

A Study on the Book of Hebrews (chapters 1-10)

1

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 1-2 We immediately see the duality of the teaching in this book. This book is about the differences between the old covenant and the new. Verse 1 speaks of the prophetic word spoken in the old testament, while verse 2 states that God has spoken directly, through Jesus in the new testament.

v 3 Here the central issue is stated--Jesus Christ--who carried the "express image" of God has "purged our sins"--completely forgiven sin and --"sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Having accomplished salvation, Christ took on a position of power and authority over all believers, a government greater and better than any human government.

v 4-6 Christ is greater than any other part of God's creation, including the angels.

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

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

9 Thou hast loved
righteousness, and hated
iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy
God, 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:

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

12 And as a vesture shalt thou
fold them up, and they shall be
changed: but thou art the same,
and thy years shall not fail.

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

14 Are they not all ministering
spirits, sent forth to minister
for them who shall be heirs of
salvation?

v 7-14 These verses continue the discussion of heavenly hierarchy. God (Father Son and Holy Ghost) rules over all in heaven. The angels are the servants of God. But what is most interesting is v 14 as the angels are also servants (ministers) to the believers. Therefore, all "heirs of salvation" are directly under the Head, which is Christ. (1Corinthians 1:3, Ephesians 1:22, 4:15, 5:23, Colosians 1:18, 2:10, 2:19)

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

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

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

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?

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

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

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

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.

v 1 Look back at chapter 1, verse 1-2. The discussion continues along this point--the old covenant was spoken "by the prophets"--but the new covenant has been "spoken to us" by Christ. Now, chapter 2 verse 1 speaks of "the things which we have heard"(the new covenant) which, it is possible to "let slip".

v 2-4 The old covenant was spoken by angels, to the prophets. Disobedience was punished. Straying from the covenant meant loss of blessing and in fact separation from God. The same result can happen, if we "neglect so great a salvation"--if we ignore or turn aside from the testimony and example of Christ which was directly given by Him, and through the signs, miracles and the gifts of the Holy Spirit released upon the day of Pentecost.

v 5-8 The rulership and authority of Christ is emphasized here. Certainly no angels were ever granted such power yet He attained His perfection through perfect service. For a season He was made "a little lower than the angels" suffering death for all--and then He was "crowned with glory and honor" and "set over the worked of thy hands." This is to say that Jesus is the Head, the "only Potentate" of the Church (1Timothy 6:15). And yet--"but now we see not yet all things put under Him" This statement affirms many other examples in the new testament which clearly show that Christian believers can be disobedient, can fall away from the new covenant, "slip" --backslide.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 9-10 Jesus' "perfection", His glory, His authority, came by suffering, by "tasting death for every man."

v 11-13 And so, believers, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or position in life, can now be "born again" and considered "brethren" with one another and God!

v 14-16 These verses are making it clear that Jesus' birth was as a man of Israel. He did not take on the "nature of angels" but rather came as one of the seed of Abraham. He destroyed Satan's authority over death by taking on the form of man (though a man without sin) to become, as we shall see-- the perfect offering for sin.

v 17-18 Jesus was like any Jew and in fact any person--that He might then fully be able to understand our problems--our temptation--and so His high priesthood is greater in understanding and compassion.

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

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

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

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

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;

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

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

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

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

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

v 1 All believers have a ministry gift (Ephesians 4:1-12). All believers are called to serve God. The highest example is Jesus. He was the One who was “sent” (“Apostle”), the messenger of our Gospel calling and also High Priest.

v 2-6 Now we turn again to the new covenant/old covenant comparison. Here, Jesus compared to Moses-- a great man who served--yet Jesus greater as the builder of the house. Verse 6 speaks of a major old covenant/new covenant change--the house of God--not the physical temple in Jerusalem, but rather Gods’ house is “who we are” *if* we “hold fast” to the tenets of this new covenant. (1Corinthians 3:16-17, Ephesians 2:21)

v 7-12 Verse 7 begins with “Wherefore”--the next four verses are in parenthesis--they make a separate point, which describes Israel’s error of unbelief in the wilderness. If we read over the parenthesis, it is apparent that the same error can occur among Christians. We are told not to repeat this error, to change our mentality as well as or functions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 13-14 In the new covenant the Church operated on a daily basis, most often meeting in homes. It was a common practice and made easily available, through this new covenant operation, to have “daily exhortation.” The Bible Church took on this type of daily meeting from the example of Jesus who functioned through the small group of apostleship on a daily basis.

v 15-19 In Israel’s journey through the wilderness many fell because of “sin.” Yet the Bible makes it clear that all are sinners. How then did some fall and not enter God’s promise, while others did? Verse 18-19 states, the sin was “unbelief.” Much of the rest of this study will center on the specific areas in which Christian believers can fall--slip--and be lead into unbelief. A functional unbelief which can lead to a turning away from pure faith in Christ as the Way to salvation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 1-2 In either covenant it was/is possible to “come short” after having heard the message of the covenant.

v3 A new covenant believer enters into immediate “rest.” The works which have saved them have been accomplished (Christ’s death and resurrection). In the old covenant, Israel need to perform certain works (most of which were accomplished on the sabbath day) in order to have sin forgiven. The new covenant has no given sabbath day, since the works which forgive sin are already accomplished. The ‘rest” given to the Christian is by grace as are all things-- a superior spiritual rest-- obtained by faith, not by works (Ephesians 2: 8-9)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 10-11 Yet, there is labor for Christians to accomplish--the spreading of the Gospel itself. This is the labor we are all called to carry on, in order to stay faithful to God, and therefore enter His rest.

v 12-13 The laws of God contain commandment laws which prove that all are sinners. Israel, in the old covenant had these same commandment laws and they are generally not changed by the new covenant. However, in the old covenant, God gave Israel sacrificial aspects of the law. It was necessary to have an earthly high priest make physical offerings in an earthly tabernacle, in order to make atonement for sin. (Leviticus 17:11)

v 14-16 The discussion now turns to the new covenant, in which our High Priest is "great" and has "passed into the heavens". He was tempted as we are, "yet without sin." Boldness and faith in Him are what save the Christian. But we are called to "hold fast our profession" literally--keep speaking this faith--to ourselves and to others.

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

2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

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

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

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

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

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

v 1-4 This is an accurate description of the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood. These priests had a constant, ongoing job of making offerings to God, for the sin of Israel (including their own sin). This position was granted by God, specifically to the descendants of Aaron.

v 5-7 This priesthood was a detailed and marvelous prophecy of the priesthood of Jesus. Jesus also was called of God, made a High Priest and having been made a man can fully understand humanity and the travails of sin and temptation. Yet Christ's priesthood is of a different order, as He was not born of the tribe of Levi. Christ's priestly order is after that of Melchisedec (of which more will be said later).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

v 8-9 Jesus suffered and “learned obedience” and so was made perfect and thus is the true origination point--the creator--the “author” of eternal salvation, to those who obey Him

v 10--11 The book of Hebrews was directed toward Christian believers who had turned toward old covenant sacrificial practices. This is why they are called “dull of hearing.” They were carrying out old covenant rituals which went against Christ’s priesthood. The repetitive practices they followed operated through an earthly priesthood/temple and offerings. These actions made it hard for them to understand Christ’s priesthood and were in fact undoing their salvation.

v 12-14 The writer of Hebrews here reprimands these believers. By this time they “all ought to be teachers”--all should be ministering. Instead they were functioning through an authoritarian and limited ministry. Only a handful were priests/ministers, the rest were considered “babes.” The Levitical priests, according to the old covenant, were the “delegated, designated, anointed, appointed” authority over the “congregation.” This was not the new covenant system of apostleship, in which all are priests (1Peter 2:5, 2:9, Revelation 1:6, 5:10)., ministers of God, functioning in the Gospel in brotherly equity.

All teachers.

1 ¶ Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

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

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

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

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

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

v 1-3 Now the writer will go into the specific mistakes the church is making, not reiterating the basic Gospel and church functions they already ought to know (repentance, faith, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, eternal judgment)

v 4-6 These believers understand salvation--the Gospel--basic church functions--the gift of the Holy Ghost--and have tasted heaven and the Word of God--yet have fallen away!

How so?

Because even though they understand the Gospel, they are functioning like old covenant Israel in certain specific ways. They “crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh”, by continuing to function by tithes and offerings, temple worship and an authoritarian priesthood. They are setting aside Christ’s priesthood, His offering, and so “put him to an open shame.” They have placed the actions of offerings and tithe as the conditions to receive God’s blessing.

Throughout this book the author is saying to them “is not Christ’s offering enough for you?” Is not His offering sufficient to not only forgive sin, but to bless and prosper?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 7-8 The result of following these old covenant practices is to produce “thorns and briers” which will be rejected by God.

v 9-11 Thankfully these believers are not completely without new covenant works (the things which accompany salvation). They have served other believers well, in love, and the writer’s desire is simply to show that they (“every one of you”) should participate in these Godly actions.

v 12-15 There is much to be learnt by the example of faithful people of the old covenant. God made a promise to Abraham--he believed by faith--and endured to receive God’s promise. This is the same correct function for all Christians to follow in a faithful walk with God. For Abraham God’s blessing was received by faith, not by any earthly works.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 16-20 People create oaths and give promises to one another, in order to put an end to strife.

God has done a similar thing in that, for us, Christ has died, returned to life and entered into the heavenlies to fulfill His priesthood. God has promised us salvation through faith in Christ, as an “anchor of the soul.” These actions accomplished and an oath made both in earth and “behind the veil” in heaven. Where Jesus has entered to carry on His great priesthood.

A priesthood which is not the Levitical/Aaronic order, but “after the order of Melchisedec.” There is a new priesthood in the new covenant.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 1-4 Melchisedec met Abraham and Abraham gave him "a tenth part of all." Although Abraham was great, Melchisedec was greater.

Melchisedec was a priest, in fact the high priest of Jerusalem and a representation of Jesus Himself. Abraham gave him "tithe"--a "tithe of the spoils" (literally the tenth part of the heaps of grain). Melchisedec, in his function as a priest, would have offered this to God, that is, he destroyed it. And so, Abraham was blessed, that is, his sin forgiven. As, in order for sin to be forgiven by God in Heaven, something must die in the earth.

v 5-7 The old covenant laws gave the Levites the "office of the priesthood." They had the constant, ongoing job of carrying on the offerings to God. The amount of many of these offerings was "tithe" (1/10th), The writer is proving that these old covenant practices are no longer necessary as Christians have a better high priest in Jesus (since Abraham paid tithe to Melchisedec).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 8 At that time, the Jewish temple, Levitical priesthood, tithes/offerings, were still being carried out by Israel, (“here men that die receive tithes”), At the same time, Christianity was going on--which is the witnessing that Christ lives. Christ in Heaven receives His “tithe”. What tithe does Christ receive? Is it money or worldly goods? No. It is this:...he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.” Jesus receives those who receive the witness of the Church in the earth. Jesus’ “tithe” are the souls of those who accept Him as Lord and Savior.

v 9-10 Again Melchisedec/Jesus priesthood is proved greater since Levi, being yet “in the loins” of Abraham--paid tithe to him.

v 11-12 The Levitical priesthood is done away with in the new covenant. The new covenant priesthood is stated in 1Peter 2:5 and 2:9..”Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy **priesthood**, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

“But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal **priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”

All Christians are meant to be a priesthood of equals. All under the direct authority of Christ the Head. The laws of the old covenant are changed in this area. Ministry is no longer an authority over others or rulership (Matthew 20: 25-26, Mark 10:42-43, Luke 22:25-29) Earthly tithes/offerings are no longer needed.

v 13-16 Jesus’ priesthood is different than that of Levi. He was born of the tribe of Judah, a tribe of the “congregation” of Israel. His altar is not earthly but in Heaven, and now these old covenant sacrificial laws are “carnal commandments”--done away with by the “power (authority) of an endless life” (a trait shared by both Melchisedec and Jesus)

Just as old covenant Israel was obligated to pay tithes to their high priest, new covenant believers are obligated to pay tithes to their high priest. The “tithes” we are obliged to pay are the souls of them who receive the Gospel..... “ there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 17-18 Again, these sacrificial commandments are “disannulled.” The Levitical priesthood, tithes/offerings and temple worship were “weak” and “unprofitable.” They were earthly shadows of what Christ would accomplish.

v 19 n These old covenant laws “made nothing perfect”. They truly did not forgive sin. But Jesus’ “better hope” did do this, and allow all people to “draw nigh unto God.” In the old covenant only the high priest could enter into God’s presence behind the veil of the temple. This veil was torn from top to bottom when Jesus was on the cross. The presence of God no longer dwells in a house made with hands (Acts 7:48). Therefore the old covenant sacrificial laws are abrogated.

v 20-22 Christ’s greater priesthood was made with a Godly oath. This oath, carried on through the actions of Jesus in His ongoing, forever forgiving priesthood--make the new testament “better.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

v 23-24 Having priest/pastor leadership is imperfect human authority and only temporal. Jesus priesthood is "unchangeable"--not subject to sin or human shortcomings. Jesus' priesthood is "unchangeable"--He does not die. The Levitical priesthood was in the hands of mortal humans and so was handed down through generations and so becomes more and more corrupt as time goes on. An overview of the history of Israel confirms this. But this same principle applies to all human authority and within the Christian function as well.

v 25-26 Christ's intercession--His perfect offering is able to save "to the uttermost."

v 27-28 The Levitical priests took the tithes/offerings and "offered up sacrifice" for both their own sin and that of the people. Jesus, Himself the offering, is "consecrated forever more." The word consecrated here means "finished and perfect." His perfect offering finishes all other offerings

Jesus called Himself everything that was offered in the old covenant law.....

blood, (1Peter 1: 18-19)

meat, (John 6:55)

bread, (John 6:32-51, Matthew 26:26)

drink (John 6:55 1Corinthians 10:16)

oil, (John 17:3--"Christ" the anointed One)

grain (John 12:24)

The central purpose of this letter is to instruct new covenant believers to come up out of these old covenant practices--to understand the old well enough so that they would understand what they should NOT do. And to embrace the fullness of the new covenant in it's purposes and functions.

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

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, 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.

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

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

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

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

v 1-2 Jesus' priestly ministry takes place in the "true tabernacle" in Heaven. Christians have this as their true place of forgiveness and worship.

v 3-5 The tithes/offerings as well as the temple/house of God were merely a "shadow of heavenly things." They were, in effect, a wonderful prophecy, a representation of what Jesus would do and in fact does today.

v 6-7 This is the "better covenant." It is better because of these changes. It have "better promises" than the old. The old covenant had "faults"--these faults are being discussed here. The old covenant had perfect commandments which served to expose the sin of mankind--but it was "faulty" in it's practices of forgiveness. These practices are not at all necessary for Christians because of what Christ has accomplished and therefore we are free to serve Him and pursue the Gospel with all our time, effort and resources.

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:

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

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

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

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

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

v 8-9 The new covenant is prophesied in the old covenant. Israel broke the covenant specifically when they asked for a king to rule them. God's original plan was that they be a "nation of priests" (Exodus 19:6). The new covenant reiterates this original plan for the Church.

v 10-12 In the new covenant God will dwell in man--the laws will be in the "mind" and the "heart"--not in a physical sanctuary. All will know God--not just a chosen few--not a select, delegated, authoritarian priesthood.

v 13 Since now, the new covenant has begun, the old covenant is "decaying"--ready to "vanish away." This is truly an amazing prophecy. At the time this book was written the temple, tithes/offerings/Levitical priesthood were in full operation. This book has emphasized that the sacrificial practices were no longer acceptable to God and not to be used as part of Christian function. These sacrificial practices did "vanish away" shortly after the writing of this book and to this day, even though the Jewish people have returned to Israel, they have not yet been able to revive the temple and it's practices. The question remains however, why so many Christian churches choose to function with the sacrificial laws as functional rules!

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

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

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

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.

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

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

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

v 1-8 The functions of the old covenant sanctuary and priesthood had rituals which in themselves showed their own imperfection. The priesthood was imperfect because it was leadership of sinful humans (and the history contained in the old testament certainly confirms this). The true tabernacle itself was closed off to full entry while the old was "yet standing." The operation of these specific old covenant laws hinder and limit the accessibility of all people to function in God directly.

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

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

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

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

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:

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

v 9-10 These sacrificial practices were “imposed” on Israel for a time--until the time came for Christ’s “reformation.” His life, His teaching, His example, His priesthood and offering.

v11 Christ’s tabernacle is not of this earth or made with human hands and there is not need for anyone to imitate these old covenant examples.

v 12-14 His offering is better. It is eternal, once for all. It ought to have the effect of purging us from these old covenant “dead works” in order that we all should now minister, or “serve God” in a Gospel oriented priesthood.

15 ¶ And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

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

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

18 Whereupon neither the first *testament* was dedicated without blood.

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

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

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

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

v15 The old covenant had laws which were commandments--laws which exposed the sin of mankind. In the old testament God gave Israel a set of imperfect sacrificial laws, laws which are being changed here in the new testament. Now in the new covenant the sin of man is forgiven completely and eternal inheritance can be attained by faith in Jesus Christ.

v 16-22 The initiation of the testament is at the point of the testator's death. Jesus, when He was alive as a man in the earth, functioned in the old covenant (yet He prophesied the new through many of His actions and teachings). The new covenant began at the cross. The old covenant began also with the shedding of blood--blood forgives sin (Leviticus 17:11).

23 ¶ *It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.*

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

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

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

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

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

v 23-24 Jesus is not to be found in an earthly tabernacle. He is not in “the holy places made with hands.” Rather He lives in Heaven--and appears in the presence of God for all who are faithful.

v 25-26 His perfect offering is made once for all, with His blood. The imperfect old covenant laws required repetitive ritual.

v 27-28 So in the same way we all die once, Christ died once, as an offering for all those who believe. And He shall return again.

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

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

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

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

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

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

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

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;

v 1-4 The old covenant sacrificial laws were a shadow of Christ's true work. They were only temporal and so needed to be done repetitively. They were weak and insufficient in that no earthly thing can take away sin (since the offerings themselves were sinful).

v 5 God does not want offerings. He desires a "body" a group of people who will believe in Him, follow His leading and serve Him together. This is exactly how Jesus operated with His apostles. He followed the will of the Father in Heaven (John 5:30, 10:25). Jesus was "among" His apostles "as one who serves" (Luke 22:25-27). A body of ministers.

v 6-8 God had no pleasure in the old covenant sacrificial functions. He does not need offerings of the law.

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

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

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

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

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

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

16 This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

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

v 9-10 The new covenant will not be fully established while the old covenant is still in effect. This new covenant sanctifies "all" through the offering of Jesus Christ--therefore all are cleansed to fully function in service toward God.

v 11-14 The old covenant required a limited ministry to carry on work every day. It was a position of human authority and thus sinful and incomplete. Jesus, sinless, gave Himself as a perfect offering and then took the highest position of power, at the right hand of God. His one offering gives sanctification forever to those who believe.

v 15-18 This eternal forgiveness is the completion of the prophecy of the new covenant (found in Jeremiah 31:31) which states that God will no longer remember sin. Therefore, since there is this "remission" there is no more need for offering of earthly physical things. We are told only to "offer up spiritual sacrifices" (1Peter 2:5)

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

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And *having* an high priest over the house of God;

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

23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

v 19-21 Christians may enter into the true “holiest” by the blood of Jesus, a “new and living way” (not the old temple--house of God --sanctuary). He is meant to be the high priest over our collective actions. We now are the house of God, not an earthly building

v22-23 All these enacted in the earth by faith--not the dead works of the old testament. We must “hold fast” to the idea of professing--speaking--witnessing our faith to others. This is the central and highest function of the Church.

v 24-25 We ought to work together and encourage one another, to “love and good works.” The Biblical churches “assembled” in small groups on a daily ongoing basis. This was the form of “assembling” the writer was speaking of. And we are told here not to forsake it.

history: The rules and functions of Christian assembly were radically altered as early as the 3rd or 4th century. In the 4th century, well recorded history tells us that a Roman emperor declared everyone in Rome a “christian.” The church of that day faced a strange dilemma. The church which emerged from this era became what we now call the catholic church. A very honest and strait forward catholic history book once explained the actions of the church of that day thusly..”simple apostleship was no longer needed....new forms of ministry had to be invented” What was invented was the mass, a ritualistic format based largely on the Jewish temple/synagogue which placed the sacrificial laws squarely back into Christian function. Human authority was strongly emphasized, and from this function comes a very narrow definition of ministry.

27 But a certain fearful looking
for of judgment and fiery
indignation, which shall devour
the adversaries.

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

29 Of how much sorer
punishment, suppose ye, shall he
be thought worthy, who hath
trodden under foot the Son of
God, and hath counted the blood
of the covenant, wherewith he
was sanctified, an unholy thing,
and hath done despite unto the
Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath
said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto
me, I will recompense, saith the
Lord. And again, The Lord shall
judge his people.

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

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

v 26-27 Assembling in the old covenant way is now described here as "sin." If the believers being written to continue following the sacrificial laws as the format for their meetings, they are ignoring Christ's sacrifice and example.

v28-31 This is the harshest warning given. By continuing in the sacrificial laws "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin" (v 26). They have "trodden underfoot the Son of God" and "counted the blood of His covenant"....."an unholy thing." By believing and functioning in old covenant tithes and offerings they have "done despite unto unto the Spirit of grace."

There is no grace in earthly offerings. The graces or gifts of God are the gift of salvation, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the gift of ministry. All of these graces are obtained through faith. Yet all of these gifts can become trampled under by incorrect function. How can I say this? Well scripture says this, but so does the history of the organized church. If you were a Christian 700 years ago you were held under strict authority of church hierarchy which enforced tithes/offerings and ministerial authority as laws, The organization of "church" taught that salvation was purchased by the penny placed in the collection plate. There was no belief in or function of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. So the gift of salvation, the Holy Spirit and the gift of ministry, were lost by Christians operating through strict adherence to old covenant sacrificial laws.

"The Lord shall judge His people" specifically on these things.

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

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

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

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

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

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

v 32-39 But there is some hope for these believers! They have done good Christian work while still following wrong practices. (This seems to me to be the exact picture of every organized Christian group whether found in history or today. Some new covenant good works, mixed with some old covenant structure!)

Their list of good faithful works include afflictions, reproaches, compassion on those in need, and loss of worldly goods. Notice that neither here, nor in any new covenant letter to any church is it mentioned as a good work to consistently collect tithes and offerings! Rather, they are told to profess their faith, and live by faith (as this book continues if you were to read onward--and I pray you will)

