

The Book of Hebrews

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Introduction

- ▶ The author is unknown
 - ▶ Why study this book?
 - ▶ Possible authors
 - ▶ Reasons for writing this book
 - ▶ Date when this book was likely written
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Introduction of Jesus as God's Son and as greater than the angels

- ▶ Chapter 1
- ▶ In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, **2** but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son. Heb 1:1-2
- ▶ The book of Romans points out the absolute *necessity* of Jesus, this book of Hebrews strongly shows the *superiority* of Christ

God's Truth

- ▶ The epistle begins by reminding the reader how God has communicated with His people in the past.
- ▶ We are living in the “last days”. Now Jesus has come. God has now...
- ▶ whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. Heb 1:2-3

Jesus – superior to the angels

- ▶ After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. 4 So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. Heb 1:3–4
- ▶ Jesus had a mission while on earth
- ▶ After He accomplished that mission, He ascended into heaven. Of course, He is much superior to the angels.

Jesus – Angels

- ▶ The writer compares Jesus to angels.
- ▶ For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten you"? (Psalm 2:7) And again: "I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"? (Samuel 7:14) *Heb 1:5*
- ▶ Jesus was the actual Son of God. No angel could lay claim to that
- ▶ Angels are not only made by Jesus, but are to worship Him

- ▶ Seven verses from the Old Testament are used to show the wavering Hebrew reader of the epistle that Jesus was far superior to any angel

Do not neglect so great a salvation

- ▶ If the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. Heb 2:2–3
- ▶ Jesus should be our first love and we should never forget Him nor ignore Him.

Jesus provides Salvation

- ▶ This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. Heb 2:3–4
- ▶ What is the evidence that Jesus did provide salvation to those who accept Him as Savior?

God's plan for mankind

- ▶ Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: **8** Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. Heb 2:7–8
- ▶ In the time of Christ, the Jews gave great credit to angels as the intermediaries between God and many of His prophets as God gave out the Law and directed the destiny of Israel and other nations. Yet, here the writer of Hebrews tells his readers that God's divine plan for the future is not to place angels in the position of authority over the world and its subjects. Instead, we are told that for some wonderful and amazing reason, God has kept man in His plan for the future.

Jesus restores mankind

- ▶ Man has been temporarily made “lower than the angels” and certainly does not have much control over creation. Jesus came to rectify this situation. As we give our lives to Jesus, we literally become a new creation in Christ.
- ▶ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. Heb 2:9

Our Brother, Jesus

- ▶ Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.
12 He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises." (Psalm 22:22)
Heb 2:11-12

Our glorified body in heaven

- ▶ Jesus is from the same stock as we are. He is human, so are we! His use of the term *brethren* for Christians shows that He fully identifies with mankind... we are His brothers and sisters. As a little sidebar, although we certainly NEVER will be any form of a god, we someday will be given a glorified body that we will use for eternity.

Jesus Suffered Himself

- ▶ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil-- 15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. 16 For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. Heb 2:14-16
- ▶ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.
- ▶ Jesus is a “merciful and faithful high priest.”
Heb 2:17

Jesus Defeated Satan

- ▶ This last portion of chapter 2 notes that Jesus came as God incarnate... God in the flesh (and blood) because this was necessary for Him to be our Savior. Because of leading His life as a perfect, sinless man He qualified to be the propitiation for our sins. The devil was not able to defeat Jesus. Just the contrary. Jesus defeated Satan.

Calvinism vs. Arminianism

- ▶ There are several verses in the book of Hebrews that talk about Christians being in danger of losing *something very significant* because of unbelief. These verses begin in chapter 3. They also appear in chapter 4 and, especially, chapter 6.
- ▶ Time will now be taken to discuss the controversial topic concerning the possibility of losing one's salvation. Is it possible?
- ▶ Calvin said no. Arminian theology says it is possible. Let us take a look at these views.

What might a person lose?

- ▶ The difficult question that arises is what is it that they are in danger of losing? These verses may be talking about losing one's *salvation*... or, they may be talking about losing the *peace and joy that accompanies the gift of salvation* in those people who earnestly obey Jesus Christ and turn the control of their lives over to the Holy Spirit.

OSAS (once saved, always saved)

- ▶ OSAS – one of the tenants of Calvinism
 - ▶ Certain people are *irresistibly called* by God to salvation; once saved, they will remain saved forever.
 - ▶ There is no possibility of losing one's salvation.
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Conditional Perseverance

- ▶ One of the tenants of Arminian theology
- ▶ Jacobus Arminius (A.D. 1560–1609)
- ▶ John Wesley (Methodist)
- ▶ A Christian can fall away from the faith and lose their salvation.
- ▶ The saved person *himself/ herself* can choose to turn away from Christ, using his/her free will, and fall from grace due to this *newfound* unbelief – i.e. rejection of Christ.

Which Side is Correct?

- ▶ Millions of believers disagree on this issue. Only one group can be correct, but which one?
 - ▶ There are many excellent Bible scholars who find many Bible verses to back up their belief on this issue.
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OSAS vs. Conditional Perseverance

- ▶ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 [if a Christian loses his salvation, that certainly would not be working out for his ultimate good]
- ▶ **And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."** John 6:38-40

OSAS verses continued...

- ▶ Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:13–14
- ▶ Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come
2 Cor 1:21–22
- ▶ And more... e.g. 1 Cor 6:19–20 and John 10:27–29

Conditional Perseverance

- ▶ However, there are many verses that suggest otherwise.
- ▶ **And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. Rev 22:19**
- ▶ **Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. 5 Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. Rev. 2:4–5**

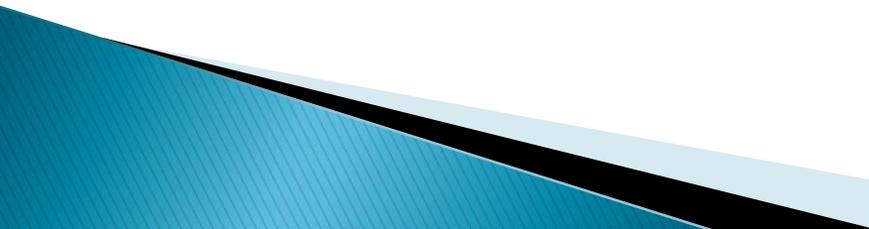
And more verses...

- ▶ Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. Luke 8:11–13
- ▶ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned John 15:5–6

And even more...

- ▶ They returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said. Acts 14:21–22
- ▶ Many additional verses, such as: Luke 12:42–46, Matt 10:22, Rev 3:4–5, 1 Cor 10:1–12
- ▶ Interestingly, some of the same verses are used to support opposite sides of this debate... they just interpret these verses differently.

A Few Examples

- ▶ A young woman gives her heart to Christ while in High School. She goes to a Christian Bible College and then spends two years as a missionary in Japan. All this time she confidently and humbly serves the Lord. Several years later, she is found working as a call girl in Las Vegas. When asked, she says she no longer believes in Jesus but has turned to Scientology.
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Interpretation of this Case

- ▶ **Conditional Perseverance:** This is simple. She was once saved, but then turned her back on Jesus and now is lost.
- ▶ **OSAS** – can look at this in three ways... let us talk about it.
- ▶ Before we get back to the commentary on Hebrews...
- ▶ When I discuss the verses that relate to the above topic, I will point out the two ways that they could be interpreted. I certainly lean to the belief that a person cannot lose their salvation.

The Bottom Line

- ▶ The bottom line should be, all Christians should NEVER live their lives in such a way that they can be in danger of losing anything from God! Never lose faith in Jesus. Who in their right mind would want to gamble on this subject?

Jesus is greater than Moses

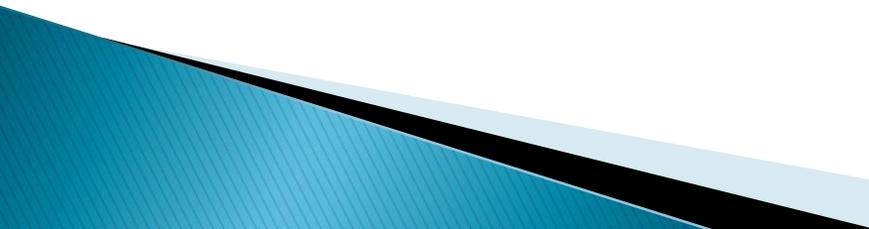
- ▶ Chapter 3: Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest whom we confess. Heb. 3:1
- ▶ Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. 4 For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. 5 Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. 6 But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. Heb 3:3–6
- ▶ The writer now asks for these folks to think very carefully about the two prophets of God.

Moses and Jesus

- ▶ Moses was responsible for the tabernacle and the current place that the Jews had in the world ... freed out of their bondage to Egypt.
 - ▶ Jesus was responsible for creating the world and freeing mankind from their bondage to sin!
 - ▶ He who creates the universe is God. Jesus is God. God the Son created the universe! Jesus not only created the universe that all people live in, but He is the chief cornerstone of another great building project... the Church.
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- ▶ we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.
Heb 3:6
 - ▶ MacArthur vs. Bruce
 - ▶ As I have previously mentioned, there will be occasional, but very important, references in the chapters to follow of the real possibility of the Hebrew recipients of this letter **losing something very, very important.**
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What might one lose?

- ▶ New Schofield Reference Bible suggests...
 - ▶ 1. These may be Jews who stop just short of salvation
 - ▶ 2. Believers who lose their rewards... not their salvation
 - ▶ 3. Believers who are in danger of losing their salvation!
 - ▶ 4. Only a hypothetical case is being presented
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Believer... be careful...

- ▶ So, as the Holy Spirit says:
"Today, if you hear his voice, **8 do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, 9** where your fathers tested and tried me and for forty years saw what I did. **10** That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.' **11** So I declared on oath in my anger, '**They shall never enter my rest.**'"
Heb 3:7-11 Psalm 95:7-11

- ▶ Other than Joshua and Caleb, all of the men over the age of 20, at the time when that faithless decision was made, were never permitted to enter into their rest... that is, enter into the “Promised Land”. On the other hand, God never allowed any of the Israelites to return to Egypt either. They, at least, had been removed from their position in bondage.
 - ▶ It is appropriate to state what the “Promised Land” represents to the two different groups mentioned above.
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Just what is meant by the Promised Land?

- ▶ OSAS - Canaan = the life of peace and joy
- ▶ Conditional Perseverance - Canaan = Heaven
- ▶ Keep in mind these concepts as we go further into this study.
- ▶ See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. Heb 3:12-13

Do Not Harden Your Hearts

- ▶ "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion." Heb 3:15
Psalm 95:7-8
- ▶ Now the Hebrew Christians are reminded that they have become partakers of Christ. In verse 6, they were exhorted to keep the faith to *the end* to continue *steadfast* in the house of Christ.
- ▶ Those consequences may be a loss of **salvation**, or the loss of the **peace, joy and other rewards**
- ▶ **What keeps people from entering into God's peace? Their unbelief!**

Entering into God's Rest

- ▶ Chapter 4: Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. 2 For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. 3 Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said,
"So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'"
And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. Heb 4:1-3

Who will enter Heaven?

- ▶ Those that have heard the gospel but did not put their faith in Jesus are those that will not enter Heaven... in other words, they were never Christians in the first place. Those that believed entered into rest; those that did not combine knowledge with faith did not.
- ▶ if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. **9** There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; **10** for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. **11** Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.
Heb 4:8-11

God's Rest

- ▶ Once a person is saved by faith in Jesus, they need to immediately give up the losing battle of attempting to be saved by works. When this is truly done, that person can rest in the finished work of Christ for their salvation. After our salvation, we *obey* Jesus because we love Him and want to make Him proud... we should never again *work* for our salvation... never.

The Word of God

- ▶ For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Heb 4:12-13
- ▶ faith comes through hearing and hearing through the Word of God. Rom. 10:17

Our Great High Priest

- ▶ Therefore, since we have a great High Priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. **15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. **16** Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. **Heb 4:14–16**

Jesus, our High Priest of the order of Melchizedek

- ▶ Chapter 5: Christ is superior to the Levitical priests
- ▶ Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. 3 This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. 4 No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. Hebrews 5:1–4
- ▶ Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a High Priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have begotten You." Hebrews 5:5 (Psalms 2:7)
- ▶ As He also says in another place: *"You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek"*. Hebrews 5:6 (Psalms 110:4)
- ▶ Levitical order vs. the order of Melchizedek

Abram and Melchizedek

- ▶ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, 19 and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. 20 And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Gen 14:18–20
- ▶ Melchizedek was a **king/priest**. Jesus is a King/Priest/Prophet. Levitical priests certainly were not kings.

The Humanity of Jesus

- ▶ During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. **8** Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered. Hebrews 5:7–8
- ▶ Let us always remember the importance of prayer and fasting.
- ▶ Jesus suffered as do all humans.

- ▶ And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him. Hebrews 5:9
 - ▶ Paul exhorts his readers to learn more about their Lord and work toward their sanctification.
 - ▶ But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Heb 5:1–14
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Believers must stay strong in their faith

- ▶ Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2 instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. Hebrews 6:1–2
- ▶ The writer of Hebrews begins to go into a more complex aspect of Christian theology.

The Backslider

- ▶ It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, 6 if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

Hebrews 6:4–6

- ▶ Two basic interpretations as follows...

Once Saved, Always Saved

- ▶ **OSAS adherents** – John McArthur, who believes OSAS, states that these verses are referring to those Hebrews in the reading audience who knew quite a bit about Jesus and were certainly strongly considering giving their lives over to Him. They were *enlightened* (i.e. had knowledge) about the gospel; they had momentarily *tasted the goodness* of God and what His Son had accomplished with His sacrificial death. Yet, they were not yet Christians.

Christians who fall away

- ▶ F.F. Bruce looks at these verses differently. He says, “the things listed here by the writer to describe the “fallen” are most certainly things that characterize all true Christians.”
- ▶ Of course, one of these two interpretations is right... the other wrong. As I have labored to point out, regardless of who is right, it is critical to keep our faith in Jesus Christ once we have turned to Him. If we do, the question of who is right becomes a moot point!

- ▶ Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. 8 But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned. Hebrews 6:7–8
- ▶ Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case—things that accompany salvation. God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.
Hebrews 6:9–10

People are Saved to do Good Works

- ▶ Although no one is saved because of their work for God, all Christians should be *recognized as such by their works*. Therefore, all should be hard working, faithful Christians until that moment that we step into Heaven and meet Jesus face to face.
 - ▶ The reader is then reminded that God has every intention of blessing His “chosen people.”
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Jesus is our High Priest

- ▶ God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. 19 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. Heb 6:1–20

God's Promise is Sure

- ▶ God wants us to know that His pledge is sure. How? There are two reasons, each one that would be totally sufficient on their own. First, God simply cannot lie and He had given His promise to Abraham and his descendants. Second, to really make this point iron clad... God swears it to us, which He rarely does... only to prove to the recipient of the promise that the promise has absolutely no chance of ever being rescinded!

Jesus is from a superior order of priesthood

- ▶ Chapter 7: The High Priest of this New Covenant was infinitely more qualified than any of the Levitical priests. Chapter 7 develops the notion that Jesus was in a better *order of priesthood*.
 - ▶ Chapter 8 talks of His better *Covenant*. Chapter 9 points to His superior *sanctuary*.
 - ▶ Several parallels between Melchizedek and their High Priest, Jesus.
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Abraham tithes to Melchizedek

- ▶ Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people--that is, their brothers--even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater.

Hebrews 7:5-7

- ▶ The mystery king... a “type” of Jesus

Levitical system was inadequate

- ▶ If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come--one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron?
12 For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law.
Hebrews 7:11-12
- ▶ The current Levitical system of worship and sacrifice, it had become patently obvious that there was not going to be a mechanism whereby mankind was going to be able to save himself via the Law and animal sacrifice.

Jesus Brings in the New Covenant

- ▶ Given the fact that this system was not going to lead to *perfection*, a new system was imperative. Jesus ushered in that New Covenant.
- ▶ He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. 14 For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. 15 And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, 16 one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."
Hebrews 7:13–17 (Psalms 110:4)
- ▶ Jesus came out of the tribe of Judah

A Better System

- ▶ The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless **19** (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God. Hebrews 7:18–19
- ▶ And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, **21** but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever.'" Hebrews 7:20–21 (Psalms 110:4)

Jesus, the High Priest of a “Better Covenant”

- ▶ Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant. 23 Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; 24 but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. 25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. 26 Such a high priest meets our need--one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. Hebrews 7:22–26
- ▶ God has sworn an oath that Jesus would be the High Priest forever.
- ▶ Jesus is our *permanent* High Priest. He does intercede for His saints now and forever.

His Sacrifice is Once for All

- ▶ He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. **28** For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever. Hebrews 7:1–28
- ▶ The Levite priests had to make continual sacrifices. Jesus, needed only one incredible sacrifice...
- ▶ That offer was His life on the cross PLUS taking the penalty on His person for all of mankind's sins.

The Superiority of the New Covenant

- ▶ Chapter 8: We do have such a High Priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man. Hebrews 8:1-2
- ▶ This chapter is concerned with pointing out the superiority of the priestly ministry of Jesus and the superiority of the New Covenant.
- ▶ Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this One also to have something to offer. Hebrews 8:3

Jesus, our Living Sacrifice

- ▶ Jesus now sits in Heaven as a Living Sacrifice for all people if only they will turn to Him as the author and finisher of their salvation.
- ▶ However, the writer of Hebrews notes a potential problem... **If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. Hebrews 8:4**
- ▶ **They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. Hebrews 8:5**

A Superior Covenant

- ▶ Jesus is currently sitting on His throne in heaven interceding for His children.
- ▶ But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises. 7 For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. 8 But God found fault...

Hebrews 8:5–8

The New Covenant

- ▶ The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. 9 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. 10 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. Hebrews 8:8-10

New Covenant cont.

- ▶ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." (Jeremiah 31:31–34)
By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear. Heb 8:1–13

Covenants Compared

- ▶ Mosaic Covenant – conditional
- ▶ New Covenant – a better covenant. Let us take a look at a few of these better features now...
- ▶ It does not put the Law on stone as did the Old Covenant. Instead, after we turn to Jesus, repent of our sins, believe that He died for our sins and rose from the dead, and ask Him into our heart, we are given a Law that is written in our hearts, mind and conscience. With the daily help of the Holy Spirit, *it is possible* for us to obey and follow God. This covenant is for all people, Jew and Gentile, weak and strong, rich and poor.
- ▶ Jesus, the Son of God, is the High Priest of this Covenant

Covenants Compared

- ▶ Certainly, it is ministered from a better sanctuary, heaven instead of earth
 - ▶ It has a better sacrifice than bulls, doves and lambs, etc., in fact, a perfect sacrifice... Jesus Himself. This New Covenant could and did provide total forgiveness for all sins. The Old Covenant could not do this.
 - ▶ This New Covenant is the only covenant at this time. The Old Mosaic Covenant is not in operation any longer.
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One day all those who follow Jesus will be united under the New Covenant

- ▶ There will come a day when all twelve tribes will unite under this New Covenant.
 - ▶ After the Great Tribulation, Jew and Gentile will all be united under Christ's New Covenant with Jesus continuing, of course, as the High Priest.
- 

The New Covenant is superior to the Old Covenant

- ▶ Chapter 9: A Comparison of the Covenants
- ▶ Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. ² A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand, the table and the consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place.
Hebrews 9:1–2
- ▶ The Lampstand and the Showbread

The Holy of Holies

- ▶ Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place (Holy of Holies),⁴ which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered Ark of the Covenant. This Ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant.⁵ Above the Ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the mercy seat. But we cannot discuss these things in detail now. Hebrews 9:3–5

The Golden Altar

- ▶ The golden altar actually was placed immediately outside the Holy of Holies. The altar was located just outside the veil to this area. No one really knows why the writer of Hebrews chose to write that it was in the “Holy of Holies.”
- ▶ Incense and coals from the altar were brought into this “room” on the Day of Atonement. Certainly, the **ministry** of the altar was within the Holy of Holies.

Contents of Holy of Holies

- ▶ The Mercy Seat
- ▶ The Ark of the Covenant
- ▶ When everything had been arranged like this, the priests entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. **7** But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and **never without blood**, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.
Hebrews 9:6–7

The Ceremony

- ▶ It was extremely important that he do this ceremony correctly. If he did not, he would be struck down dead.
- ▶ Blood was the necessary sacrificial material to cover the people's sins.
- ▶ The Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing. **9 This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. 10 They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings--external regulations applying until the time of the new order. Hebrews 9:8-10**
- ▶ They could not save anyone from their sins... they did not even *cover* all *potential* sins. The ceremonies then listed concerning food, drinks, washings, etc. were appropriate to do only until the reformation - i.e. the New Covenant - i.e. until Jesus came.

A More Perfect Tabernacle

- ▶ When Christ came as High Priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. Hebrews 9:11
- ▶ He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.
13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. 14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! Hebrews 9:12-14

Christ our Mediator

- ▶ For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.
Hebrews 9:15
- ▶ Those who are called and accept that call and receive Jesus as their Savior will receive the promise of eternal life!!!
- ▶ The law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.** Hebrews 9:22

Christ – the Perfect Sacrifice

- ▶ It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. **24** For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. Hebrews 9:23–24
- ▶ Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. Heb 9:28

Earthly Sanctuary

- ▶ Location is on earth where it is subject to destruction (as in A.D.70)
- ▶ It was temporary
- ▶ A thick veil separates the people from God
- ▶ The sacrifices are temporary fixes to cover sin... they cannot eliminate sins penalty
- ▶ The High Priest is human with all of humanities imperfections
- ▶ The sacrifices are animals
- ▶ It was only a “type” of the real sanctuary of God
- ▶ It was constructed by humans
- ▶ It belonged to Israel
- ▶ Blessings from worship and sacrifice were temporary
- ▶ It used animal blood to “cover” sins temporarily

Heavenly Sanctuary

- ▶ Location is in Heaven
 - ▶ It is permanent
 - ▶ There is direct access for all people to God and Jesus
 - ▶ The sacrifice provided by Jesus was for all time... once and for all
 - ▶ The High Priest is Jesus (God the Son)
 - ▶ The sacrifice was a “perfect” human (Jesus) and therefore acceptable to the Father
 - ▶ It was made by God
 - ▶ It belongs to the whole world
 - ▶ Blessings from this Heavenly Sanctuary result in eternal salvation
 - ▶ It uses the blood of Jesus to “cleanse” sins from all believers permanently
- 

Jesus is the Perfect Sacrifice

- ▶ Chapter 10: The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming--not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. **2** If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. **3** But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, **4** because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Hebrews 10:1-4

Jesus said...

- ▶ Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; 6 with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. 7 Then I said, 'Here I am--it is written about me in the scroll-- I have come to do your will, O God.'" Hebrews 9:5-7 (Psalms 40:6-8)
- ▶ He sets aside the first to establish the second. 10 And by that will, **we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** Hebrews 10: 9b-10
- ▶ Isaiah 1:11 and Jer. 6:20

Jesus came to do His Father's will

- ▶ It would require much more to settle the sin problem. Hence, the New Covenant was enacted. Then God prepared a body for His Son so that He could come onto the earth incarnate.
- ▶ Jesus said, **Here I am... I am come to do your will, O God.**” So Jesus came ready to do whatever His Father wanted Him to do. He followed through wonderfully by living a sinless life, teaching us how we should live and showing us God. Then Jesus became the Perfect Sacrificial Lamb to *finish* the work of redemption.

The Sacrifices of the Priests

- ▶ Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.
12 But when this priest (Jesus) had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Hebrews 10:11–12
- ▶ Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, 14 because by one sacrifice he has *made perfect* forever those who are *being made holy*. Hebrews 10:13–14
- ▶ Sanctification – the goal of all Christians

Sanctification

- ▶ The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds." Hebrews 10:15–16
- ▶ Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin. Hebrews 10:17–18

Confidence from Faith

- ▶ Therefore, brothers, since we have **confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20** by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in **full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 10:19–22

We have direct access to Jesus

- ▶ Now, because of Jesus and His blood sacrifice, all Christians have direct access to our Holy God... We are all now saints and can boldly come to God and Jesus with faith that our prayers, praise, worship and requests will be heard and answered. Jesus has now become our High Priest. We are invited to speak with God anytime and anywhere. Our temple is in the Heavens.
- ▶ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
Heb 10:25
- ▶ One final point on this topic from the writer of Hebrews...

Do not keep on sinning

- ▶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the Law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

Heb. 10:26–29

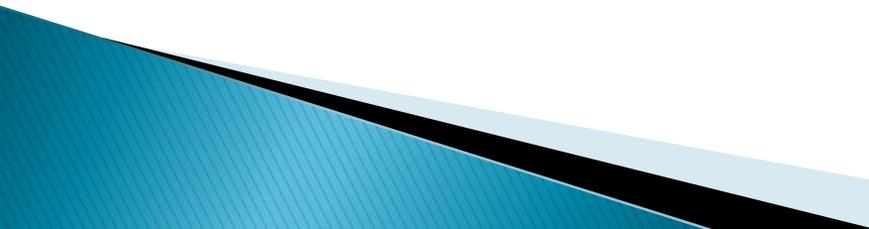
Keep the Faith

- ▶ Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. Heb 10:32–34

The Saints Will Persevere

- ▶ So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. **36** You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. **37** For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. **38** But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved. Heb 10:1–39
- ▶ **“Well done my good and faithful servant.”**
Matt 25:21

The Saints Hall of Fame

- ▶ Chapter 11: Many Old Testament Hebrew Saints are mentioned to show the reader the value of faith.
 - ▶ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1
 - ▶ Let us take a look at this concept of “faith.”
 - ▶ God gives us the faith to believe.
 - ▶ We can cultivate this gift, however, and God tells us how.
- 

Faith

- ▶ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.
4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead. Hebrews 11:3-4
- ▶ The Hall of Faith began at Creation.

The Hall of Faith

- ▶ Cain vs. Abel
 - ▶ Enoch
 - ▶ And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Heb. 11:6
 - ▶ Joshua
 - ▶ Job – his story
- 

Hall of Faith

- ▶ Noah
- ▶ Abraham – many examples of faith
- ▶ By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, 18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." 19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. Heb 11:17–19

Hall of Faith

- ▶ The Patriarchs
- ▶ Moses
- ▶ Joshua
- ▶ Rahab
- ▶ Many, many others
- ▶ The writer of this epistle telling his readers that because of this wonderful thing called *faith*, men and women over the centuries had performed amazing feats for God. They had been willing to suffer loss and pain for the Lord. All of these things had been done because of their *faith*. To obey and follow God is the only way to truly be happy and by placing their *faith in Him*, they would someday “gain a better resurrection.” (Heb 11:35)

The Result of Faith

- ▶ These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. **40** God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect. Heb 11:1-40

Living the Christian Life

- ▶ Chapter 12: Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb. 12:1–2
- ▶ As the saints of old watch from above... emulate Jesus as we work toward sanctification.

Godly Discipline

- ▶ *"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, 6 because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." (Proverbs 3:11–12) 7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? 8 If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!*
Hebrews 12:5–9

Godly Discipline

- ▶ Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:10–11

- ▶ Christians are actually considered sons and daughters of the Holy God.

Never Give Up

- ▶ The writer of the Hebrews exhorts the reader to lead a holy, pure life in their remaining years... to keep on with the marathon race of life. Never giving up until face to face with Jesus in heaven... saved for eternity.
- ▶ You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm. Heb. 12:18

The City of the Living God

- ▶ **But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God.** You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, **23** to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, **24** to **Jesus the mediator of a new covenant**, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. Heb. 12:22–24
- ▶ All Christians are invited to come to God. He awaits our coming... now through our prayers and song and worship... someday, we will actually be there in spirit... and someday we will be there in our glorified body.

An Unshakable Kingdom

- ▶ The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken--that is, created things--so that what cannot be shaken may remain. **28** Therefore, since we are receiving **a kingdom that cannot be shaken**, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, **29** for our "God is a consuming fire." Heb 12:27-29

And Finally...

- ▶ Never forget, God is love and God offers joy and peace..... But He is just and will not suffer sin to enter into His Holy Heaven – those who do not enter will experience the fact that God is also a “consuming fire

Practical Advice to the Christian

- ▶ The concluding chapter speaks of practical ways we must live by faith. In chapter 11, many examples of people living by great faith were given. Chapter 12 exhorts all Christians to follow their example.
- ▶ Keep on loving each other as brothers. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. 3 Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.
Heb. 13:1–3
- ▶ Matt 25:35–40

More Advice

- ▶ Marriage, money
- ▶ God's words of comfort...
- ▶ "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."
(Deut. 31:6) So we say with confidence,
"The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What
can man do to me?" (Psalms 118:6)
Hebrews 13:5-6
- ▶ Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of
God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of
life and imitate their faith. Heb. 13:7
- ▶ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and
forever. Heb 13:8
- ▶ Beware of cults.

Look for the City to Come

- ▶ We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat. **11** The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. **12** And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. **13** Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. **14** For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are **looking for the city that is to come.** Hebrews 13:10–14

Offer the sacrifice of praise

- ▶ Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name. **16** And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. Heb. 13:15-16
- ▶ Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. Heb 13:17
- ▶ The writer (probably Paul) asks for prayer

In Conclusion

- ▶ May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, 21 equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. 22 Brothers, I urge you to bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written you only a short letter.

Hebrews 13:20–22

- ▶ A word concerning his young friend, Timothy.
- ▶ Grace be with you all, Amen. Heb 13:25



