, God promised she would give birth to a son within a year. Her first reaction was to laugh, but when she *“believed God,”* she received strength to conceive.

**“...and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.”** *“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”* Numbers 23:19. God is faithful to do whatever He promises.

**12 “Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead...”** Abraham was ninety-nine years old when God gave him the promise of Isaac, who would be born to Sarah. It was humanly impossible that Isaac should be born. The promises of God, however, have no limitations to those who believe what God has said.

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

**“...so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.”** Abraham had no child when God told him to *“Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.”*

**13 “These all died in faith, not having received the promises...”** *“These all”* includes Abel, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah; *“all”* with the exception of Enoch, who was *“translated that he should not see death”* verse five. Each of these did receive personal promises fulfilled, but there was the greater promise of a *“redeemer”* (the seed of the woman) Genesis 3:15, who was yet to come. Abel *“obtained witness that he was righteous”* verse four. Noah built the ark and received the salvation of his household when the entire world perished in the flood. Abraham received Isaac, the *“child of promise,”* but his *“seed”* in whom *“all the nations of the earth shall be blessed”* Genesis 22:18, would not be seen for another two thousand years until Christ came into the world. Galatians 3:16. Abraham *“died in faith,”* still searching for *“a city whose builder and maker is God.”* We who have believed the truth and trusted in Jesus Christ are citizens of that city Galatians 4:26.

**“...but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them...”** They *“believed God;”* by *“faith”* they could *“see the promise afar off.”* They were persuaded of it, and *“embraced”* it, yet they *“died in faith”* without receiving it.

The world believes such a life is but foolishness. I have known great men and women of God who totally believed Jesus would return in their lifetime, and *“watched”* for Him as long as they lived. They never *“made peace with the world,”* because they possessed the *“peace of God”* Philippians 4:7, *“which passeth all understanding.”* These were not *“foolish,”* as some

Chapter Eleven **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 11:1-40  
**Christ: Our Better Thing**

may think. They had received what Abraham “*died in faith*” believing, and they are even now “*present with the Lord*” <sup>11</sup> Corinthians 5:8.

**“...and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”** Abraham, who became the “*heir of this world*” Romans 4:13, never found nor desired a lasting possession in this world. “*Believing God,*” he belonged to the world to come.

**14 “For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.”** According to the testimony of Stephen, Abraham, though greatly blessed by God, did not possess enough land to “*set his foot upon*” Acts 7:5. He was seeking a city “*whose builder and maker is God*” verse 10. Such a city is not to be found on earth. It is a “*heavenly city*” in a “*heavenly*” country <sup>verse 16.</sup>

With the words “*They that say such things ...*,” the apostle includes every believer from every age, from the entrance of sin to this present time. Those who feel at home in this world are not “*strangers and pilgrims on earth.*” They have their inheritance in this present world and do not “*seek*” the “*things above*” Colossians 3:1.

**15 “And truly, if they...”** The word “*they*” continues the thought of “*...they that say such things,*” which includes every believer in our day who “*say such things.*”

**“...had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.”** If Abraham’s desire had been on the things of this world, he could have had them by simply returning to the land from which God had called him out <sup>Genesis 12:1.</sup> One of the chief causes of “*backsliding*” is many who profess to believe continue to have pleasant memories of the life they had before “*receiving Christ.*”

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

**16** “**But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly...**” *“They who say such things”* are those who *“confess they are strangers and pilgrims on earth.”* They see themselves on a pilgrimage, ever keeping in view *“the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness”* II Peter 3:13, which they *“see afar off”* verse 13.

**“...wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.”** Our *“heavenly city”* has been *“prepared.”* When Christ died for our sins and rose again from the dead, all those who *“died in faith, not having received the promises”* verse 13, *“received the promise.”* They were immediately translated into that heavenly city which Paul speaks of as *“Jerusalem which is above ...which is the mother of us all”* Galatians 4:26, where they remain as *“the spirits of just men made perfect”* Hebrews 12:23 until the general resurrection at the second return of Jesus Christ.

**17** “**By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac...**” Abraham could offer his beloved son Isaac only because he *“believed God.”* We will see what this means in the next two verses.

**“...and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,”** The *“promises”* God had given to Abraham could only be fulfilled in Isaac. If the life of Isaac came to an end on the altar of sacrifice, the promises would have been null and void. Abraham believed the promises of God and trusted in God who gave them.

**18** “**Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:**” God had rejected Ishmael a year before Isaac was born to Sarah Genesis 17:18-21. It was the same day the child Isaac was *“weaned from the breast”* that Hagar and young Ishmael

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

were “*cast out*,” and were forced to go into the wilderness Genesis 21:14. This was the day God reaffirmed to Abraham, “*In Isaac shall thy seed be called*.”

It was at least a dozen years later that God tested Abraham with the sacrifice of Isaac, who was a strong young man by this time, with the strength to carry the wood for the sacrifice. Abraham “*believed God*” and understood that if Isaac perished, God would be proven a liar. He trusted in the faithfulness of God when he offered Isaac on the altar of sacrifice Genesis 22:9-10.

**19** “**Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.**” When Abraham started up the mountain Moriah to offer his son, he told the servants as he left them behind, “*I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you*” Genesis 22:5. Abraham was fully persuaded that both he and his son Isaac would “*come again*” down the mountain, even if it required that God would raise Isaac from the dead.

God actually had much more invested in Isaac than Abraham. All the promises to Abraham had to come through Isaac. The “*seed of the woman*” who would “*bruise the head of the serpent*” Genesis 1:15,” must also come through Isaac. The entire redemptive plan depended on a living Isaac, just as it would depend on a “dying” Savior. God would not forsake His promise, “*In Isaac shall thy seed be called*.”

**20** “**By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.**” Isaac “*believed God*” concerning all the promises God had given to both his father Abraham and himself Genesis 26:24. Based upon those promises, Isaac blessed his sons, and told them of things to come.

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

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

**of his staff.”** We should keep in mind that the “*faith*” of Jacob, as all true faith is, is based upon believing what God has said. Jacob was able to bless not only his sons, but his grandsons also, based upon the promises which God had given to him  
Genesis 28:12-16.

**22 “By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.”** Joseph knew the future of the children of Israel in Egypt because he “*believed*” what God had said to Abraham: “*Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance*” Genesis 15:13-14. Joseph “*believed God*” and commanded the children of Israel to carry his bones when they departed Egypt for the land of promise.

**23 “By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents...”** This verse speaks of the faith of Moses’ parents, who must have “*heard from God*” concerning their newborn child. “*Believing God,*” they disobeyed the king’s commandment that their child should be destroyed at birth.

**“...because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.**

**24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;”** The baby Moses was rescued from the Nile River by the daughter of Pharaoh, who adopted him as her own child. Unknown to Pharaoh’s daughter, the woman she hired to nurse baby Moses until he was weaned was the true mother of the child. Little Moses lived with his own family and was taught in the way of the Hebrews until the age of five or six years, at which time he

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

was taken to the palace to become the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and to be educated as an Egyptian prince. Moses never lost the memory of those precious years with his true mother, and when he came to manhood, he refused any longer to be called "*the son of Pharaoh's daughter.*"

**25** **“Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;”** It was because he *“believed God,”* the God his Hebrew mother had taught him of, that Moses was able to make such a choice, knowing that his choice would bring great affliction upon him. He could have continued in the power, prestige, and pleasure afforded him as a prince of Egypt, but he chose to suffer with the children of Israel, which were truly his own people.

**26** **“Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt...”** The choice Moses made was based upon his deep, settled belief that the reproach of serving the true God with the Hebrew slaves was more to be desired than all the fabulous treasures of Egypt.

**“...for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.”** This is the third time this phrase, *“recompence of reward”* is used in this epistle. Jesus asked the question, *“What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”* Mark 8:36. Our *“reward”* awaits us in the *“new heavens and new earth.”* Moses' hope was not in the *“reward”* of Egypt, which would be temporary, but in the *“exceeding great reward”* Genesis 15:1 of the children of God in the world to come.

**27** **“By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king...”** Moses *“forsook Egypt”* two different times; the first was *“by fear”* when he fled in fear for his life Exodus 2:14-15, but the second was *“by faith”* when he led the children of Israel out of their bondage.

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

**“...for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.”** The gods of Egypt were visible, fashioned by the hands of man; the living and true God of Israel is invisible. Moses heard Him speak from the burning bush, and many times thereafter. *“Believing God,”* he could see what others could not see. This was the secret to Moses’ perseverance in the face of a humanly impossible task

**28 “Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.”** Not only Moses, but everyone who believed and obeyed what God said concerning the offering of the Passover lamb were spared by the death angel and delivered from Egypt in one night.

**29 “By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land...”** The children of Israel, though fearful of the Egyptian armies, believed when they saw the Red Sea open. They knew God had opened the Sea for their deliverance, and they did not fear to walk into its depths. God had said “go forward” Exodus 14:15, and *“by faith”* they passed through the Red Sea to victory on the other side.

**“...which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.”** The ungodly Egyptian army tried to do what they had seen the children of Israel do. They rushed in to their own destruction, because God had hardened Pharaoh’s heart.

**30 “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.”** This is the next generation of the children of Israel. Forty years after they crossed the Red Sea, they saw a repeat of the miracle as the waters of the Jordan River *“stood in a heap”* at flood stage as they crossed into Canaan Joshua 3:16. Now, they *“believed God”* and saw the walls of Jericho fall when they obeyed what God told them to do. Joshua 6:3-5.

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

**31** **“By faith the harlot Rahab...”** There is some controversy over whether Rahab was a prostitute or an innkeeper, because the Hebrew words which were translated “*harlot*” could be translated either way according to Adam Clark in his commentary. It is certain, however, that she became the wife of Salmon, and the great great grandmother of King David.

**“...perished not with them that believed not...”** Rahab’s “*faith*” is seen in her words to the spies; “*I know that the LORD (Jehovah) hath given you the land...*” Joshua 2:9, and, “*The LORD (Jehovah) your God, is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath*” Joshua 2:11.

**“...when she had received the spies with peace.**

**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:”**

The apostle gives a short list of great men of faith. In the next two verses he gives a brief view of their great exploits which they did because they “*believed God*” in everything He said. A common error of many who do not understand faith is in seeking to “*believe God*” to fulfill their own fantasies and ambitions. Faith is, and always has been, “*believing what God has said.*” God has spoken to us in the scriptures, and those who believe what He has said through the prophets and apostles will certainly be blessed. The greatest faith, the unshakable faith, however, is the possession of those who have personally heard God speak directly to them by His Spirit. We must understand that He will never speak anything that is contrary to the scriptures or exalting to the flesh. Everything God does is for His own glory, and never for the glory of man. Those who understand this will be greatly blessed by God.

## Christ: Our Better Thing

**33** “Who through faith subdued kingdoms (David), wrought righteousness (Samuel), obtained promises (Abraham), stopped the mouths of lions (Daniel),”

**34** “Quenched the violence of fire (Three Hebrew children), escaped the edge of the sword (Jephthae), out of weakness were made strong (Gideon), waxed valiant in fight (Samson), turned to flight the armies of the aliens (Barak).”

**35** “Women received their dead raised to life again (The widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite woman): and others were tortured...” With the word “*others*” the message of this chapter changes from those who did great exploits and won great victories through their faith in God, to those who suffered unimaginable hardships and persecutions, even unto death **because of their faith in God**. Which of these is the greatest before God it is impossible to tell.

“...not accepting deliverance...” These could have been spared from sufferings and death if they had renounced their faith.

“...that they might obtain a better resurrection:” Jesus spoke of two resurrections; “*the resurrection of life*” and “*the resurrection of damnation*.” Every person that has ever lived on this earth will be resurrected to stand before God and be judged according to their works Revelation 20:13. Jesus said, “...*all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation*” John 5:28-29. For every child of God, there is a “*better resurrection*” with a “*better and enduring substance*” Hebrews 10:34. The ungodly, however, regardless of how good or how cruel their present circumstances may be, have nothing to look forward to but “...*a certain fearful looking for of judgment and*

## **Christ: Our Better Thing**

*fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries”* Hebrews 10:27.

**36 “And others had trial of cruel mockings (Samson) and scourgings (The Hebrews under the Egyptian taskmasters; the prophet Jeremiah), yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:”** (Joseph, Jeremiah, and Micaiah)

**37 “They were stoned (Naboth), they were sawn asunder (Isaiah), were tempted (Joseph), were slain with the sword I Kings 19:10: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;**

**38 (Of whom the world was not worthy):...”** In the heart and mind of the writer, the greatest reward any person could receive when they stand before Christ is to hear Him say, *“The world was not worthy of this one.”* Such words were spoken only of those who suffered the direst of circumstances in this life, yet continued faithful unto death. Jesus sent a message to the church of Smyrna, saying, *“I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich)...”* Revelation 2:9. His final exhortation to them was *“be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life”* Revelation 2:10.

**“...they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.”**

**39 “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:”** Every one of these mighty men and women of faith in this chapter *“obtained promises”* whether in life or in death, but there was one promise that none of them received; it was the *“promise”* of a *“redeemer”* Isaiah 59:20, the *“promise”* of *“The Messiah the Prince”* who would *“make an end of sins”* Daniel 9:24-25, and the promise of the *“seed of the woman,”* who would *“bruise the head of the serpent”* Genesis 3:15. These three and many other *“promises”* are but one *“promise”* which was fulfilled in Jesus Christ

Chapter Eleven **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 11:1-40  
**Christ: Our Better Thing**

when He died on the cross to *“take away the sin of the world”*  
John 1:29.

**40 “God having provided some better thing for us...”**  
This single phrase clearly explains why the entire chapter was written. These were all great men and women of God, all of which believed God, obeyed God, and did mighty exploits, yet they all died without the salvation from sin which Christ has provided for us. The *“least in the kingdom of God”* has something Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, nor any of the Old Testament saints received in their lifetime. We are *“born again;”* we have received the *“new heart and new spirit”* Ezekiel 36:26, which is given to every child of God.

Peter tells us of the prophets who saw our salvation afar off. They *“searched diligently... what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow”* <sup>1</sup>Peter 1:10-11. They questioned, *“What is this...when shall it be?”* Peter called it *“the grace that should come unto you,”* and said *“the angels desire to look into”* <sup>1</sup>Peter 1:12 this great salvation God has given to us.

**“...that they without us should not be made perfect.”** The apostle has explained this *“perfection”* in Hebrews 10:14; *“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”* Our *“perfection”* (completion) was finished at the cross of Christ when the blood of Jesus Christ washed us from our sins and purified our heart. This was the reason Christ came into the world.

The Old Testament saints could not be perfected without us, because Christ had not yet come and suffered the death of the cross, but they died in faith, believing what God had promised. We, on the other hand, were not *“perfected”* without the Old Testament saints. Every person who has “believed God” from

Chapter Eleven **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 11:1-40  
**Christ: Our Better Thing**

every age since the world began has now been “*washed from their sins*” Revelation 1:5 in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, which He shed to “take away” the sin of the world.

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

### **“Christ: Our Mediator”**

**1** **“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses...”** The word “*also*” gives a hint as to who the “*cloud of witnesses*” are. There were many witnesses to the faith and exploits of these great men and women of God of the Old Testament. We also are compassed about with a great “*cloud of witnesses.*” The world is watching, believers and unbelievers alike, to see what the outcome of our faith will be.

**“...let us lay aside every weight...”** The apostle gives the analogy of an Olympic race. Those who run sometime train with weights on their legs until the time of the actual race. We, as the children of God, are not in “*training;*” this is the “*real thing.*” It is time to lay aside the “*weights,*” that is, anything that would slow us down or hinder us in any way.

**“...and the sin which doth so easily beset us...”** This phrase, which is often used by those who seek to prove we are “*all sinners,*” actually speaks of anything that competes with us for our time, energy, or dedication. Things that are not sinful by nature often become sin to us when they take us out of the race.

**“...and let us run with patience...”** Solomon tells us, “*The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong*” Ecclesiastes 9:11. The race that is set before us is to be run with patience. The proper definition of the Greek word which was translated as “*patience*” is “*cheerful endurance.*”

**“...the race that is set before us,”** Every child of God may have a different race to run. Paul, when nearing the end of his “*race,*” wrote to Timothy, “*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness...*” II Timothy 4:7-8. The

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

Greek word “*dromos*,” which was translated as “*course*,” actually speaks of “*a race*.” Paul won his race simply by finishing the course. Previously, in the heat of the battle, when faced with bonds and imprisonment, he said, “*None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus...*” Acts 20:24. While in prison, he said to the Philippians, “*I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*” Philippians 3:12. Christ had “*apprehended*” Saul of Tarsus for His purpose Acts 26:16, which the Apostle Paul accepted as his “*cause*” Ephesians 3:1.

*“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but **this one thing I do**, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, **I press toward the mark** for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”* Philippians 3:13-14

**2** **“Looking unto Jesus...”** With these words, the apostle tells us how to reach the mark; “*looking unto Jesus*.” Those who lose sight of Jesus will certainly miss the mark, but those who keep their eyes on Him will “*finish their course with joy*”

Acts: 20-24.

**“...who for the joy that was set before him...”** The night before He suffered the cross, Jesus prayed to His Father to confirm the terms for which He was willing to die, lest He should die in vain. He prayed, “*And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*” John 17:5. Adam had been created in the image and likeness of God, and “*crowned with glory and honor*” Hebrews 2:7. Everything God created brought praise and glory to God, but all this ended with the entrance of sin, which “*entered*” when the first man Adam disobeyed God.

Chapter Twelve **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 12:1-29  
**Christ: Our Mediator**

It was the entrance of sin that destroyed the first creation. It was through His death on the cross that Christ would “*make an end of sins*” and “*bring in everlasting righteousness*” Daniel 9:24-25. The “*joy that was set before Him*” was a “*New Creation*,” which would be created in His image and likeness, which would come into being when God raised Christ from the dead 1 Peter 1:3.

**“...endured the cross...”** The “*death of the cross*” Philippians 2:8” is the means by which Christ “*made an end of sins.*” He is “*the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” John 1:29, which speaks of “*the sin*” which entered into the world through Adam’s transgression Romans 5:12. Through His death on the cross, Christ destroyed sin Romans 6:6, Satan Hebrews 2:14, and the world Galatians 6:14, for as many as will believe the truth and trust in Him.

Paul said to the Corinthians, “*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*” II Corinthians 5:17. It is very important to understand the “*cross*” is not “*the source*” of anything, but it is “*the end*” of everything. The “*old things*” have “*passed away.*” That is the language of death. What happened to “*our old man*” when we first believed and trusted in Christ? He “*passed away*” through crucifixion with Christ, which is a real event that took place over nineteen hundred years ago on the cross at Calvary, which is effectual to “*everyone that believeth*” Romans 1:16.

**“...despising the shame...”** Jesus Christ is “*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” Revelation 13:8, but in the eyes of the masses, he was sentenced to death as a blasphemer and a deceiver. He died the shameful “*death of the cross*,” which was cursed by the Law of Moses. He died as a criminal between two thieves. That is the “*shame*” of the cross.

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

**“...and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”**

As the cross is the end of all things old for the believer, so His resurrection is the birth of all things new. Peter tells us that God has *“begotten us again (we are born again) unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...”* <sup>1 Peter 1:3</sup>. The reconciliation of everyone who will believe is proven by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Having received a *“New Creation,”* which *“after God is created in righteousness and true holiness”* <sup>Ephesians 4:24</sup>, He *“sat down at the right hand of God.”* The *“new creation”* was *“the joy that was set before Him.”*

This epistle to the Hebrews opened with this same thought; *“...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high”* <sup>Hebrews 1:3</sup>. First, we should notice that He *“purged our sins...by Himself,”* which speaks of the *“offering”* of His own body on the cross. In that He did it *“by Himself,”* He did not need our help to take our sin away. Our part is to believe who He is, and that He came into the world for that very purpose. For those in every age who have *“believed”* and *“trusted in Him,”* He has cleansed them from sin even **before** He ascended to the throne and sat down at the right hand of God.

**3** **“For consider him (Jesus Christ) that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”** These Jewish believers were suffering rejection by the world around them because of their profession that *“Jesus is the Christ.”* Paul exhorts all such to *“look to Jesus”* and *“consider”* the things He suffered for our salvation. They need to see, not only His sufferings, but also *“the glory that followed”* <sup>1 Peter 1:10-11</sup>. Some among the Hebrews were in danger of *“drawing back”* <sup>Hebrews 10:38</sup>, which would mean they would move away from Christ, and be lost. Those who *“draw back”* do so unto their own damnation <sup>Hebrews 10:39</sup>.

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

**4** “**Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.**” Those who “*resisted unto blood, striving against sin*” are those who suffered physical assault because of their stand for Christ. These had suffered the loss of their goods, alienation from friends and family, and condemnation from the Jewish culture in general, but the general population had not yet suffered physical wounds or martyrdom. The apostle Paul had suffered “*unto blood*” several times. He was beaten with whips five times; beaten with rods three times, and He was stoned and his body left outside the city as dead one time. Paul clearly told the Hebrews in this verse, “*It is not as bad as you believe it is. You have not yet resisted unto blood.*”

**5** “**And ye have forgotten the exhortation** Proverbs 3:11-12 **which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son...**” With this verse, the apostle enters into a discourse on the “*chastening*” and “*correction*” of the Lord to His children. He reminds them of something they have forgotten, that God always deals with us as His sons and daughters.

**“...despise not thou the chastening of the Lord...”** The Greek word “*paideia*,” which was translated as “*chastening*” in this verse, speaks of “*tutorage*,” through “*training, teaching, and discipline*.” This Greek word is not as severe in meaning as the English word “*chastening*” seems to be. It speaks of the proper rearing of children from the time they are newborn until the time they are educated and mature. It does include discipline when needed. We are exhorted not to “*despise*,” that is, not to “*disregard*” or “*disesteem*” our time of schooling by the Lord.

**“...nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:”** The Lord’s “*rebuke*” is on the opposite end of the spectrum from His “*chastening*.” The Greek word which was translated as “*rebuke*” means “*to confute*” and “*to admonish*.” The English

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

word “*confute*” properly means “*to prove to be wrong or in error*” American Heritage Dictionary. Those who receive His training and instruction have no need of His rebuke, and will live their lives on earth in the “*goodness of God*” Romans 11:22.

There is an indication that not everything these Hebrews suffered was the result of their “*faith in Christ.*” It is possible for a professing Christian to live their lives under the “*severity of God*” through doubt and unbelief Romans 11:22. There were some among the Hebrews who were “*drawing back,*” and Paul said, “*My soul (and by extension, God) shall have no pleasure in him*” Hebrews 10:38. It is all too common for “*casual believers*” to think they are suffering because of their “*faith,*” when in reality their “*suffering*” is due to their indifference to the faith.

**6 “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth...”** Exactly as a loving parent will train, teach, and discipline their children, so God does for His children. Discipline includes correction when needed, and certainly God corrects His children.

**“...and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”** The Greek word for “*scourge*” means “*to flog,*” which is the severest form of correction and punishment. It is what Solomon referred to when he said, “*He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes (early)*” Proverbs 13:24.

God chastens all who are His children. If we receive his “*chastening*” (training, teaching, and discipline) we will never be “*scourged*” by God. He “*scourgeth*” only those who are wayward and disobedient among His children. According to the prophet Ezekiel, God has “*no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live*” Ezekiel 33:11. How much more so does He not “*take pleasure*” in “*scourging*” His children.

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

**7** “**If ye endure chastening...**” The word “*endure*” in this verse means “*to stay under*” and “*to remain.*” We must not “run from God” and “refuse” to be taught or disciplined by Him. At this point in this discourse, the apostle seems to be speaking more of “discipline and correction” than “training and teaching.”

**“...God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”** Every good parent spends time to train, teach, and discipline their children. God does the same for His children. The schooling of God may seem severe at times, but those who receive it as a blessing from God will always find it to be a great blessing.

**8** “**But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.**” God does not train, teach, or discipline those “*children*” that are not His. Those who can “*continue in sin*” Romans 6:1-2 without receiving reproof from God have never been “*born again*” of the Spirit of God and are not His children, even though they may be members of the church.

**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...**” The term “*Father of spirits*” simply means that God is the Father of all who have been “*born again of the Spirit.*” Jesus said, “*That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*” John 3:6.

**“...and live?”** Certainly this speaks of “*eternal life,*” which can be forfeited by those who “*draw back*” from faith in Christ to trust in other things. God is faithful to correct His children and give them life. We should understand that we have eternal life only to the extent that we “*abide in Christ.*” The apostle

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

John said, *“This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and **this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life**”* IJohn 5:11-12.

The “sin” for which these Jewish believers were being chastened was *“drawing back”* from Jesus Christ, exactly as their forefathers had “drawn back” Exodus 20:18 from God at Mount Sinai. The prophet Jeremiah said they *“went backward, and not forward”* Jeremiah 7:24. The apostle will yet tell them in this chapter, *“For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched...”* verse 18, which was Mount Sinai, where their forefathers had refused to hear God speak from the mountain Exodus 20:19. *“But ye are come unto mount Sion...”* verse 22 *“...and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things...”* verse 24. **“See that ye refuse not him that speaketh”** verse 25.

The Apostle began this epistle by saying, *“God...hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son...”* Hebrews 1:1-2. These Hebrew believers were in danger of repeating the error of their fathers. If they *“draw back”* from Jesus Christ they can only *“draw back unto perdition”* Hebrews 10:39. If they *“draw near”* to Jesus Christ, however, they will be brought directly into the presence of God almighty, and abide in His love for them.

**10 “For they (our earthly fathers) verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure...”** Earthly parents discipline their children according to their own will and purpose, but not necessarily for the benefit of the child.

**“...but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.”** God knows what is *“profitable”* for us, and He disciplines His children for their ultimate good.

**11 “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous...”** The *“chastening”* in this verse is

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

definitely referring to discipline. No “*correction*,” whether it is from our heavenly Father or our earthly father, is intended to be a joyful experience. It must be strong enough to produce the intended result, and when it is done properly, it will only increase the bonds of love between the parent and the child if it is received properly. The result of this type of chastening is a child that respects every proper authority, whether it is our heavenly Father or the policeman on his beat.

**“...nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.**

**12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees...”** The only proper response when we are chastened by God is to “*lift up*” our hands which hang down and “*draw near*” to God through Jesus Christ. Certainly, our “*feeble knees*” will be strengthened as we draw near to Him.

**13 “And make straight paths for your feet...”** The secret of making straight paths for your feet is found in the words of the apostle, “*looking unto Jesus*” verse 2. Every farmer, when plowing a field, knows to keep his eyes on a distant object to insure his furrow is straight. If he looks back, his furrow will not be straight. Jesus said, “*No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God*” Luke 9:62. This He said to those who promised to follow Him, but looked back to other things. Jesus Christ is the one our eyes must be set upon.

**“...lest that which is lame be turned out of the way...”** We should understand that the path we make is not for ourselves alone, but for those who will take us for an example. No one lives only to themselves. The world around us is watching, and they are witnesses to the race we run. If we choose a path filled with “pitfalls” those who seek to follow our path will certainly stumble. Do not choose a path that is filled with the dangers

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

and pitfalls of this world, but “*make a straight path for your feet*” which anyone can follow as you follow Christ.

**“...but let it rather be healed.**

**14 Follow peace with all men...**” The Greek word “*diōkō*,” which was translated as “*follow*” is properly defined as “*to pursue.*” We are to “*pursue peace with all men,*” which may not be possible to attain, but it is the pursuit of the children of God.

**“...and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:”** The word “*holiness*” was translated from the Greek word “*hagiasmos*,” which is properly defined by Strong’s Greek Dictionary as “*purification, that is, (the state) purity.*” This same word was translated as both “*holiness*” and “*sanctification,*” but in every case speaks of a “*pure heart.*” Jesus said, “*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God*”

Matthew 5:8.

The apostle speaks of this in the next chapter of this epistle, saying, “*Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate*” Hebrews 13:12.

Did Jesus “*suffer outside the gate of the city?*” Yes He did! Did He shed His precious blood on the cross? Again, the only possible answer is “**Yes He did!**” If these things are true, those who believe them and trust in Him who “*loved us, and gave Himself for us*” Galatians 2:20, are sanctified. They are “*made holy,*” which means their heart is “*purified*” without religious works or human efforts. The heart of Cornelius was “*purified*” in a moment of time just before the Holy Ghost fell upon him

Acts 10:44, Acts 15:8-9.

It is impossible to have a “*pure heart*” and continue in sin. Jesus said everything that defiles a man comes out of his heart:

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

*“That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”* Mark 7:20-23

A “*pure heart*” has none of these pollutions in it. It is a heart that has been washed and made clean by the blood of Jesus Christ. He “*...loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood...*”

Revelation 1:5.

**15** “**Looking diligently...**” These words are translated from the Greek word “*episkopeō*,” which is properly defined as “*to oversee; by implication to beware*” Strong’s Greek Dictionary. Perhaps a better translation would have been to “*Being watchful and aware lest any man fail...*”

**“...lest any man fail of the grace of God...”** The word “*lest*” is used three times in two verses, indicating three things which are the end result of those who, for whatever reason, cease in “*looking unto Jesus*” verse 2.

The first of these warning is “*lest any man fail of the grace of God.*” The Greek word “*hustereō*,” which was translated as “*fail*” properly means “*to fall short.*” It is the same word that is translated as “*come short*” in Romans 3:22; “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*”

The “*grace of God*” in this verse is the same as “*so great salvation*” in Hebrews 2:3. The Apostle Peter spoke of the Old Testament prophets who received visions of our great salvation, and called it “*the grace that should come unto you*” I Peter 1:10, through “*the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow*” I Peter 1:11. The manner of “*this grace*” Romans 5:2 is such

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

that Isaiah said, “*Thy people also shall be all righteous...*” Isaiah 60:21, and “*...they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD*” Isaiah 62:12. Those who fail of the grace of God cannot be either righteous or holy because they have lost the “*so great salvation*” Hebrews 2:3 which is received only “*by grace, through faith,*” as a “*gift of God*” Ephesians 2:8.

Any person who “*fails of the grace of God*” will definitely find themselves once again in bondage to sin. Paul clearly told those at Galatia who turned from Christ to trust in the Law, “*Ye are fallen from grace*” Galatians 5:4. They had “*failed of the grace of God,*” and he said to them, “*Christ shall profit you nothing*” Galatians 5:2, and “*Christ is become of no effect unto you*” verse 4. Such is the condition of those who “*fail of the grace of God.*” It is only through the grace of God that “*sin shall not have dominion over you*” Romans 6:14.

### **“...lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you...”**

Those who “*despise the chastening of the Lord*” and “*faint at His rebuke*” verse 5 will often become bitter at God, believing He has failed them, and wrongly chastised them. The correct understanding of the “*root of bitterness,*” however, goes even beyond a temporary bitterness which can be repented of. When I was a child, we had a wild orange tree in our front yard. It was beautiful to see, but painful to touch, because its branches were covered with sharp three inch thorns, and produced no fruit. My dad had the tree cut down and grafted four shoots from a satsuma tree into the stump. Out of that wild stump grew a beautiful satsuma tree, and within a couple of years, it was loaded with sweet fruit. This continued until a winter season in which the temperature plunged below 10 degrees for about a week, and the satsuma tree died. The wild root of the tree survived and began to put forth wild branches, which were covered with thorns and could not produce fruit. This is what the apostle spoke of as a “*root of bitterness springing up.*”

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

Those who fail of the grace of God will always see sin revive in their hearts.

**“...and thereby many be defiled;”** Bitterness destroys the one who is bitter, and defiles those who sympathize with them. Many years ago I ate a pickled carrot, and was shocked when it burnt my mouth. I discovered it had been pickled in a jar of jalapeno peppers, and had taken on the heat of the peppers. For me, the carrot was defiled. And so it is with those who seek companionship with a bitter person; they become bitter also.

There is healing for the bitterness that destroys in the churches, but it cannot come without the refreshing from heaven to wash the bitterness away. Very often a bitter person will resist the Holy Spirit of God when He moves among the people. If, however, they will simply surrender in His presence, all bitterness will be washed away, and they will “blessed” to become a “blessing.”

### **16 “Lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as Esau...”**

The use of the word *“fornicator”* in this verse does not indicate that Esau was living in fornication. The definition of the Greek word *“ pornos,”* which was translated as *“fornicator,”* means *“to sell”* and by extension *“a (male) prostitute.”* Esau did not *“sell”* his body, however, but he *“sold his birthright,”* and became a *“spiritual fornicator.”*

This is the third of those things we as ministers of Christ are told to be watchful and aware, *“lest”* these should come to the church. The first is those who *“fail of the grace of God.”* The second, the old man of sin revives in their heart, and is manifest in their lifestyle, and finally, they become such as would sell their eternal soul for the morsels of flesh which the world has to offer.

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

**“...who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.”** The “*profane person*,” as the word is used in this verse, speaks of those who, like Esau, are guilty of “*despising their birthright*.” They have the “*birthright claim*” to all the “*spiritual blessings*” Ephesians 1:3 of the children of God, but their “*affections*” are set on “*things on earth*,” and not on “*things above*” Colossians 1:1-2. Esau is said to have “*sold his birthright*” for “*one morsel of meat*,” which indicates what little regard such people have for the “*unsearchable riches of Christ*” Ephesians 3:8, which is the birthright of the children of God. Their greater love is set on “*the things of this world*” I John 1:15.

**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.”** Esau never understood he had lost his birthright blessing until the day he expected to receive it. The matter of selling it to Jacob for a bowl of pottage was a simple “jest” in his sight; certainly everyone could see that. Both Jacob and his mother Rebecca took it very seriously, however, when they plotted to get the blessing for Jacob. Those who “*despise their birthright*” never know they have lost it until it is too late, when they stand before God, only to be turned away.

**18 “For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched...”** The “*mount that might be touched*” refers to Mount Sinai in Arabia, where God came down in the fire to speak to the children of Israel Exodus 20:1-7.

**“...and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,**

**19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:”** God had promised the children of Israel incredibly great and wonderful things, if they

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

would “*obey His voice*” and “*keep His covenant*” Exodus 19:5-6. When God began speaking to them, however, they turned their backs and fled from His presence, crying to Moses, “*Let not God speak with us...*” Exodus 20:18-19.

**20** “(For they could not endure that which was commanded...)” “*That which was commanded*” had nothing to do with “*the Ten Commandments*” which God spoke to the children of Israel that day. If they had listened to what God said, everything may have ended differently for them. “*That which was commanded,*” which they “*could not endure*” was spoken to them by Moses...

**“...And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:”** Their fear of being “*thrust through with a dart*” if they touched the mountain is the reason they refused to hear the voice of God and “*drew back*” from the mountain.

It may seem strange that the mountain Paul said “*might be touched,*” is the same mountain which God commanded the people not to touch.

**21** “**And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:**)” According to the words used in the Greek text, Moses was terrified and frightened.

**22** **But ye are come unto mount Sion...**” Mount Sion (Zion) is the “*holy mountain of God*” that cannot be seen with the eyes or touched with the hands of man. It is, however, a “*mountain*” to which we are to “*draw near,*” and “*enter in.*” Paul will give us an incredible view of Mount Sion in the next verses.

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

**“...and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem...”** This is the “city” for which Abraham searched during his lifetime. It is “*a city whose builder and maker is God*” Hebrews 11:10.

**“...and to an innumerable company of angels,”** All the angels of God rejoice as the redeemed “*draw near.*”

**23 “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven...”** This “*church of the firstborn*” is made up of all whose names are “*written in heaven,*” whether presently alive on earth, or those who have “*died in faith*” and “*received the promise.*”

**“...and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,”** The eleventh chapter of Hebrews gives the record of numerous men and women in the Old Testament who were “*justified by faith.*” They were all said to be “*just* (righteous)” before God, but they all “*died in faith, not receiving the promises*” Hebrews 11:13.

All of them did, in fact, “*receive promises,*” but they could not receive those promises of redemption and salvation before Christ died as “*the lamb of God*” John 1:29 to “*take away our sin*” I John 3:5. Our “*so great salvation*” Hebrews 2:3 is the “*better thing*” Hebrews 11:40 God has provided for us, which they could not receive in their lifetime. Those who “*died in faith,*” however, have also received the “*better thing*” when Christ shed His precious blood on the cross at Calvary. These are the “*spirits of just men made perfect*” spoken of in this verse, who are presently in the “*heavenly Jerusalem.*”

**24 “And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant...”** Above all, as we “*come to mount Sion,*” we are drawing near to Jesus, who “*loved us and gave Himself for us*” Galatians 2:20.

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

**“...and to the blood of sprinkling...”** The blood of millions of animals was *“sprinkled”* for centuries past, none of which could *“take away sins”* Hebrews 10:4. The *“blood of sprinkling”* in this verse speaks of the blood which Christ shed Hebrews 13:12 for our sanctification. He *“...loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood”* Revelation 1:5.

**“...that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”** This phrase is one of the most misunderstood phrases in the New Testament. We know that God told Cain, *“...the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground”* Genesis 4:10. We do not know what the blood of Abel was crying for. Was it crying for vengeance? ...or was it crying for mercy and forgiveness for Cain? The reality is that Abel's blood, which was shed by Cain, did not say anything, but it remained on the ground as proof of Cain's guilt. Please read the following closely.

*“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.”* Hebrews 11:4

Abel's *“more excellent sacrifice”* was the blood of a lamb from his flocks. He offered a *“firstling of his flock”* Genesis 4:4, while Cain offered *“the fruit of the ground”* Genesis 4:3. Abel's sacrifice was *“more excellent”* than Cain's simply because it was a *“blood sacrifice”* such as God required of man until the time Christ shed His precious blood to *“take away our sin”* John 1:29, Hebrews 10:4, I John 3:5. The blood of Abel's sacrifice could only make a covering for sins, but it could not *“take away sin”* Hebrews 10:4. The blood of Jesus Christ is *“the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”* It is holy and precious blood. It is the blood of the *“Lamb of God,”* which *“taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29.

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

**25** “**See that ye refuse not him that speaketh...**” *“Him that speaketh”* refers to Jesus and His precious blood which *“speaketh better things....”*

**“...For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth...”** God *“spake on earth”* to the entire congregation of Israel at Mount Sinai Exodus 20:1-17. They *“refused”* to hear His voice Exodus 20:19; they worshiped a golden calf Exodus 32:1-6, and refused to enter into Canaan because of their unbelief Numbers 14:1-11, which was the reason they perished in the wilderness.

**“...much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:”** We should keep in mind that in the New Covenant, it is Christ and His blood that speaks from heaven.

**26** “**Whose voice then shook the earth...**” The earth trembled as God spoke from the mountaintop of Sinai.

**“...but now he hath promised...”** This promise was spoken by the prophet Haggai; *“For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations....”* Haggai 2:6-7.

**“...saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.”** This *“shaking”* began when the Son of God shed His precious blood on the cross, and has never ceased where the blood of Christ is preached. Heaven itself was shaken when the blood of Christ was shed, and Michael and his angels were able to cast Satan and his angels out of Heaven. *“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb...”* Revelation 12:11.

The preaching (speaking) of the cross and blood of Christ still shakes everything that can be shaken, with the *“removal”* of everything that is shaken verse 27. We should understand, it is

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

“what” the blood of Christ “speaks” that “*shakes both heaven and earth.*” What does the blood speak? Below I have given a few verses that the precious blood of Jesus Christ speaks of:

**Redemption:** “*In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*” Ephesians 1:7

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

**A Pure Conscience:** “*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?*” Hebrews 9:14

**Sanctification:** “*Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*” Hebrews 13:12

**Cleansed from all Sin:** “*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*” 1 John 1:7

**Washed in His Blood:** “*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood....*” Revelation 1:5

“*These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*” Revelation 7:14

**Made Overcomers:** “*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb....*” Revelation 12:11

**27** “**And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken...**” Christ did not

## **Christ: Our Mediator**

shed His precious blood to “cover sins” as mere animal blood did. His blood was shed to “*make an end of sins*” as promised by the angel Gabriel Daniel 9:24-25. Does that “shake” you? Don’t be shaken, but believe! Trust in Christ, who “*loved you and gave himself for you*” Galatians 2:20, and He will “*take away your sins*” John 1:29, I John 3:5.

**“...as of things that are made...”** Those who are “*in Christ*” are “*new creations*” II Corinthians 5:16. The phrase, “*things that are made*” speaks of the original creation, “*the world, and the things that are in the world*” I John 2:15-17.

**“...that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.**

**28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved...** The children of God are those who have been “*... delivered from the power of darkness*” and “*translated into the kingdom of His dear Son*” Colossians 1:13. This speaks of “*the kingdom which cannot be moved.*”

**“...let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably...”** Grace is not given to take sinners to heaven; instead, grace is given “*to serve God acceptably.*”

**“...with reverence and godly fear:**

**29 For our God is a consuming fire.”** It is amazing to consider that when Moses charged the second generation of those who came out of Egypt to obey the voice of God who spoke to their fathers from Mount Sinai, he said to them, “*For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire.*” The apostle Paul, when charging us with the voice of Christ and His precious blood that speaks to us from Mount Zion, says, “*For our God is a consuming fire.*” Such is the warning he gives to those who refuse the speaking of Christ’s blood, and “*despise the Spirit of Grace*” Hebrews 10:28-29. These are those who “*neglect so great salvation*” Hebrews 2:3.

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

**“Christ: The Same ...Forever”**

**1** **“Let brotherly love continue.”** The first commandment of Christ and the message they *“heard from the beginning”* <sup>1John 3:11</sup> was to *“love one another as I (Christ) have loved you”* <sup>John 15:12</sup>. The apostle exhorts them to “continue in love.”

**2** **“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”** The Greek word *“aggelos,”* which was translated as *“angels,”* is properly defined as *“a messenger.”* It refers to the messengers of God, whether they are heavenly angels or ministers of Christ on earth. In times of great persecution, when faith in Christ could cost your life, the exhortation is to treat every wayfaring man as you would treat an angel of God, for it may be they are ministers of Christ.

**3** **“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them...”** Minister to the needs of those who are imprisoned for the testimony of Jesus.

**“...and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.”** The Greek word that was translated as *“adversity”* speaks of *“maltreatment.”* Those who are *“persecuted for righteousness sake”* <sup>Matthew 5:10-11</sup>. These are very special in the sight of our Lord. The apostle dealt with this same issue to the Corinthians when he said, *“...whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it”* <sup>1 Corinthians 12:26</sup>. We are to see ourselves as being *“bound with those who are bound,”* and *“afflicted with those who are afflicted,”* because we are *“one body”* <sup>1 Corinthians 12:20</sup> with them in Christ.

**4** **“Marriage is honourable in all...”** Marriage, as it was instituted by God in the beginning, is the union between one man and one woman. Marriage in our generation has fallen

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

into dishonor by the vast majority of the people. When over fifty percent of firstborn children are born outside of the bonds of marriage, marriage is dishonored. When men and women live together as man and wife without the bonds of marriage, they are dishonoring marriage. When men seek marriage with men and women with women, marriage is dishonored. When some are forbidden to marry for religious reasons, marriage is dishonored by that religion. When the apostle made the clear statement that marriage (the union between one man and one woman) is honorable in all, he never considered the issue of “*gay marriage*,” which is the ultimate “dishonor” to marriage.

**“...and the bed undefiled...”** Both the Adam Clark and the Jamieson Fawcett and Brown commentaries agree this phrase should be understood to say “...and let the bed be undefiled,” which speaks of the marriage bed. It is actually an “*honorable marriage*” that serves to keep the bed undefiled. The Apostle Paul said to the Corinthian church, which was troubled with fornicators at the time 1 Corinthians 5:1, “...to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” 1 Corinthians 7:2. It is sad that many who profess to be “*Christians*” believe that nothing can defile the marriage bed. This is far from the truth the apostle is presenting. In Romans 1:26, when speaking of the “*vile affections*” which God gave the people up to, Paul said, “...for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature.” Vile affections often begin in the marriage bed, but soon move outside of marriage because of the uncontrollable passions that are released when the marriage bed is defiled. “*Sodomy*” is an abomination in heterosexuals as well as in homosexuals.

**“...but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.”** When marriage becomes a “*legal cover*” for perverted pas-

## **Christ: The Same ...Forever**

sions, that “*marriage*” is not honorable, and the “*bed*” is defiled. God sees and knows all things, and He will judge all whoremongers and adulterers.

**5** “**Let your conversation...**” The Greek word that was translated “*conversation*” actually speaks of your “*manner of life*” or your “*lifestyle*.”

**“...be without covetousness...”** The Greek word that was translated as “*covetousness*” in this phrase is properly understood as “*to be not fond of silver*.” The apostle said to the young man Timothy, “*The love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*” I Timothy 6:10. This is a consistent theme in the writings of all the apostles. The apostle John exhorted the “*young men*” to “*love not the world, neither the things that are in the world,*” which is another exhortation against covetousness. The covetous person is listed among those whom Paul said “*shall not inherit the kingdom of God*” I Corinthians 6:10.

**“...and be content with such things as ye have...”** According to the apostle Paul, the present day idea that “*gain (prosperity) is godliness*” has issued out of “*corrupt minds, destitute of the truth*” I Timothy 6:5. The apostle tells us, “*from such withdraw thyself,*” and continues in the next verse to give us the opposite truth; “*but godliness with contentment is great gain*” I Timothy 6:6. This is most certainly not a “*plea for poverty,*” but for “*contentment with such things as ye have.*”

**“...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”** In “good times” the apostle exhorts the people, “*...that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread*” I Thessalonians 3:12. In “bad times,” we have the promise of our Lord, “*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*” David said, “*I have never*

## Chapter 13 **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 13:1-25

### **Christ: The Same ...Forever**

*seen the righteous forsaken, nor their seed begging for bread”*

Psalms 37:25. Neither will you!

**6** “**So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.**” Those who trust in Christ in all things soon receive great confidence and boldness, knowing that He will not forsake them. He will be with them in whatever the future may bring.

**7** “**Remember them which have the rule over you...**” The phrase “*have the rule over you*” was translated from the Greek word “*hēgeomai*,” which is defined by Strong’s Greek Dictionary as “*to lead, that is, command (with official authority).*” The same word was also translated as “*governor*” and “*judge.*”

In the kingdom of Christ, no one is given authority from Christ to rule as a governor or judge. Jesus said, “*Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. **But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant***” Matthew 20:25-27.

A true man of God, whether apostle, prophet, evangelist, or pastor, will speak the word of God to the people, and “*lead them*” through example. Peter exhorted the elders, saying “*Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; **Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples (examples) to the flock***” I Peter 5:2-3. No man of God, pastor or otherwise, has been invested by God with authority over the consciences of the people. Understand this entire phrase to say, “*Call to your remembrance those who have led you....*”

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

**“...who have spoken unto you the word of God...”** They have given you the gospel, and have told you what the scriptures say about every issue of life.

**“...whose faith follow...”** They have “*led you*” in the faith; be followers of them “*in the faith.*”

**“...considering the end of their conversation.”** This last phrase suggests that the apostle is speaking of those great men and women of God who have gone on to be with Christ. The Greek word that was translated “*end*” is used only two times in the New Testament, and actually means “*an exit.*” The words “*end of their conversation*” speaks of their “*exit*” from this life. Some died as martyrs for the faith, holding fast to their profession of faith Hebrews 10:23. They did not “*draw back*” in the time of persecution and tribulation Hebrews 10:32. They “*kept the faith*” and “*the faith kept them.*”

**8 “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”** What He has done for those pioneers of the faith who have gone before us, He will do for us today, and for all who may come after us, who “*believe the truth*” and “*trust in Christ.*”

**9 “Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines...”** The apostle John said, “*Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed*” II John 1:9-10. Any doctrine other than the “*doctrine of Christ*” is a “*strange doctrine*” when found in the house of God.

The “*doctrine of Christ*” in short is this; “*Know who Christ is; know what He came into the world to do; and know He accomplished it through His death on the cross.*” If you know

## **Christ: The Same ...Forever**

“*Jesus is the Christ*” and place your trust in Him, He will do in your heart and nature everything He came into the world to do. This is the “*simplicity of Christ*” which Paul spoke of to the Corinthians II Corinthians 11:3. Many “*divers and strange doctrines*” have come into the church dogma during the almost two thousand years since Paul and the other apostles of Jesus Christ first revealed the gospel of Christ.

**“...For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace...”** The Greek word that was translated as “*established*” actually means “*to stabilize,*” or “*to give stability to.*” No one whose “*heart*” remains sinful has the stability spoken of in this verse. If grace “*covers sin,*” it does not give stability. If grace, on the other hand, “*takes sin away*” and fills the heart with righteousness, then the heart has been given “*stability.*”

**“...not with meats...”** When the apostle speaks of “*meats*” in this verse, he is not referring to the food we eat, but to certain doctrines which were “*imposed*” upon the people by the Law of Moses. Paul spoke of the priests who daily offered gifts and sacrifices in the tabernacle, “*...that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation*” Hebrews 9:9-10. The words “*which stood only*” indicate that such offerings could not “*establish the heart*” of the priest, but he “*stood only*” in the gifts and sacrifices he offered continually.

**“...which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.”** When the apostle wrote this epistle to the Hebrews, first and foremost in his mind was the “*meats*” that had “*occupied*” the Jews in their religion for over fifteen hundred years of the Law of Moses. In the third chapter of Romans,

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

Paul presents a series of questions that demand an answer. The first question presented is, “*What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?*” Romans 3:1. The apostle gives the answer in the next verse; “*Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God*” Romans 3:2. The last question in the series is in the ninth verse; “*What then? are we (the Jews under the Law) better than they (the unbelieving gentiles)? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin*” Romans 3:9. For over fifteen hundred years, the Jews had been “*kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed*” Galatians 3:23. They had kept the feast days, the “*holy days*” and the “*Sabbaths.*” They had offered millions of animal sacrifices, and sprinkled barrels of blood, but for all this, they were no better than the heathen nations around them. Certainly, under the Law of Moses they were “*occupied*” with “*meats*” that could do absolutely nothing for them.

The sad reality is that after almost two thousand years have passed since Christ shed His precious blood to “*wash us from our sins*” Revelation 5:1, the modern church believes it is spiritual to say “*we are sinners; we sin every day.*” We who believe in Jesus Christ have had every advantage over every other person on earth, but if the apostle were to ask the question today, “*What then? are we (believers) better than they (unbelievers),*” the answer would be the same as then; “*no, in no wise.*” The modern church has lost the truth that in the first generation of the church “*turned the world upside down*” Acts 17:6. It was a “*truth*” that transformed those who believed it from “*sinner*” to “*saint.*” Somewhere along the way we “*changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator*” Romans 1:25.

## **Christ: The Same ...Forever**

One case in point is a “*doctrine*” which millions have believed for the past five hundred years. It is considered to be an “*orthodox doctrine*,” that is, one which is beyond dispute. I speak of the doctrine of “*penal substitution*” which was given to the church only five hundred years ago by John Calvin. The brief form of this doctrine, which is almost universally believed in our generation, is that Jesus died “*to take the penalty for our sins.*” What does this doctrine do for those who trust in it? It leaves them in bondage to sin, to “*sin every day*,” while believing they are “*covered*” and “*hidden from the eyes of God.*” The basis for their “*security in Christ*” is that every sin, whether past, present, or future, has been forgiven even before they commit it. Those who believe this doctrine openly profess that they are “*still sinners*” and will continue in sin as long as they live in a body of flesh. They believe they will “*die in sin*” but will be “*resurrected in righteousness.*” It is certain that their “*doctrine*” has not benefited them in the least. It is certainly a “*strange doctrine*” to those who “*know the truth*” that has “*made them free.*” Christ did not die to “*take the penalty for our sin*,” but to “*take away our sin*” John 1:29, 1 John 3:5-6, 8.

**10** “**We have an altar...**” The Old Covenant sacrifices were offered at the altar of sacrifice. “*We have an altar;*” it speaks of where Christ was “*offered*” to take away the sin of the world.

**“...whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.”** Under the Old Covenant order, there were those sacrifices which were offered daily at the door of the tabernacle which were meat for the Levitical priesthood. The sin offerings, however, whose blood was brought into the holy place for the sins of the people, was forbidden for food. Instead, its body was to be taken outside the camp and burned to ashes. The body of Jesus, which was offered without spot unto God for the sanctification of the people Hebrews 10:10, is said to be the

## Chapter 13 **THE EVERLASTING COVENANT** Hebrews 13:1-25

### **Christ: The Same ...Forever**

meat and drink of the believer. Jesus referred to this in the sixth chapter of John shortly before going to the cross. *“I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world”* John 6:51.

*“Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.”* John 6:53-55

Jesus Christ is the New Covenant sacrifice. He was offered as *“The Lamb of God”* to *“take away the sin of the world”* John 1:29. Those who trust in anything else cannot eat of this altar. For those who *“know the truth”* John 8:32, our meat and drink is found at the altar where Christ was offered.

**11** **“For the bodies of those beasts** (which were offered under the Law), **whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.**

**12** **Wherefore Jesus also...**” The apostle makes a symbolic connection between the burning of the Old Covenant sin offering *“outside the camp”* and the crucifixion of Jesus which was also *“outside the camp.”* It is the purpose for which the blood of Christ was offered that makes all the difference for the believer. That *“purpose”* is revealed in the remainder of this verse.

**“...that** (in order that) **he might sanctify the people** (purify their hearts) **with his own blood...**” Jesus shed His blood, that He might *“sanctify the people.”* Sanctification cannot be a lifetime process.

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

**“...suffered without the gate.”** This is one of the most important scriptures in the bible for the believer to understand if we are to “*know the truth*” which Jesus said “*will make you free*” John 8:32. The eternal Christ became a man for the sole purpose of offering His body and blood, a sacrifice to “*take away the sin of the world*” John 1:29. He was “*...made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death*” Hebrews 2:9. It was predetermined that He would suffer and die the cursed “*death of the cross*” to reconcile the world through the sanctification of the people, which He accomplished with His own blood.

There are six questions that every news report must answer in order to be complete. They are; “*who, what, where, when, why, and how.*” This single verse, with only seventeen words, answers all of these questions with the exception of “*when,*” but we know when Christ died on the cross.

1. **Who?** “*Wherefore Jesus also...*”
2. **What?** “*...suffered...*”
3. **Where?** “*...outside the gate.*”
4. **When?** *This is the only question not answered in this verse.*
5. **Why?** “*...that He might sanctify the people...*”
6. **How?** “*...with His own blood...*”

Only seventeen words, inspired by the Holy Ghost and given to us by the apostle Paul in the conclusion of his epistle to the Hebrews, tell us everything we really need to know about why Christ became a man and died on the cross. It was “*that He might sanctify the people.*” This verse, however, only confirms what the apostle has told us repeatedly in all his epistles. It is a settled issue for those who know the truth; “*...we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all*” Hebrews 10:10.

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

**13** “Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp...” Jesus was not only crucified “*outside the camp,*” but He was rejected “*within the camp*” of the Jew’s religion for His entire ministry. About fifteen hundred years before, Moses removed himself and the tabernacle from the “*camp*” of Israel in response to their idolatrous worship before the golden calf.

*“And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, that every one which sought the LORD went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp.”* Exodus 33:7

Exactly as those who “*sought the LORD*” in Moses’ day had to go “*outside the camp*” to the tabernacle, which was “*outside the camp,*” so those who “*go forth*” to Jesus will also find themselves “*outside the camp*” of religion. Those who are “*in Christ*” are also “*outside the camp.*” It has always been the case, and it will always be so.

**“...bearing his reproach.”** “*Christ-crucified*” has always been a reproach to the unbelieving world. He died between two thieves; He was condemned by the high priest as a blasphemer and a deceiver; but He was “*set forth by God*” to be the “*propitiation for our sins*” Romans 3:25. Sadly, many who believe the truth of the gospel in our day have become a “*reproach*” in the eyes of those who dwell “*in the camp,*” and often find themselves driven “*outside the camp.*”

Isaiah described the condition of the nation when “*truth is fallen in the street,*” and “*justice standeth afar off*” Isaiah 59:14. It was in such a time as this that the prophet wrote, “*Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey*” Isaiah 59:14. It is those who **do not** “*continue in sin*” Romans 6:1-2 that have become the target of those who **do not** “*know the truth.*”

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

**14** “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.” Abraham sought for a city “whose builder and maker is God” Hebrews 11:10. God has prepared for us such a city. It is the “heavenly Jerusalem” Hebrews 12:22, which Paul said is “the mother of us all” Galatians 4:26.

**15** “By (through) him therefore...” Jesus is “The Christ.” God sent the angel Gabriel to Daniel to foretell the coming of “The Messiah (the Christ), the Prince (the Son of God)” Daniel 9:25. Gabriel gave six reasons for which Christ would come into the world; “...to (1) finish the transgression, and to (2) make an end of sins, and to (3) make reconciliation for iniquity, and to (4) bring in everlasting righteousness, and to (5) seal up the vision and prophecy, and to (6) anoint the most Holy” Daniel 9:24.

**“...let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”** Certain of the Old Testament Rabbis said that when the Messiah would come, all sacrifices and offerings would cease with the exception of “praises to God” for all the Messiah had accomplished. “Jesus is the Christ” I John 5:1, who has accomplished all these things through His death on the cross. It was Jesus Christ, who “caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease” Daniel 9:27 KJV when He offered His own body and blood, which fulfilled and finished every sacrifice and oblation. It is “through Jesus Christ” that we praise God continually, because He has, “made an end of sins” and “brought in everlasting righteousness” Daniel 9:24 for everyone who believes and trusts in Him. Oh, what “joy unspeakable, and full of glory” I Peter 1:8.

**16** “But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” Our “sacrifice of praise” must be more than lip service, however. To “do good”

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

and “*communicate*” speaks of our relationship with one another. “*Communicate*” actually speaks of helping those less fortunate among us by sharing what we have, both in material and spiritual things.

**17** “**Obey them that have the rule over you...**” The apostle Paul said to the Corinthians, “*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*” I Corinthians 11:1. In this verse, as in verse seven above, the words “*have the rule over*” were translated from the Greek word “*hēgeomai*,” which means “*to lead*.” The Greek word “*peithō*,” which was translated “*obey*” in this verse is better understood as “*confidence*” or “*trust*,” hence a better understanding of this phrase would be “*Have confidence in, trust, and rely upon those who lead you.*” Do so, however, only as they “*follow Christ*,” as the apostle Paul said to the Corinthian church, “*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*” I Corinthians 11:1.

**“...and submit yourselves...”** No believer is required to “*submit*” to ungodly leaders. True ministers of Jesus Christ, whether “*apostles, prophets, evangelists, or pastors and teachers*,” do not lead by command, but by “*example*” I Peter 5:2-3. The examples left us by Jesus and His apostles was the example of one who served. It was never the “*example*” of one in authority over the people to be served by the people Mathew 20:25-28.

**“...for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account...”** Every minister will “*give account*” before Christ of whether he (or she) has watched for the souls of the congregation. In watching for their souls, the man of God will “***Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine***” II Timothy 2:2. These are the limitations of the minister of Christ. We must not seek to control the people, knowing that Christ will certainly judge both “*the quick and the dead*” at His coming

## **Christ: The Same ...Forever**

**“...that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”** If the minister of Christ has been faithful to “watch for the souls” of the congregation through both the life they live and the word they preach, those who believe the word and follow the example will be blessed, and the minister of Christ will give account with joy. If the people, however, having seen the good example and heard the good word yet refuse to follow, the minister of Christ will “*give account*” with much grief, but it is the rebellious who will suffer the most.

**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.**

**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,”** In verse twelve the apostle establishes that the blood of Jesus Christ, which is “*the blood of the everlasting covenant,*” was shed to “*sanctify the people.*” In this verse, he shows the same blood which has sanctified us <sup>Hebrews 10:14</sup>, will also “*make us perfect in every good work to do His will.*” Everything God has done through Christ for the redemption of lost humanity was for one purpose; “*That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ*”

Ephesians 1:12.

**21 “Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight...”** We are “*new creations*” because of what Christ accomplished “*through death*” <sup>Hebrews 2:14</sup> on the cross. The existence of a “*new creation*” is “*to the praise of His glory*” <sup>Ephesians 1:12</sup> even before we do our first “*good work.*” Christ is glorified by what we are, and the same precious blood of Christ which has

**Christ: The Same ...Forever**

*“made us to be”* will also *“cause us to do”* those things that are *“well pleasing in His sight.”*

**“...through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

**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.**

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

**25 Grace be with you all. Amen.”**

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