

A Better Way



Commentary on the letter to the Hebrews

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God's Final Word

Letter to the Hebrews

Introduction

1. Who is the author of Hebrews?

1. For several hundred years there was general agreement that Paul was the author. The first printed Bibles titled this work as the “Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews.”
2. Why was the authorship of Paul called into question? 1) In other letters Paul identifies himself but in this letter there is no such statement. 2) Some have rejected Paul as the author because the style, the vocabulary and the sentence structure is different than his other writings.
3. It is clear that the author is known to those who received this letter. See 6:9-10.
4. The author is in prison. See 10:34
5. There are several others who some have proposed to be the author, including – Luke, Barnabas, Silas, Philip.
6. However, one issue has never been in dispute. This letter was accepted as genuine early and often was quoted by the church fathers. Clement of Rome quotes from Hebrews in 95.

2. To whom is this letter addressed?

1. The letter is addressed, not to a city or church, but to Hebrews (Jews) wherever they may be living.
2. Hebrews often quotes from the Old Testament, which the Jews would be very familiar with and readily accept. It also makes many references to the worship, sacrifices and offerings of the Law of Moses.
3. It is clear that the author intended for this to be read by Jewish Christians.

3. Where was this letter sent?

1. Where the original letter was sent is not clear. We know that Clement of Rome had a copy by 95.
2. The theories of location are often tied to who is thought to have written the letter.
 1. Apollos to Alexandria
 2. Barnabas to Antioch
 3. Clement of Rome to Rome. Italy is mentioned in 13:24.
 4. Luke or Philip to Caesarea

4. When was Hebrews written?

1. Most agree that it was written before AD 70. The worship at the temple was in its last days. See 8:13.
2. The entire book urges the Jewish Christians not to return to Jewish worship. All such worship ended with the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in 70.
3. We know it was written before 95 because Clement of Rome quotes from it.

5. Why was this book written?

1. Hebrews was written to urge Jewish Christians to remain faithful to Christ and not return to their former religion and worship.
2. In the 13 chapters the word “better” is used 13 times. The theme is that Christianity is “better” than Judaism. Christ is better than Moses. We have a better law, a better covenant, a better high priest, a better promise, etc.
3. Hebrews was written during the reign of terror by Nero. Christians were under threat of persecution. Some Jewish Christians were wanting to return to Judaism because it was safer than being a Christian.
4. The purpose of this book is to say, “Don’t return to the weak, inferior, and soon to pass away religion of Judaism. Remain with the strong, superior and better religion of Jesus Christ.

6. What type of book is this?

1. In the Bible there are several different types of writings. History, poetry, prophecy, law, biography, personal letters and apocalyptic are all very different forms.
2. Hebrews does not fit in any of the above categories.
3. Hebrews is a highly technical writing to people who knew the details of the law.
4. Today, many Christians see this book as very difficult to understand because it discusses many topics with which we are not familiar. To study Hebrews you must also spend some time in the books of Law in the Old Testament.

Outline of the book

1. Jesus, son of God, greater than all 1:1-2:18

1. The greatness of the Son 1:1-3
2. Jesus is superior to angels in his person 1:4-14
3. Jesus is superior to angels in his message 2:1-4
4. Jesus is superior to angels as a human being 2:5-18

2. The superior apostle 3:1-4:13

1. Jesus is superior to Moses 3:1-6
2. Warning to obey 3:7-4:2
3. Warning not to miss God's promised rest 4:3-13

3. The greatest chief priest 4:14-7:28

1. Jesus is superior to Aaron 4:14-5:14
2. Jesus is superior in promises 6:1-20
3. Jesus is superior to Melchizedek 7:1-28

4. Jesus is the better mediator 8:1-10:39

1. A new and better agreement 8:1-13
2. A new way to praise God 9:1-28
3. A new sacrifice and way to life 10:1-39

5. The better way 11:1-13:25

1. The way of trust and hope 11:1-40
2. The right way to live 12:1-29
3. The way of love and doing what God wants 13:1-25

1 Jesus, son of God, greater than all 1:1-2:18

The greatness of the Son 1:1-3

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, **2** has in these last days spoken to us by *His Son*, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through 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 at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

1. The letter begins with no introduction, no identification of author, no statement of greeting to those addressed.
2. The first sentence includes all of Bible history. All of the three dispensations are included here.
 1. God spoke in various ways in the past to the fathers. This is the Patriarchal Age that included Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
 2. God spoke by the prophets beginning with Moses and the Law and continuing through the Mosaic Age. The prophets would include Samuel, Nathan, all of the writing prophets in the Old Testament and many others mentioned in the Old Testament.
 3. God now speaks through His Son. With the beginning of the Christian Dispensation, the law of the patriarchs and the law written down by Moses have been removed and replaced with the law of Christ.
3. We now focus on Christ.
 1. He is appointed heir of all things.
 2. He is co-creator with the Father.
 3. Christ reflects the brightness of the Father.
 4. He is the express image (picture, photo) of the person of God. He became God in the flesh. See Colossians 1:15.
 5. The world remains by the power of the word of Christ.
 6. He is the one who was finally able to purge us from our sins.
 7. He now reigns from heaven.

Jesus is superior to angels in his person 1:4-14

Jesus, Son of God 1:4-5

4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. **5** For to which of the angels did He ever say: *"You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"*? And again: *"I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"*?

1. Immediately we begin to learn the purpose of this letter. Jesus is superior to the

angels.

2. The Jews held angels in high regard because they were with God, messengers of God, and were very active in the Old Testament history of the Jews.
3. This is the first of 13 times we will hear the word "better" in this book.
4. Jesus can offer us a more excellent inheritance.
5. Jesus offers us a superior name than angels.
6. God never called an angel "Son".
7. Psalm 2:7 is quoted to show that Jesus is better than the angels. Angels are not ever claimed to be the Son of God. Jesus is.
8. Then 2 Samuel 7:14 is quoted to show the Father accepts him as a Father / Son relationship.

Jesus superior to angels 1:6-9

6 But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." 7 And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels spirits And His ministers a flame of fire." 8 But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions."

1. Jesus is the firstborn of God. See John 3:16; Colossians 1:15 & 18. When Jesus was born angels did sing, praise and worship Him.
2. Psalm 97:7 is quoted here with some loss in the translation from Hebrew into Greek. In Hebrew it reads, "worship him all you gods." Gods (high and exalted beings) would include all exalted angels in heaven.
3. Angels are spirit beings. Psalm 104:4 is quoted. The angels are ministers who serve God.
4. But Jesus is addressed in a different way. Jesus IS God. Psalm 45:6-7 is proof that Jesus is higher, better, over the angels. Angels minister that the command of God. Jesus is God.
5. **NOTE:** There is much confusion about the trinity. It is a difficult issue to understand. First we need to notice that the word "God" is used of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. All of them are God. All of them are called God. Second, most of the time when we read "God" we think it is a reference to the Father. That is not always true. Even in this quote – Jesus is called God, then is anointed by God. Third, we must remember that in many passages, God is a generic term for the Godhead, the trinity, and is a reference to deity or the divine nature.

Jesus same forever 1:10-12

10 And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail."

1. And, to add to the substantial proof already given, here is another passage to consider.
2. Jesus was involved in the creation of world, the heavens and the earth. Psalm 102:25-27 is quoted to show the creative power of Jesus. See also these passages (Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:1-4) that discuss Christ's involvement in the creation.
3. Jesus is God. He is powerful and creative.
4. 2 Peter 3:10-13 reminds us also that this world is temporary. It will perish, grow old, wear out, and will be burned up. But Jesus will remain.
5. Jesus does not get old, wear out, perish, or become weak and useless. Jesus is God. God is Eternal.

Jesus on God's side 1:13-14

13 But to which of the angels has He ever said: "*Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool*"? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

1. When did God ever invite an angel to sit at His right hand? Answer: Never.
2. Psalm 110:1 is cited to show that Jesus is invited to be where angels are not invited.
3. Verse 14 is often talked about.
4. Angels are ministering spirits. Many think this is a reference to "guardian angels" that watch over and protect God's people. The question is: Who are the angels serving, God or man? Who sends them out to perform a service? God does. They are doing the will and work of God.
5. In Daniel 9:21-23, Gabriel was sent by God to serve a special need of Daniel.
6. Study Matthew 18:10 (the other guardian angel passage). They are not facing earth and protecting us. They do always face the Father.

Jesus is superior to angels in his message 2:1-4

1 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

1. We must pay close attention to our conduct, our behavior, our relationship with God.
2. We can drift away. Most who stop attending worship and stop serving Christ and His church do not do so suddenly. It is very gradual. They do not leave in a tornado. They just seem to drift away with little attention to how far they have traveled.
3. The "if" in verse 2 is used in the sense of "since". The message of the angels is sure, steadfast, and can be relied upon.
4. One of the messages of angels was to point out sin.
5. Here is something to think about. What if everything we did wrong was caught and

punished? What if every time we broke the speed limit, we were ticketed? What if we were caught every time we rolled a stop sign, went through a red light, made an illegal turn and all the rest? Have you ever taken something that was not yours? Have you ever gotten away with a lie? Where would we be if every sin, every violation of the law, every transgression was punished?

6. How shall we escape? Here we are not talking about rolling stop signs or running red lights. The topic here is more serious. Eternal. Don't neglect the salvation God offers.
7. About this salvation there are some interesting points made here.
 1. Was first spoken by the Lord.
 2. Was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.
 3. God bore witness with miracles to show it was His will.
8. Now study Mark 16:15-20.
 1. Jesus spoke about salvation – v. 16
 2. He told them to preach this gospel to all men – v. 15
 3. It was confirmed with signs and miracles.
 4. The Lord was working with them to show His will.

Jesus is superior to angels as a human being 2:5-18

5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. 6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? 7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. 8 You have 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 do not yet see all things put under him. 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." 13 And again: "I will put My trust in Him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me." 14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. 17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

1. Even when Jesus came to earth and lived as a human being, He was still superior to the angels.
2. The newly created world was not turned over to angels to care for it and tend it. God placed man over all the creation to care for it.

3. Psalm 8:4-6 shows that man was crowned with glory and honor. Man was given authority over all the creation.
4. Verse 8 makes a simple argument. When God put ALL under mans feet. All means all. There nothing that was not under mans control and oversight.
5. Man was made a little lower than the angels. Now we see Jesus as human, made lower than the angels – to suffer death, to be crowned with glory, to taste death for every man. Study Philippians 2:8-9.
6. It was fitting (proper) for Jesus to be the captain of our salvation. Jesus is our Lord, our King, our Captain, our Savior.
7. When we are sanctified (saved) we become one with Jesus. Jesus is not ashamed of us. We should not be ashamed of Him. (Matthew 10:32-33) Jesus calls us brethren.
8. He will tell everyone of our relationship to Him. See Psalm 22:22.
9. He will sing in with us in the worship of the church.
10. 2 Samuel 22:3 and Psalm 18:2 adds to this point. There must be mutual trust.
11. The next quote is from Isaiah 8:17-18. God blessed Christ with many obedient followers.
12. Since we were adopted into the family of God and are human, it was fitting that Jesus become flesh and blood that he might conquer death, the power of death, and Satan, himself.
13. It is our nature to fear and dread death. Jesus took the sting of death away. Death is not longer in charge. Jesus overcame and we can overcome.
14. Jesus did not become an angel. He became human. He took on flesh and blood. He had a bloodline that could be traced back to Abraham.
15. In all ways, it was proper that Jesus become like us. In that way he could become a high priest that was merciful.
16. Jesus was the proper one to make pay the debt of sin for us. Propitiation is not a common word. Only used three times in the New Testament – here and 1 John 2:2 and 1 John 4:10. The Greek word means to satisfy the debt, to pay in full.
17. Because Jesus suffered, He is able to understand our suffering.
18. Tempted here means tried. He was put to the test. He can help us when we have our faith tested.

2 The superior apostle 3:1-4:13

Jesus is superior to Moses 3:1-6

1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, **2** who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all His house. **3** For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. **4** For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things *is* God. **5** And Moses indeed *was faithful* in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken *afterward*, **6** but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

1. With chapter 3 we move to the subject of Jesus being superior to Moses and Aaron. Of course, Moses and Aaron were brothers of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of priests. This will lead into chapter 4 and the priesthood of Melchizedek.
2. Jesus is called an Apostle. We often think of the 12 apostles. But there are others who are called an apostle. The Greek word simply means "one sent on a mission or with a task to perform." Jesus was sent by the Father to perform an important mission. He was, in that sense, an apostle.
3. Jesus is also called High Priest who performed the service that He was appointed to perform. There will be much more about Jesus as High Priest later.
4. There is a clear difference in Moses and Jesus.
 1. Moses was faithful **IN** the house. Jesus was faithful **OVER** the house.
 2. Moses was a **SERVANT**. Jesus was **SON**.
 3. Moses **FAILED** to bring rest. Jesus **BROUGHT** rest to the people of God.
5. Verse 4 gives us an important principle of logic. Every house is built by some man. We know that houses are not built by disasters, explosions, tornadoes or earthquakes. The fact that a house stands shows that it was designed, and built by someone. Clearly there is an application for the atheist. The existence of the world and universe is clear evidence that it was designed and built by someone. It did not come into existence by accident or the Big Bang theory.
6. The second principle is found in verse 3. The builder of the house is greater, stronger, smarter, more powerful, than the house itself. Today, many focus on the object that was built rather than the one who designed and built it.

Warning to obey 3:7-4:2

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: *"Today, if you will hear His voice, **8** Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness, **9** Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years. **10** Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.' **11** So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.' "*
12 Beware, 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 *"Today,"* lest any of you be hardened through the

deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said: *"Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."* 16 For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses?* 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness?* 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard *it*.

1. The Holy Spirit is given credit for this Old Testament statement.
2. Psalm 95:7-11 is quoted here in verses 7-11.
 1. **Today** - is the important time to obey God. Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow is not promised. Today is the day we must choose to obey God.
 2. **Harden your heart** – describes what man does as he continues to reject the plea of God.
 3. **Not enter my rest** – was God's only option as a result of their hard hearts. God promised a rest for the faithful people of God. If we harden our hearts, we can be refused entrance into that eternal rest with God.
3. Verse 12 is an important verse for those who believe that once we are saved we are always saved and can not be lost. Notice the important words of this verse.
 1. **Brethren** – is not talking to the lost in our world but to those who are part of the family of God.
 2. **Heart of unbelief** – a departure from their professed faith and baptism into Christ. Now they have lost that faith they once professed.
 3. **Departing from** – shows the position they once held and chose to leave. **Notice:** You can not “depart from” a place you have never been.
4. The way to prevent this departure from God is to exhort one another. Thayer's Greek Lexicon says that “exhort” means “1) to call to one’s side, call for, summon; 2) to address, speak to, (call to, call upon), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc.; 2a) to admonish, exhort; 2b) to beg, entreat, beseech; 2b1) to strive to appease by entreaty; 2c) to console, to encourage and strengthen by consolation, to comfort; 2c1) to receive consolation, be comforted; 2d) to encourage, strengthen; 2e) exhorting and comforting and encouraging; 2f) to instruct, teach”
5. We are now reminded of the fact that Moses led Israel out of Egypt, but because of their sin and rebellion, many died in the wilderness and did not enter the land that was promised to Abraham.
6. Why could they not enter the promised land? Because of unbelief.
7. A rest remains. The promise of God remains. But the same danger faces us. They did not enter because they departed from God. But we must fear that we may come short of the faith that God expects of it.
8. In a commentary by Ian Mackervoy is written – “We have heard the good news that Jesus has come to save us. He has taken our sins away in his own body. He has died for us, so that we might live to God. We shall also fail, if we do not trust in Jesus. The way to God's rest is in Jesus and is for all who follow him. The Hebrews failed because they did not trust God and obey what he said. We shall not fail, if we hear the good news of Jesus and accept it.”

Warning not to miss God's promised rest 4:3-13

3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: *"So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,' "* although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: *"And God rested on the seventh day from all His works";* 5 and again in this place: *"They shall not enter My rest."* 6 Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, 7 again He designates a certain day, saying in David, *"Today,"* after such a long time, as it has been said: *"Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts."* 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. 9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. 10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His. 11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must* give account.

1. Does God every get angry? Yes. In His wrath because of their unbelief He did not allow them to enter the promised land.
2. The place was ready. God finished creation on the 6th day and rested on the 7th day. The place of rest was ready, but the Hebrew nation was not ready to obey and enter.
3. Verse 8 – Joshua – Joshua is a Hebrew word that means “savior.” Jesus is a Greek word that means “savior.” The KJV is in error here using Jesus, but it should be Joshua. The same error occurs in Acts 7:45.
4. After Moses died and the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness was complete, Joshua was ready to lead Israel to the land of promise. But they did not fully conquer the land, drive out the inhabitants. Israel had the land – but never the complete rest that was anticipated.
5. There is still a place of rest that remains in promise to the people of God.
6. We must pay attention to our faith and obedience to the will of God if we want to enter that rest. We can fall away and depart from God just as they did at the time of Moses and Joshua.
7. The Word of God remains:
 1. **Alive** – not a dead letter
 2. **Powerful** – able to save our soul (James 1:21)
 3. **Sharp** – like a two-edged sword.
 4. **Piercing** – able to enter the heart, cut to the core, reach the center of our being
 5. **Soul / spirit** – often used interchangeably for each other, sometimes used together.
 6. **Thought / intent** – God's Word is able to penetrate to our intent and thought, not just judge our outward actions.
8. There is nothing we think, intend, or do that is hidden from God. We stand before God like an open book. Everything is seen and accountable.

3 The greatest chief priest 4:14-7:28

Jesus is superior to Aaron 4:14-5:14

Our confidence 4:14-16

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are, yet* without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

1. Jesus is greater than Moses or Joshua. Jesus is also greater than Aaron. Jesus is our High Priest. He is a living, continually active High Priest. He does not need to be replaced.
2. Jesus is a High Priest that understands the struggles, temptations, and trials of mankind. He is able to sympathize with our weakness. He was tempted like we face temptations. But He was without sin.
3. Because our High Priest is in heaven, we can come to the throne of grace with boldness. Many of our prayers are weak, lacking courage and boldness. We must learn to come to God with big, bold, courageous prayers.

Rules for the chief priest 5:1-4

1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. 3 Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer *sacrifices* for sins. 4 And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron *was*.

1. Every human high priest was a man appointed to the work of offering gifts and sacrifices for sin.
2. He understands the weakness of man, because he too is tempted. When he offers sacrifice for the sins of the people, he must offer sacrifice for his own sins.
3. The high priest was not a political office. He does not take this office and duty lightly or with pride.
4. Serving God in any office (elder, deacon, minister, teacher) is not a high personal honor. Each serves because God calls us to serve Him.

Jesus our new chief priest 5:5-11

5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, *but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You."* **6** As *He* also says in another *place: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek"*; **7** who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, **8** though He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. **9** And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, **10** called by God as High Priest *"according to the order of Melchizedek,"* **11** of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

1. Christ did not "toot his own horn" about his power.
2. It was the Father who declared that Jesus is His Son. See Psalm 2:7.
3. The Father also declared that Jesus was to be High Priest. In Psalm 110:4 Jesus is declared to be our High Priest forever – after the order of Melchizedek.
4. What about Melchizedek? What do we know about him? We will learn more in chapter 7 as this point is expanded and discussed.

Weak and strong Christians 5:12-14

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. **13** For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. **14** 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.

1. After the brief mention of Melchizedek, the author takes a break from the deep and more difficult to point out the reason they don't know about the priesthood of Melchizedek.
2. How long have you been a Christian? At some point you should have the basics down. You should know enough to begin teaching others.
3. But you are still needing the first principles.
4. What are first principles? Milk.
 1. Milk of the word, not solid food.
 2. Milk only makes one unskilled in the word of God.
 3. Drinking only milk keeps one a baby in Christ.
 4. Solid food belongs to those who grow up, mature, stop being a baby, are of full age.
 5. Solid food is for those who have enough sense to know the difference in good and evil, right and wrong.

Jesus is superior in promises 6:1-20

Grow as Christians 6:1-3

1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, **2** of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. **3** And this we will do if God permits.

1. **Leaving** – does not mean to abandon or stop paying attention to them. Here it means to build on them. You start with a foundation. Don't stop there. Leave the foundation and move on up with the walls and roof.
2. **Elementary principles** – the first principles of the oracles of God. The milk mentioned in the previous verses.
3. **Foundation** – the basic principles of the Christian life include:
 1. **Repentance** – to turn around, to change your behavior and attitude toward the sin in your life.
 2. **Faith** – when leaving the sinful life, we seek to find another foundation. Faith, trust is that foundation for our new life.
 3. **Baptisms (washings)** – Ephesians 4:5 says there is one baptism. But here it is in the plural. Israel had many washings. See Mark 7:4 & 8. The Greek word for baptism is also translated – dip, wash, and washings. This is not a reference to the baptism of the New Testament but the ceremonial washings of the Law of Moses.
 4. **Laying on of hands** – was part of the ceremony when installing priests, and others in special positions, it was used during a prayer for someone, and it was used to show approval or acceptance. See Numbers 8:12; Matthew 19:3; Matthew 9:18.
 5. **Resurrection of the dead** – This was a strong teaching of the Pharisees but rejected and denied by the Sadducees. See Mark 12:18; Acts 23:8.
 6. **Eternal judgment** – There will be a judgment and the consequences will be eternal. See Acts 17:31; Matthew 25:46; 2 Thessalonians 1:9.
4. As it is the will of God, we are determined to build on this foundation.

No second chance 6:4-8

4 For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, **5** and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **6** if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame. **7** For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; **8** but if it bears thorns and briars, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned.

1. This section of scripture is often quoted and discussed, but also seldom understood.
2. If this was a class in English grammar – I would ask you to find the basic sentence, then discuss the dependent clauses.

3. **Here is the basic sentence** - - - It is impossible for those who were once enlightened — if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance. The basic sentence describes one who has become a Christian, then fell away.
4. **The issue is** – How do you bring them back? What can you tell that that they don't already know? What can you tell them about the importance of being a Christian that they did not realize? ANSWER: Nothing. They knew all this and decided to reject it.
5. **The dependent clauses** – tasted the heavenly gift, partakers of the Holy Spirit, tasted the good word of God; and the powers of the age to come — all describe the phrase “who were once enlightened.” They were enlightened with the gospel, they could taste the gift of heaven, they received the gift of the Holy Spirit when they were baptized, they knew the taste of the word of God, and knew the power of God. All these phrases simply mean one thing – they were a Christian.
6. **Impossible** – Many think this is the “unpardonable sin.” First, there is no sin that God can not pardon. Second, we must ask, What is impossible in this verse? Is it impossible for the Christian who falls away to come back? No. Is it impossible for God to forgive and accept back the Christian who falls away? No. What is impossible is to find way for us to bring them back. What can you tell this person that they don't already know and have rejected? What can you tell them about God, the Bible, the church, judgment, heaven and hell that they have not already considered and decided to throw away? They can come back. God can forgive and accept their repentance. But there is not any point or argument that you and I can make for them to come back.
It is impossible for us to bring them back. This is in contrast with Galatians 6:1 and James 5:19-20. When Christians go astray because of temptation or weakness – we can bring them back. When they choose to reject God and repudiate all that they know about being a Christian – it is impossible to bring them back.
7. When it rains – some of that rain grows our garden vegetables and is good. But some of that rain falls on the thorns and briar patches – and they grow and spread. All you can do is pull the weeds and burn them.

Go on in faith 6:9-12

9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. 10 For God *is* not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

1. You can do better than that. We are confident that you will remain faithful to what you have learned. You have been enlightened, tasted heaven, know the word of God and we are sure you will not want to reject all of these good things.
2. Have you tasted salvation? Have you felt the joy of forgiveness? Have you known the blessedness of being free from sin? Do not let those feelings slip away.
3. God is aware of your work for the Lord, your love for Jesus and your labor for His

name. God knows you have helped needy saints in time of distress. God is aware of all the ways you minister to others.

4. Now is not the time to stop working. Keep doing the same good works you have been doing. Show the same diligence and passion until the end.
5. Don't become sluggish – This word means, slow, sluggish, slothful. In simple words – Don't slow down. Keep working like one who knows the promise is coming.

God's promise is sure 6:13-20

13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, "*Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.*" 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation *is* for them an end of all dispute. 17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*. 19 This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence *behind* the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, *even* Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

1. It is at this point that the book of Hebrews become more difficult for us. Not because we can not understand the words, but because we are not familiar with the workings of the law of Moses.
2. God made a promise to Abraham. God made that promise by swearing by Himself. He could swear by no one greater. God promised to bless Abraham. And God kept that promise. Men make promises and swear by something or someone greater than themselves.
3. **Immutability** – The word means – fixed, firm, unalterable, not to be changed. Gods purpose is fixed. The plans of God never change. God confirmed this truth with the oath, promise, sworn promise to Abraham.
4. **Two immutable things** – 1) The promise to Abraham; 2) The oath God swore to it. And remember – God can not lie. This gives us the comfort and consolation we need to rely on. This world is not dependable. God is. Trust in God.
5. **Hope** – Hope is the combination of desire and expectation. Hope is an anchor for our soul. An anchor holds a ship in place when the storm blows against it. Our hope is both sure and steadfast.
6. An anchor is sure and steadfast when it is attached to something firm and solid. In the case of a ship, if the anchor is hooked on a large boulder it will hold better than if it is only dragging in the sand. In the case of the Christian, our hope is anchored in heaven, behind the veil (a reference to the veil between holy place and most holy place in the tabernacle and temple). Beyond or behind the veil is where the Ark of the Covenant stayed and represented the presence of God.
7. Jesus is already beyond the veil. He is already in heaven. He is now serving as our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Jesus is superior to Melchizedek 7:1-28

Melchizedek 7:1-10

1 For this Melchizedek, 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 translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," 3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually. 4 Now consider how great this man *was*, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. 5 And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; 6 but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. 7 Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. 8 Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he *receives them*, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. 9 Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, 10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

1. What do we know about this man, Melchizedek?
 1. He was a king. King of Salem. Salem is the short and old name for Jerusalem.
 2. He was a priest of God.
 3. He met Abraham as he returned from a battle to free Lot.
 4. Abraham paid tithes (one tenth of the spoils of the battle) to Melchizedek.
 5. He was known as the king of righteousness and king of peace.
 6. He was "without father, without mother" and "without genealogy." Much discussion about the meaning of these phrases has occupied many hours of Bible class time.
 1. **Without father** – often translated "orphan" meaning the father died and the child is without a living father. But the added phrases about mother and genealogy imply that his background is not known. He seems to just appear on the scene with Abraham.
 2. Albert Barnes writes, "It was very important in the estimation of the Jews that the line of their priesthood should be carefully kept; that their genealogies should be accurately marked and preserved; and that their direct descent from Aaron should be susceptible of easy and certain proof. But the apostle says that there was no such genealogical table in regard to Melchizedek. There was no "record" made of the name either of his father, his mother, or any of his posterity. "He stood alone."
 7. Adam Clarke makes some excellent points here about the priesthood of Melchizedek. "The objection is this: If the Messiah is to be a true priest, he must come from a legitimate stock, as all the priests under the law have regularly done; otherwise we cannot acknowledge him to be a priest: but Jesus of Nazareth has not proceeded from such a stock; therefore we cannot acknowledge him for a priest, the antitype of Aaron.
To this objection the apostle answers, that it was not necessary for the priest to come from a particular stock, for Melchizedek was a priest of the most high God, and yet was not of the stock, either of Abraham or Aaron, but a Canaanite. It is well known that the ancient Hebrews were exceedingly scrupulous in choosing their high priest; partly by Divine command, and partly from the tradition of their ancestors, who always considered this office to be of the highest dignity.
 1. God had commanded. Leviticus 21:10, that the high priest should be chosen from among their brethren, i. e. from the family of Aaron;
 2. that he should marry a virgin;

3. he must not marry a widow;
4. nor a divorced person;
5. nor a harlot;
6. nor one of another nation.”
8. Verse 7 illustrates the opposite of what we usually think. We think the greater would bless those who are beneath him. Here the lesser, Melchizedek, blesses the greater, Abraham.

King and priest 7:11-14

11 Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need *was there* that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. 13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. 14 For *it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.*

1. If the Law of Moses were the perfect law – there would be no need to replace it.
2. How could Abraham be blessed by a priest that was not of the tribe of Levi? How could the Jewish Christians accept Christ as their High Priest since he did not come from the tribe of Levi?
3. We not come to an important principle that applies in other areas of our worship and obedience to God.
 1. To change the priesthood from Levi to Melchizedek, you have to change the law.
 2. Jesus came from another tribe (Judah).
 3. Moses spoke nothing about Judah being a priest. Numbers 18:1-2 assigns the duties of the priesthood to the tribe of Levi and special duties to the house of Aaron as high priests.
4. Christ is of the tribe of Judah. Can Christ be a priest? NO. Not under the law of Moses. If Christ serves as a priest, the law will have to be changed.
5. **Application:** When God gives a simple command – Sing – You can not change it to play unless you change the law. When God says “first day of the week” we can not change communion to Thursday or Saturday.
6. **Notice the words** – Which Moses spoke nothing – Moses did not have to say, Judah can not be priest. When it said Levi – the matter was closed. When God said “sing” - the matter is settled.

Christ is greater, for He is alive 7:15-19

15 And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest 16 who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. 17 For He testifies: "*You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.*" 18 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, 19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, *there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.*

1. Jesus can be a priest after the order of Melchizedek because the law has changed.
2. Also – there is a technical point about the genealogy of Christ.
 1. **Legally** – the genealogy followed the father – So Jesus was of the tribe of Judah – the tribe of kings.
 2. **Biologically** – The blood and DNA in Jesus was from his mother. Mary was of the tribe of Levi – the tribe of priests.
 3. In a real sense – Jesus is BOTH priest and king. He fits in both tribes.
3. We now focus on Melchizedek and his no beginning and no end.
 1. Of course, in a very real sense, Jesus has no beginning. And He has no end. He was from the beginning and created all things. He is eternal.
 2. Jesus has come to the priesthood – not by the legal commands of the law of Moses – but because of His eternal nature.
4. The law was annulled – The KJV says “disannulling.” More modern English says “annul.” Marriages can be annulled, wiped away, abolished. Here the law about the priesthood of Levi was annulled. That law was taken away, abolished.
5. In doing away with the law – a better hope allows us to draw near to God.
6. Under the priesthood of Levi – there was a separation between the sinner and God. The sinner brought a sacrifice to the priest. The priest would follow the law about the sacrifice of the animal and seek forgiveness for the sinner. Now that separation has been removed. We can draw near to God. We are the priest. We do not have to go to a priest. We are the priesthood of believers. We are priests of God.

Christ is greater because of the promise 7:20-22

20 And inasmuch as *He was not made priest without an oath* 21 (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: "*The LORD has sworn And will not relent, 'You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek' "*"), 22 by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

1. Christ is really our High Priest. The high priest under the Jewish law had to be sworn in with an oath, similar to high government offices, like president of the United States. He is not president until he takes the oath of office.
2. Jesus was sworn in as High Priest under the new covenant.
3. We are reminded that Jesus is a better priest and we live under a better covenant.

Christ is greater because he is a priest forever 7:23-25

23 Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. 24 But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

1. The priesthood of Christ is better because He is eternal. He lives.
2. Priests under the law of Moses lived normal lives, got old, became sick and died.
3. But Jesus is alive forever. So we have a priesthood that does not change.

4. He is always available and ready to serve.
5. He is ready to make intercession for us. See 1 John 2:1; Romans 8:34.

Christ is greater because he has offered a better sacrifice 7:26-28

26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, *appoints* the Son who has been perfected forever.

1. Christ makes an excellent High Priest because He fits our needs better than the old priesthood of Aaron.
2. What are the differences? Christ is:
 1. Holy – pure, without the stain of sin
 2. Harmless – does good without doing any harm
 3. Undefiled – no spot, blemish or stain
 4. Separate from sinners – He was without sin
 5. Higher than the heavens – He is at the right hand of God.
 6. Does not need to daily offer sacrifices, He offered Himself once (and for all)
 7. Does not need to offer first for his own sins
 8. Not weak like the priests of Levi
 9. Jesus is the Son of God forever

4 Jesus is the better mediator 8:1-10:39

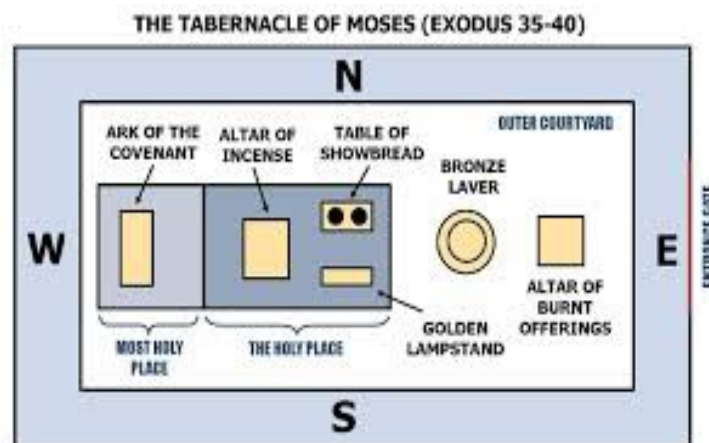
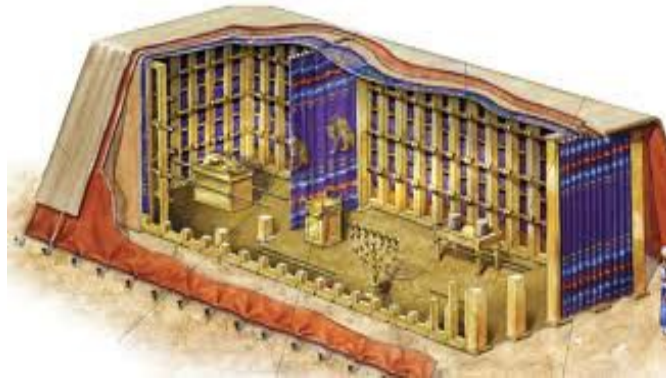
A new and better agreement 8:1-13

Work of Christ is greater than that of the old priests 8:1-7

1 Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at 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 erected, and not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore *it is* necessary that this One also have something to offer. 4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "*See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.*" 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. 7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

1. We have a High Priest, Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God.
2. We are now discussing things most of us know little about – High Priests.
 1. Here is a summary of the office of the high priest under the law of Moses.
 2. Josh Byrd wrote: "What was the job of the high priest in ancient Israel? Essentially he had two jobs. **First he represented the people of Israel to the LORD.** When the people had a concern or needed guidance they asked the high priest to consult the LORD on their behalf. The high priest stood between men and God. He stood before the LORD and represented the people. A prophet on the other hand represents the LORD to the people. The priest takes our message to the LORD and brings His answer back but a prophet brings us the message of the LORD and takes back our response.
The second job of the high priest was to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin. It was his job to make the yearly sin offering for the people. He was the only one who could go into the holy of holies and stand before the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant. Before he could make the offering of sin on behalf of the people he had to first make an offering for his own sin. His own sin made him unworthy to offer the sacrifice for sin. So he had to have a sacrifice for himself and then for the people. He did all this in the temple in Jerusalem and before that in the Tabernacle both were pale reflections of the True Temple."
3. Only the high priest could wear the Urim and the Thummim. They were in pockets on the Ephod. (Exodus 28:4)
4. One of his roles was overseeing the responsibilities of all the subordinate priests (2 Chronicles 19:11).
5. The office of the high priest was hereditary and was traced from Aaron, the brother of Moses, of the Levite tribe (Exodus 28:1; Numbers 18:7).

6. The high priest had to be “whole” physically (without any physical defects) and holy in his conduct (Leviticus 21:6-8).
 7. The high priest had to offer a sin offering not only for the sins of the whole congregation, but also for himself (Leviticus 4:3-21).
 8. When a high priest died, all those confined to the cities of refuge for accidentally causing the death of another person were granted freedom (Numbers 35:28).
3. Then the tabernacle and sanctuary are mentioned in verse 2.



4. Some of the furnishings in the tabernacle and later in the temple of Solomon are mentioned later in Hebrews.
5. If Christ were on earth he could not be a priest or high priest.
6. There are priests doing this work (4) indicates that a) the temple still exists; b) that this letter was written before 70AD.
7. **Follow the pattern** – Verse 5 states an important principle for us. God had given Israel a pattern for the tabernacle and all the articles to be placed in it. God has given us a pattern for the church worship, organization, work, and function.
 1. Albert Barnes makes this comment about the pattern – Exodus 25:9, Exodus 25:40; Exodus 26:30. In Exodus 11:1-10, it is also repeatedly said that Moses executed all the work of the tabernacle as he had been commanded. Great care was taken that an exact copy should be exhibited to him of all which he was to make, and that the work should be exactly like the pattern.

2. 1 Timothy 1:16 and Titus 2:7 show that we must show in our life the pattern of a Christian.
8. **Better Covenant** – Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant.
 1. John Gill, in his commentary on Hebrews, makes this observation. “The covenant of grace, as administered under the Gospel dispensation; which is not only better than the covenant of works, that being conditional, this absolute; that stood on the foot of works, this on the foot of grace, and is established in Christ; that being broken and made void, this continues.”
 2. We must understand how the agreement we have with God is far superior to the covenant under which the Jews lived.
9. **Better Promises** – Jesus offers to us better promises.
 1. Albert Barnes wrote about the contrast in promises. “The promises in the first covenant pertained mainly to the present life. They were promises of length of days; of increase of numbers; of seed time and harvest; of national privileges, and of extraordinary peace, abundance, and prosperity. That there was also the promise of eternal life, it would be wrong to doubt; but this was not the main thing. In the new covenant, however, the promise of spiritual blessings becomes the principal thing. The mind is directed to heaven; the heart is cheered with the hopes of immortal life, the favor of God and the anticipation of heaven are secured in the most ample and solemn manner.”
 2. Forgiveness, eternal life, salvation, home in heaven – those are promises to us that were only dreams to the Jew.
10. **First and Second Covenants** – Verse 7 points out the obvious. If the covenant with Israel and Moses was without flaw – there would be no reason to replace it.

New agreement replaces the old one 8:8-13

8 Because finding fault with them, He says: *"Behold, the days are coming, says 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 did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."* 13 In that He says, *"A new covenant,"* He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

1. The first covenant was full of flaws. It was weak and needed to be replaced.
2. The long quote here is from Jeremiah 31:31-34.
3. Again the obvious is stated. When we say NEW we make the previous one OLD.
4. We understand the law was taken away at the death of Christ on the cross. (Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 2:14-17; 2 Corinthians 3:6-18 and several other passages) But the Jew did not understand this. The Jews still had the temple. They still had priests

offering animal sacrifices. So this verse states that their way of worship and service to God is “becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.” It would all end in 70AD.

A new way to praise God 9:1-28

The old holy place 9:1-10

1 Then indeed, even the first *covenant* had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. 2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part*, in which *was* the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; 3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, 4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; 5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. 6 Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing *the services*. 7 But into the second part the high priest *went* alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and *for* the people's sins *committed* in ignorance; 8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. 9 It *was* symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience-- 10 *concerned* only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.

1. We are now introduced to the articles that were placed in the tabernacle.

1. **First part – Holy Place** – priests entered daily

1. **Lampstand** – (candlesticks)



2. **Table of Shewbread**



2. **Second part – Holiest of All** (Holy of Holies, Most Holy Place) with veil separating the two parts – Only the High Priest could enter, once a year, Day of Atonement

1. **Golden censer** – was used to carry hot coals to light candles and incense



2. **Ark of the Covenant** – contained the stone tablets, a pot of manna and Aaron's rod



The blood of Christ 9:11-14

11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for 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, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

1. The tabernacle of Christ is – 1) Greater 2) More perfect 3) Not made with hands 4) Not of this creation 5) Not with blood of animals - - - But with His own blood
2. Christ, as High Priest, entered the Most Holy Place – Not once a year, but once for all
3. Christ obtained eternal redemption, not just a temporary postponement
4. The blood of the animal sacrifices could only purify the flesh (outside)
5. The blood of Christ - - - 1) Is offered through the Holy Spirit 2) Is without spot or blemish 3) Able to cleanse the conscience 4) Frees us from continuing to perform dead works 5) Allows us to serve the living God

Christ brings us into a new agreement 9:15-22

15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where there *is* a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament *is* in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. 18 Therefore not even the first *covenant* 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 goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, "*This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you.*" 21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. 22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

1. The blood of Christ is superior to the blood of animals, therefore He is able to be the Mediator of a new covenant.
2. His death, His blood, became the once and for all sacrifice. So the annual offerings were no longer needed or valid.
3. We now introduce another word – testament. It is a legal term for a will. We can write a will, change it, add things to it, remove things from it. It is not a binding will until the death of the testator (the one who writes and signs the will).
4. A will has no power or force while the testator lives. The will states that I inherit his collection of books. I can not take possession of those books until the testator dies. He might change his mind and decide to give the books to another person.
5. Even the first covenant was sealed with blood. Moses announced that this testament was in force because of the death of these animal sacrifices. See Exodus 24:8.
6. Almost everything used in worship to God – the tabernacle, all of the furnishings, all of the utensils – were purified with blood.
7. Here is the principle of the old covenant and the new covenant – **Without the shedding of blood there is no remission.**

The perfect sacrifice 9:23-28

23 Therefore *it was* necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, *which are* copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another-- 26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, 28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

1. It was important, no, necessary that all these things were purified before they could be used to offer worship to God.
2. The spiritual and heavenly is better than the material and earthly.
3. Christ did not enter the Most Holy Place of the earthly tabernacle or temple. He entered the spiritual equivalent – heaven itself.
4. **NOTE:** There are many exact parallels between the earthly tabernacle and the spiritual one.
 1. Burnt offering altar – Sacrifice of Christ
 2. Laver – Cleansing of baptism
 3. Holy Place – the church
 4. Lampstand – inspired Word of God
 5. Table of Shewbread – The Lord's table
 6. Altar of incense – Prayers offered to God
 7. Most Holy Place – Heaven
 8. Ark of the Covenant – Presence of God
 9. Blood of animals – Blood of Christ
5. Christ was in the better Most Holy Place – Heaven. If His sacrifice had been in the Most Holy Place of the earthly tabernacle – then this sacrifice would need to be repeated each year.
6. The emphasis in verses 26-28 is on the word – ONCE. This word means one time only. It does not need to be repeated.
 1. **Christ died once** – He does not need to die annually.
 2. **Men die once** – We do not keep coming back to earth and dying again and again. The teaching of reincarnation is not only untrue, it is opposed by the clear teaching of the Bible – Old and New Testament.
 3. **Next the Judgment** – After our death, the next event will be the judgment. After death, time loses its meaning. Eternity does not have clocks or calendars.
 4. **Christ was offered once** – The debt for all the sins of all men who have ever lived or are now living, or will live in the future, has been paid by Christ.
7. If you are an obedient believer you will look for the second coming of Christ. This second appearing is not to offer Himself or our sins. That is done, complete, and does not need to be repeated. The second coming is to take the faithful home with Him for all eternity.
8. Think about the phrase – **eagerly wait** – The KJV says “look for.” The idea is not how we often impatiently wait in a checkout line. The idea here is that we keep looking with anticipation, eager, anxious for the arrival. Children know that their grandparents are coming and the look out the window at every car that goes by looking for the one that will turn in at their house.
9. **Question:** How anxious are you for Christ to come? Are you ready? The early Christians had a one word prayer – **Maranatha**. (1 Corinthians 16:22) They prayed for the “Anathama” (condemnation on the enemies of Jesus) and “Maranatha” (Lord, come quickly and take me away). See also Revelation 22:7, 12, and 20.

A new sacrifice and way to life 10:1-39

The law of a shadow of things to come 10:1-4

1 For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. 3 But in those *sacrifices there is* a reminder of sins every year. 4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

1. **Shadow** – A dark outline of a shape. There is a difference in the shadow of a man and a clear image (photograph) of the man. The law of Moses was that dark shadow. Christ is the very image of the Father. See John 14:9.
2. **Every year** – Each year Israel observed a Day of Atonement. There were many special activities for that day – the scapegoat released into the wilderness, the death of a lamb as sacrifice, the blood taken by the high priest, the high priest entering the Most Holy Place, the sprinkling of blood around the Ark of the Covenant. This day was observed as the guilt of the sins were simply postponed for one year.
3. But on this day each year all the past sins were remembered again. Why didn't this sacrifice remove the sins permanently? Because the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins.
4. **NOTE:** We often use other phrases - "rolled forward" is a common expression but is not entirely correct. The sins were not just pushed down the road. They were forgiven – for one year. Then they were remembered again.

The only sacrifice for sins 10:5-18

5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "*Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me.* 6 *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure.* 7 Then I said, '*Behold, I have come-- In the volume of the book it is written of Me-- To do Your will, O God.*' " 8 Previously saying, "*Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them*" (which are offered according to the law), 9 then He said, "*Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.*" He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. 11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. 14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. 15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, 16 "*This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,*" 17 then He adds, "*Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.*" 18 Now where there is remission of these, *there is no longer an offering for sin.*

1. **A body prepared** – Psalm 40:6 is quoted to show that it was in the plan of God for Jesus to come in a fleshly body.
2. **Double barrel prophecy** – Psalm 40, like many statement in the Old Testament had both an immediate message and were so worded as to apply to Christ also.
 1. Isaiah 7:14 and Hosea 11:1 are two more familiar of these. There are many more in the Bible.
 2. Psalm 40 is about David and his troubles. Many verses in this Psalm are not about Christ. But this one statement has a double meaning – for David and about Christ.
3. Why does God say that He had not pleasure in the sacrifices and offerings? The were according to the law. But they did not come from the heart. They were just outward acts. See Isaiah 1:11-15.
4. **Take away to replace** – Christ took away the sacrifices and offerings that did not accomplish the forgiveness of sins. We are now sanctified by the new, replaced will of Christ once and for all.
5. Priests kept offering sacrifices daily but they did not remove the sin. Christ offered the one and only one sacrifice that would remove the sin.
6. Once this sacrifice was accomplished He sat down at the right hand of God.
7. Psalm 110:1 is referenced here. Christ is waiting for the enemy to be finally defeated. See also 1 Corinthians 15:25-27.
8. The Holy Spirit is given credit for the statement in Jeremiah 31:31-34. This passage proves the removal of the old covenant and the establishment of a new covenant. But it also shows the sacrifice of Christ was once and for all. Once sins are forgiven – they are gone. No further offering, no more sacrifice, no other death is needed.

The way to meet God 10:19-25

19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and *having* a 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 confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

1. Jesus entered the Holiest of All with His blood. This shows that Jesus is a High Priest and able to go beyond the veil. It shows that the blood of Christ is the sacrifice for our sins. It proves that we can have full assurance in our faith. We sing “Blessed Assurance” but many don't have much comfort in their faith.
2. Our heart (soul, mind, conscience) was cleansed by the blood of Christ. Our bodies were washed (buried in baptism) as part of that internal cleansing. See 1 Peter 3:21.
3. **Don't waver** – Don't straddle the fence. See Matthew 6:24 about serving two masters. We can not be in and out, up and down, with our service to God. God promised. God will keep His promise. Why do we waver in our dedication to God?
4. **Consider one another** – We must help those who begin to waver. Encourage them to

remain faithful. Help them be involved in doing good works. Inspire them to deeper love for Christ and His church.

5. **Don't forsake** – The word here is a military term – AWOL. Don't abandon your post. Don't stop performing your duty in the Lord's army.
6. **Assembling** – Christians are to gather together, meet together for times of worship. But they are also times of support and encouragement. We sing together in worship. But in that singing we teach and admonish one another. (Ephesians 5:19)
 1. Which assembly? Through the years many have had long discussions about which assemblies are included here. Just Sunday morning? What about Sunday night? Wednesday night? Gospel meetings? Other spiritual meetings? What about other gatherings of the church that are not worship – like a time of fellowship?
 2. There is no easy answer here. It is clear that the elders are charged with feeding the flock of God. They must determine when and how often such is needed for the flock to be strong and healthy.
 3. It is also clear that Christians should have a desire to be there. We should have a hunger, a thirst, a strong desire to be present. I understand the situations where one is not able to attend. This is not the problem. Work, sickness, in a nursing home and many other situations prevent one from being in the assembly. I have seen people in a nursing home cry because they could not be at the assembly.
 4. The problem is for those who are able to be present and make a willful choice to be absent.
 5. Why would any Christian want to anywhere else? This is not a matter of physical presence. It is a matter of the heart.
7. **The day approaching** – There has been much discussion about what “day” is mentioned here.
 1. **The Lord's Day** – I don't believe this is day here. We are to encourage more and more as the day approaches. Are we to encourage more on Friday than on Monday?
 2. **The day of Judgment** – Here we have a problem because the day of judgment will come without warning. Jesus said there will be no signs of its coming.
 3. **Destruction of Jerusalem** – This is more likely the meaning. B. W. Johnson says, “There were signs that the Hebrew Christians could see that *the day* was near at hand. They probably thought that Christ would come in person at that day. He did come in judgment on the Jewish nation. As that awful time of trial seemed near at hand they should be zealous in exhorting each other. Macknight, Stuart, Milligan, Meyer and many others refer "day" to the destruction of the Jewish nation.”

In Matthew 24 Jesus gave us the many signs of the coming destruction. As this letter is being written, many of those signs were already visible. This is why he said that the old covenant was getting old and “ready to vanish away.” (Hebrews 8:13)

4. The more danger or threat of harm and persecution, the more we need the support and encouragement of each other. Anytime our faith begins to weaken, anytime our love for Christ begins to wane, anytime our work of the Lord begins to be lax – It is time to be in the assembly to renew our strength, our faith and our determination to remain faithful to Christ.

Warning to those who will not believe 10:26-31

26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*" says the Lord. And again, "*The LORD will judge His people.*" 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

1. **Willful sin** – John Gill discusses this term in his commentary. “Which is not to be understood of a single act of sin, but rather of a course of sinning; nor of sins of infirmity through temptation, or even of grosser acts of sin, but of voluntary ones; and not of all voluntary ones, or in which the will is engaged and concerned, but of such which are done on set purpose, resolutely and obstinately; and not of immoral practices, but of corrupt principles, and acting according to them; it intends a total apostasy from the truth, against light and evidence, joined with obstinacy.”
2. **Willful sin includes** – rebellion, presumptuous, deliberate and intentional acts of sin. Most of us sin because of temptation, weakness of the flesh, or just not paying close attention. Here the sin is a willful and deliberate decision to go against the will of God.
3. **NOTE:** Keep this in the context of verse 25. Don't abandon the meeting together for support and encouragement. Making the decision to abandon the assembly is not a sin of weakness or temptation. It is a deliberate act against the will of God.
4. **No more sacrifice** – Remember the discussion at the end of chapter 9 and the first part of chapter 10. Christ died ONCE. He will not return to die again. There is no other plan of salvation. There is no Plan B. Reject Christ and there is no other option.
5. **Only judgment** – Don't look for another plan of salvation. The only thing to look for in the future is the final and eternal judgment day. Reject the will of God, refuse to assemble with the saints for mutual support and encouragement, and nothing remains to look for – except the judgment of God.
6. **Death penalty** – Under the law of Moses many offenses against the law were punished with death. The only protection was the need for 2 or 3 witnesses.
7. **Worse punishment** – There is a punishment worse than death. It is the eternal death of being separated from God. Why is this punishment so harsh?
 1. **Treated Jesus like dirt** – They trampled the Son of God under their feet.
 2. **Despised His blood** – By choosing to be absent from the assembly of the saints, you are telling Jesus that he died in vain. You do not want to remember his death in the Lord's Supper. You do not want to praise Him in song and prayer. You are saying that His blood was shed for nothing.
 3. **Spit on the Holy Spirit** – When we are not willing to assemble with the church we are showing our contempt for the salvation by grace that the Holy Spirit offers us.
8. God will deal harshly with them. Vengeance belongs to God. He will judge and condemn those who have done what is described above.
9. **Fearful thing** – God is love, mercy, compassion, tender-hearted, kind, gentle. But we

must remember there is another side to God. He is also just, holy, pure. He can not condone sin, rebellion and willful sin. We often think of “fear” as we fear a robber, rapist or murderer. Fear in the Bible is used most of the time in the sense of awe, power, majesty, might. God is Almighty. God is Powerful. We should stand in awe of His strength and power. In verse 31 fear can be understood in either way – His awesome power and might or a God of whom the rebellious should be afraid.

Choose the right way 10:32-39

32 But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: 33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; 34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. 35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 *"For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."* 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

1. The Hebrew nation has a long history of being in slavery, bondage, under persecution and being harshly treated. Even now, as Christians, they are facing hardship. The point here is that if they abandon Christianity and return to Judaism – the persecution will not cease.
2. **In my chains** – The author mentions his being in prison, which is one of the points for Paul being the author of this book.
3. **Better possession** – They had endured, not only the persecution and ridicule of themselves, but the taking of their possessions and material property. But they were not all that concerned because they knew a better and eternal possession was waiting for them.
4. **Don't throw it away** – Don't quit now. With each day we are closer to our better possession of heaven.
5. **Needed: Endurance** – What we need is the ability to hang on. They have endured some persecution. There might be more suffering ahead. We just need to endure. The promise of eternal life comes AFTER the suffering, not before it. Rest comes after we work.
6. **Wait for it** – Habakkuk 2:3-4 is quoted here. We must wait patiently for the reward. We will live by faith. Draw back from faith and God will not be pleased.
7. **Which are you?** - The writer expresses his hope that they are of the type that will not draw back and spend eternity in destruction and perdition. We should be those who keep believing to the eventual saving of our soul.

5 The better way 11:1-13:25

The way of trust and hope 11:1-40

The meaning of faith 11:1-3

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

1. **Faith** – Thayer's Greek Lexicon gives this definition to this word. "Conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it."
2. **Faith is substance** – The Greek word here literally means a placing under. It has reference to the base, substructure, the foundation. Then Thayer says, "of a person or thing; the steadfastness of mind, firmness, courage, resolution; confidence, firm trust, assurance."
3. **Faith is evidence** – That by which something is proven to be true. Faith is not a leap into the dark unknown. Faith has a firm base, a solid foundation. Faith is based upon evidence.
4. **Not seen** – We believe because of the foundation and the evidence even though we have not actually or physically experienced it. We have not touched, tasted, seen, heard or smelled God. The same is true of many material and physical things. I have never physically experienced China. But there is some foundational evidence that such a place exists. Therefore I believe that China is a real place. It is not a guess. My faith in China is base on what evidence I have heard and seen.
In the spiritual realm many things are invisible, unseen. Study Romans 1:20 and Hebrews 11:27.
5. **By the word of God** – Read Genesis 1. "And God said" is the theme of the chapter. See 2 Peter 3:4-7. The word of God caused the flood to occur and to stop. The world remains in orbit by the word of God. By the word of God the world will burn and be destroyed.
6. **Create** – Verse 3 gives us a simple definition of "create". Make means to take existing elements and combine them to "make" something new. One can take flour, sugar, eggs, and other ingredients and make a cake. Create means to take nothing and have something result. Notice both words are used in Genesis 1. God created light. God made the sun, moon and stars.

Faith of men before the flood 11:4-7

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. 5 By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, *"and was not found, because God had taken him"*; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith *it is impossible to please Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*. 7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

1. Here we begin a long list of people who demonstrated their faith by how they lived, obeyed and responded to the will of God.
2. Here are people who had their faith tested – and they passed the test. Here are people who are in “God’s Hall of Faith.”
3. They offer us words and an example of encouragement to continue in our faith.
4. There are three mentioned in the period before the flood.
 1. **Able** – Able, the son of Adam and Eve, offered a better sacrifice than his brother Cain. God declared Able to be righteous and accepted his sacrifice. The offering of Cain was not accepted.
 1. There has been some disagreement about the reason for the rejection of the sacrifice of Cain.
 1. **Not by faithful obedience** – Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). The conclusion is that Cain did not offer what God commanded.
 2. **Not the best of his crop** – Some have suggested that it was not an issue of animal vs. vegetable. It was a question of the quality of the offering.
 3. **Type of offering; Quality of offering; or Heart of the one making the offer** – Here is an excellent comment by Wayne Jackson, “How did Abel present his sacrifice unto the Lord? It was **by faith**. Moses did not write that Cain offered his sacrifice by faith, and no New Testament writer comments on the faith of Cain demonstrated by this offering. If Cain did not offer his gifts unto God by faith, then how did he worship? The opposite of faith is by sight (2 Cor. 5:7), that is, through human intuition. Cain worshiped according to “sight” — according to what his own senses and wisdom dictated would be an honorable gift unto the Lord. No doubt, his produce was lovely to look upon. No doubt, he labored over those crops until the harvest. No doubt he anticipated that all the hard work, time, and care he had spent on those offerings would be acceptable. His expectation of acceptance is clearly demonstrated by his reaction to the Lord’s rejection of his sacrifice. But Cain’s offering was not rejected because he did not worship in earnest. Instead, his offering was rejected because it was offered according to his own presumption and not by faith.”
 2. **Enoch** – In Genesis 5:21-24 we read about the short life of Enoch. The most

important thing to know about Enoch is “he pleased God.” The one thing that most know about Enoch is that he is only one of two people in the Bible who did not die. Elijah and Enoch were simply taken away from the earth. But his avoiding death is not what God wants us to remember. Enoch pleased God.

3. **Noah** – God gave Noah a warning about something that Noah had not ever experienced. That took faith. Noah obeyed God and began to work with godly fear. That is faith. Noah built an ark just as God commanded. That is faith in action. Noah saved his family. That is faith at work.
5. **Without faith** – Verse 6 is an important verse. Faith is vital. Without faith we can not please God like Enoch did. See John 8:24. What must we believe?
 1. **That God is** – We must believe in the existence of God. The atheist denies that God even exists. The Deist believes that God exists but rejects that He is active or cares about what is going on here on earth.
 2. **That God rewards** – God is aware of the those who obey and those who do not obey. God rewards those who seek to obey and please Him.
 3. **Faith seeks** – There is in man a desire to know God. We must seek to learn all we can about God. We must learn His will and resolve to do it.

Faith of Abraham and Sarah 11:8-19

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 11 By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude--innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, 18 of whom it was said, "*In Isaac your seed shall be called*," 19 concluding that God was able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

1. **Abraham** – Went away from family and home, not even knowing where he was going. He lived in tents, temporary structures, not in a permanent house. He waited for the house not made by man and physical materials. He looked for the heavenly home with God.
2. **Sarah** – was strong enough to bear a son when she was past child bearing age. From that one birth came a great nation, strong, numerous as sand on the shore.
3. **NOTE:** They died having lived in faith, but never received the promise. Land promised

to Abraham did not belong to them for another 400+ years. They could have given up and gone back to the area Abraham left. They choose to seek a better country. They were strangers and pilgrims here on earth.

4. **Abraham** – There is a second example of Abraham's faith. He was tested by being asked to offer his son, Isaac. Abraham believed that what God could promise, God could raise him from the dead. If God promises, God can find a way to keep the promise. That is faith.

Other examples of faith 11:20-38

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. 21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff. 22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones. 23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw *he was* a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. 24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. 28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. 29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry *land*, *whereas* the Egyptians, attempting *to do so*, were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. 31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace. 32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also *of* David and Samuel and the prophets: 33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. 36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented-- 38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in* dens and caves of the earth.

1. **Isaac** – As patriarch after Abraham, blessed both his sons. Blessing was more than an expression of well wishes. The Blessing was an inspired prophecy about them.
2. **Jacob** – Before he died, Jacob blessed (prophesied) about each of his sons who would form the 12 tribes and the nation of Israel.
3. **Joseph** – Near his death, Joseph prophesied that Israel would depart Egypt and go the land promised to Abraham. He requested that his bones be taken to the promised land for burial.
4. **Moses** – Was protected at his birth. When he grew up he rejected the line of the king of Egypt and choose to suffer with his people, Israel. He choose to suffer than enjoy sin

for a short time. He kept the Passover, sprinkling of blood, and saved the death of the firstborn in Israel.

5. **Israel** – Was able to leave Egypt by passing through the Red Sea. When the army of Egypt marched into the Red Sea, God converted his army to a navy, but chariots don't float. They crossed the Jordan and took down the city of Jericho by marching around the walls for seven days.
6. **Rahab** – Was allowed to survive the destruction of Jericho and join the nation of Israel. She protected the spies that came to see the land.
7. **Others** – The list is a long one. There are many others that could be discussed.
 1. **Gideon** – Saved Israel in Judges 6 & 7.
 2. **Barak** – worked with Deborah in Judges 4.
 3. **Samson** – saved Israel with his extra strength in Judges 14-16.
 4. **Jephthah** – Saved Israel and regretted the vow he made in Judges 11.
 5. **David** – Defeated Goliath, became king, was the foundation of the line of kings until Christ would come.
 6. **Samuel** – was the last of the judges and became the prophet at the time of Saul and David
 7. **And the prophets** – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, all the minor prophets and all the prophets that did not write (oral prophets) who served God in faith.
8. **Other tests of faith** – subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped mouths of lions, endured fire, sword, strong in battle, won some battles, tortured, mock trials, scourging, chains, imprisonment, stoned, cut in half, tempted, killed with the sword, lived under animal skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, live in deserts, mountains, dens and caves.
9. **Now** – explain why you could not attend church, work for the Lord.

The promise of God to those who trust him 11:39-40

**39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,
40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.**

1. All of these mentioned in chapter 11 obeyed God through their faith.
2. None of them received the promise. It was always ahead of them.
3. We are in a better position than any of them. Christ has come. He died for our sins. He was raised from the dead of the third day. He has ascended into the Holiest of All and is now reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords. He is the head of the church, and the king of His kingdom.
4. We are able to look at the accomplished promise of God from Genesis 3:15 on. All of the promises in the Old Testament are fulfilled in Christ. Our faith is in the completed, finished, accomplished work of Christ. While their faith looked forward to these events, our faith looks back at the completed promise.
5. **SO** – Why is our faith so weak? Why are we reluctant to teach other about Christ?

The right way to live 12:1-29

Jesus our example 12:1-3

1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **3** For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

1. We are literally surrounded by the examples of the faithful. They fought the battles. They were tested and passed. They were persecuted, some even in death, and remained faithful to God.
2. Here is what we must do.
 1. **Lay aside every weight** – All the obstacles that keep us from running must be removed. What is the weight that you slow you down or prevent you from running the race and finishing it?
 2. **Lay aside the sin that ensnares us** – Notice that above included every weight. Here it is the sin (singular) that must be set aside. What is your sin? For each of us there must be some serious and honest looking inside our heart and life. Of all the sins that we face or are tempted with – Which one is the most difficult for you? We often think of the “big” sins like adultery, murder, etc. But often what hinders us is not the bolder in the path, but the pebble in our shoe.
 3. **Run with patience** – This race is not a sprint that is over in a few seconds. This is a long distance run for the rest of your life. There is a difference in how you run a sprint and a long race. The long race requires you to keep going at an even pace.
 4. **Look to Jesus** – Keep your focus on the goal. It is easy to be distracted. We often allow our eyes to wander while driving our car and we begin to drift out of our lane. In life we can be distracted and veer off our course. Keep you eye on Jesus.
 5. **Lest you become discouraged** – Remember what Jesus did for you. Remember where Jesus is, at the right hand of God, in heaven, in the Holiest of All. Do not let anyone or anything distract or discourage you.

Discipline from God 12:4-11

4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. **5** And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: *"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."* **7** If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? **8** But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. **9** Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? **10** For they indeed for a few days

chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

1. What has your faith cost you? Your home? Your property? Your freedom? Have lost any blood because of your faith?
2. We need to go back and read chapter 11 again. See what their faith cost them and compare to what our faith has cost us.
3. Do not forget that some correction may come from God. "Whom the Lord loves, He chastens."
 1. **Chasten** – The Greek word here means – 1) **to train**; to be instructed or taught or learn; to cause one to learn; 2) **to chastise**; to chastise or castigate with words, to correct of those who are molding the character of others by reproof and admonition
 2. **Rebuked** – This word means to find fault with, correct, refute, convict.
4. Parents punish children because they want them to grow up to be good adults. God does the same with His children.
5. Most who have a problem with these statements – focus on How does God punish us? Does God cause disease, house fires, storms? How does God inflict His corrections on us?
 1. First – We can not assume that all rebuking is painful. We can be corrected without suffering some pain and punishment.
 2. Second – Some chastening is with strong words. Some is done by leading us in a different direction. Chastening can be gentle, kind and productive.
 3. Third – Chastening is important to our growth and development as strong Christians.
6. Our fathers corrected us – and we survived. God will correct us and we will be better because of this correction.
7. No correction is enjoyed at the moment. But later we realize how it helped to shape us to become stronger, better servants of Christ.

Continue to live as Christians 12:12-17

12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be *dislocated*, but rather be healed. 14 Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; 16 lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. 17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

1. See Isaiah 35:3 for the origin of these statements. Renew your courage. Make a new effort to do better because of this correction.
2. **Follow peace** – Romans 14:19 teaches this same principle. Try to get along.
3. **Pursue holiness** – We need to be sanctified in heart and life.

4. **Don't fall short** – Read Romans 3:23. One word for sin is to fall short of the mark. We miss the target. We fail to reach the goals that God set in front of us.
5. **Don't be bitter** – Bitterness can sneak up on us. We become bitter we things don't go our way. Bitterness leads to sinful actions.
6. **Don't be Esau** – Remember Esau, who exchanged his birthright and blessing for Isaac, for a bowl of soup. The immediate hunger was more important to him than the spiritual that would come later.
7. **Don't be profane** – Albert Barnes defines this word. “The word “profane” here refers to one who by word or conduct treats religion with contempt, or has no reverence for what is sacred.”
8. **Don't regret your life** – Esau later regretted what he had done. But it was too late. There are things in life, choices we make, that we may regret later but can't take them back. In golf there is a mulligan – a chance to take a shot over again. In life we don't get any mulligans. We can not un-churn the butter. We must learn to accept that it was an error – don't repeat it – but we can't go back and do it over.

Contrast of Sinai and Zion 12:18-25

18 For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, 19 and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard *it* begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. 20 (For they could not endure what was commanded: "*And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.*" 21 And so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, "*I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.*") 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven,

1. The mountain we have not come to: (Mount Sinai)
 1. Can not be touched
 2. Burned with fire
 3. Trumpet and voice
 4. Exceeding fear and trembling
2. The mountain we (Christians) have come to: (Mount Zion)
 1. City of the living God
 2. Heavenly Jerusalem
 3. Innumerable company of angels
 4. General assembly / church of the firstborn
 5. God the Judge
 6. Spirits of just men
 7. Jesus the mediator of the new covenant
 8. The blood that speaks better things than Able

3. Don't refuse to hear God. Israel refused God who spoke from the earth (Sinai) and suffered because of it. We will not escape if we refuse God who speaks from heaven.

When God shakes all things 12:26-29

26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "*Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.*" **27** Now this, "*Yet once more,*" indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. **28** Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. **29** For our God is a consuming fire.

1. The voice from Sinai shook the earth. Haggai 2:6 is quoted to show that God is powerful enough to shake, not just on mountain (Sinai) but His voice can shake the whole earth. His voice shook the earth and caused the flood in the day of Noah. One day the voice of God will raise all the dead. The voice of God will destroy the earth with intense heat and fire.
2. But – We are part of the kingdom of God. That kingdom can not be shaken. The kingdom of God is eternal. It will not be destroyed by flood or fire. It will stand forever. See Daniel 2:44.
3. We must serve God with reverence. Our world curses the name of God. God is scoffed at; scorned, ridiculed, laughed at. Be very careful that your treatment of God is with deep reverence.
4. We must serve God with godly fear. Study what Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 12:13.
5. God is a consuming fire. See Deuteronomy 4:24.

The way of love and doing what God wants 13:1-25

Christian love 13:1-6

1 Let brotherly love continue. **2** Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so *doing* some have unwittingly entertained angels. **3** Remember the prisoners as if chained with them--those who are mistreated--since you yourselves are in the body also. **4** Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. **5** *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."* **6** So we may boldly say: "*The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?*"

1. Chapter 13 contains a number of practical exhortations.
2. **Continue to love** – There are two primary words translated “love.” Agape is the word for God's love for us, husbands love for their wife, etc. Here the other word is used. The Greek word is philadelphia. It comes from two words; philo means to be friends, show kindness; adelphos means a brother. Put them together and you have brotherly love or brotherly kindness. The city of Philadelphia is known as the city of Brotherly

Love.

3. **Entertain strangers** – The Hebrew Christians understood the word “strangers.” We use this word to mean someone we do not know. But in the Old Testament and in the law of Moses, a stranger was anyone not a Jew. While they were not to marry “strange” women (non-Jewish) they were commanded to watch over, care for, protect, feed, assist and help when they were in need. Abraham entertained some strangers who turned out to be angels.
4. **Remember those in prison / the mistreated** – Jesus taught this in Matthew 25:36. We must not become hard and calloused. We must be compassionate.
5. **Marriage is honorable** – Many today are just living together without getting married. Marriage is honorable. Just living together is not, it is fornication.
6. **Do not covet** – Covetousness is a difficult word to define. The primary definition is – greedy, the inordinate desire for more, the desire to obtain what can not be gotten by lawful means.
7. **Be content** – For us today, this may be the most difficult. We are, by nature it seems, complainers. We gripe if it is too hot, too cold, too wet, too dry. We are like Goldilocks. We want everything just right.
The bombardment of commercials creates in us a desire for more. We want more. What we have is old and worn out. I can't wear this old thing. I can't keep driving this old car. We are not content with much in our lives. We must learn to be content with what we have. Study Philippians 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:8; Luke 3:14.
8. **God will not leave us** – Jesus promised that He would be with us always. (Matthew 28:20)
9. **Lord is my Helper** – Study Psalm 27:1 and Psalm 118:6. God promised to be a very present help in time of trouble. (Psalm 46:1)
10. **Why are we afraid?** - What can man do to me? See Matthew 10:28. Man can not touch my soul. Man may kill by body – but that is all he can do.

The example of leaders 13:7-8

7 Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of *their* conduct. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

1. There are three passages in the rest of the chapter that discuss our relationship to those who serve as elders in the church. See also v. 17 and v. 24.
2. **Remember** – is more than to simply recall. It means to keep in mind, to hold in memory. Who are these we should remember?
 1. **Spoke the word** – In NT times the elders were also the primary teachers, preachers, ministers of the Word of God.
 2. **Example of faith** – They lived, worked and worship with you. You can see how they have grown in their faith. Follow their example.
 3. **Conduct** – Also notice how they conduct their lives. See how they deal with problems, adversity, problems.
3. **Same Jesus** – Jesus does not change. God does not change. (Malachi 3:6) Some

laws of Deity have changed. But the nature, character and moral laws of Deity have not changed.

Call to sacrifice 13:9-16

9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For *it is* good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. 10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. 11 For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. 13 Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. 14 For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. 15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. 16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

1. **Strange doctrines** – By the time this letter was written many strange teachings were showing up. The first doctrine the church had to deal with came from Jewish Christians who were teaching that circumcision was necessary for salvation. (Acts 15) Later came many more. John talks about some who deny that Jesus came in the flesh. There are many (hundreds) of strange doctrines today. Don't let the wind of these teachings blow you off course. (Ephesians 4:14)
2. The rest of verse 9 is difficult for us to understand. Here is what Burton Coffman wrote in his commentary on this passage. "The proclivity of the whole human race to save themselves by some kind of diet is an amazing characteristic of homo sapiens. Long after Christ himself made "all meats clean" (Mark 7:19), even the apostle Peter protested a vision from heaven, saying, "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean" (Acts 10:14). There were possibly large numbers of the original readers of Hebrews who could have said the same thing."
3. In the Law of Moses there were very specific rules about sacrifices. Some could burn part of the animal and the priest keep other parts. Some sacrifices were not to be eaten at all. Some were burned away from the tabernacle, outside the camp.
4. Jesus was taken outside the camp (out of Jerusalem) to be killed.
5. Christians need to get outside the camp. To catch fish you have to go where they are. To reach the lost world we must get outside the camp (church building) and reach out to sinners.
6. **Sacrifice of praise** – We must offer the sacrifice of praise. Sing and pray to God. Offer, not animals, but the sacrifice of the fruit of our lips.
7. **Share** – The early Christians shared all they had. They had all things in common. They shared their possessions. See Acts 4:32-37; Acts 2:44-46.

Obey and follow what is right 13:17

17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

1. Burton Coffman says, "The divine injunction to obey persons in authority covers obedience to civil powers; and even the policeman is hailed in the scripture as "a minister of God to thee for good" (Romans 13:4); but the obedience required in this verse is submission to the elders of the church."
2. **Obey / Submit** – These words are resisted by many today. If the elders are doing things out of love for the local church, the members will have no issue with following. The same is true for husband / wife relationships.
3. **Watch for souls** – Elders have a specific duty. They must watch for and be accountable for the souls of those in the local congregation. Elders are to be shepherds who feed, watch, care for, protect, heal and help the sheep in the flock.
4. **With joy, not grief** – Many elders resign because they are beaten down, discouraged, and feel that all the effort they have done is not appreciated.

Pray for us 13:18-19

18 Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably. 19 But I especially urge *you* to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

1. The author urges the Jewish Christians to pray for him and those with him.
2. It is always important to pray for the elders, preachers, missionaries and others who are serving the Lord and His church.

The end of the letter 13:20-25

20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen. 22 And I appeal to you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation, for I have written to you in few words. 23 Know that *our* brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly. 24 Greet all those who rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you. 25 Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

1. The letter ends with prayer.
 1. Jesus gave his blood for an everlasting covenant
 2. We are complete as we do His will and pleasing
 3. To Christ belongs the glory forever
2. **Accept the exhortation** – The author summarizes this letter with one word. Don't get angry and reject these words. They are written to encourage, support, admonish.

These words were not written to be critical or harsh. They were written to advance the cause of Christ and urge all to remain faithful.

3. **Timothy has been set free** – He may be able to travel shortly
4. **Greet the elders** – Greet is more than just saying, Hi. The word means to receive joyfully, to welcome.
5. **Greet the saints** – This kind of joyful welcome should be present among all the Christians.
6. The common Hebrew greeting and farewell – **Grace be with you all. Amen.**

The Way of Christ is The Better Way.

Word List

altar ~ the special table, for burning animals or other gifts offered to God.
amen ~ a word from the Hebrew language that means we agree, or it is true, or let it be so.
Ammonites ~ a nation who fought against the Israelites.
ancestors ~ any persons from whom the families of your father or mother come.
anchor ~ a heavy weight on a chain which sailors throw over the side of the boat to hold it steady.
angel ~ a spirit person made by God to serve him and take his messages. There are angels who sinned and now serve the Devil.
apostle ~ one whom God sends; especially one of the 12 that Jesus chose to be his helpers.
ark ~ a box in the Most Holy Place; a large boat such as Noah built.
baptism ~ burial in water in which we are cleansed by the blood of Christ, and that we want to serve and obey God.
belief ~ what we accept as true and act accordingly ... see faith.
believers ~ those who have chosen to obey Christ.
boldness/boldly ~ to be brave and without fear; with courage.
Canaan ~ the land that God promised to Abraham (Genesis 12:7).
Canaanites ~ the people who lived in the land of Canaan and who fought.
cherubs ~ special angels who were in the most holy place.
Clement of Rome ~ a church leader and writer who lived at the end of the first century.
creation ~ the act of God in making the world and everything there is: everything that God has made.
Egypt ~ a country where the Israelites were slaves before the exodus.
Egyptians ~ people who belong to the land of Egypt.
elders ~ older men, respected men, or leaders in the church.
exodus ~ a word used to refer to the time when God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt.
faith ~ to trust someone or something; belief and trust in God and in Jesus his Son; belief that the Bible is true.
firstborn ~ a title of Jesus as the first to rise from the dead. Then Christians are referred to as firstborn ones.
Gethsemane ~ a garden outside Jerusalem where Jesus prayed before his death.
Greek ~ the language in which the authors wrote the New Testament.
Hebrew ~ a Jewish or Israelite person. The language of the Jewish people.
heir ~ a person who will own the property or position when the present owner dies.
human(s)/humanity ~ human person(s).
hyssop ~ a small bush used by the Israelites with the blood of sacrifices.
incense ~ something that gives a sweet smell when it burns; the priest burned it in the temple.
Israel ~ God changed the name of Jacob to Israel (Genesis 35). The sons of Jacob were the beginning of the nation of Israel. The land that God promised to them is the land of Israel.
Israelites ~ the people of Israel.
Italy ~ a country.
Jericho ~ a city that the Israelites destroyed when they came into the land that God had promised them (Joshua 6).

Jerusalem ~ the capital city of Israel; the temple of God was there.

Jews ~ people who were born from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their children. It is also a name for the people of Israel.

Judah ~ one of the 12 sons of Jacob (Israel). It was from his family that the Messiah was to come. When the nation of Israel split, 10 of the 12 tribes became Israel and 2 of the 12 tribes became Judah.

Judaism ~ the religion of the Jews.

kingdom ~ the place or territory where a king rules.

Lord ~ a title for God, or Jesus, to show that he is over all.

mediator ~ the agent who makes peace between persons. Jesus is the mediator between God and humanity. As mediator he made the new agreement with God for humanity.

messengers ~ those who bring messages.

Messiah ~ the special servant of God, the name God chose for Jesus Christ. The person that God sent to save his people from their sins. God promised the Jews that Messiah would come. Jesus is that Messiah but the Jews still do not believe it.

Midian ~ a nation that fought against Israel.

Midianites ~ people of the land of Midian.

miracles ~ wonderful works that God does by his power; wonderful things that show that a person's message is from God.

Passover ~ the meal that the Jews had at the time of the Exodus. Each year they still have this meal to remember the Exodus.

persecution ~ when enemies of God hurt people because they believe in Jesus.

Philistines ~ a nation that fought with the Israelites.

promised land ~ the land that God promised to give to Abraham and his family.

prophet(s) ~ those who are able to tell to other people what God wants; people who spoke for God a long time ago; they often told of things that would happen in the future.

repent, repentance ~ a change of mind and heart, to turn away from sin and turn to God.

resurrection ~ rising from the dead; coming alive again.

righteous(ness) ~ being right with God; people that God sees as clean and not his enemies; people who do what is right.

Rome ~ the capital city of the rulers at that time. They were the Romans.

Sabbath ~ the Sabbath was the seventh day of the week which was special to the Jews. It was a day on which the people were to rest from work (Exodus 20:8-11).

sacrifice ~ an offering to God, often an animal or bird, by the Jews to ask God to forgive their sins. Jesus gave himself to die as a sacrifice for our sins.

Salem ~ a city of which Melchizedek was king; short for Jerusalem.

salvation ~ when God saves us from the result and punishment of our sin; the rescue from sin, as God forgives us and gives us new life in Christ.

Sarah ~ the wife of Abraham.

scripture ~ the books of the Bible.

shepherd ~ one who feeds and takes care of sheep.

Sinai ~ a mountain where God met with Moses and gave him the law.

sin ~ to sin is to do wrong, bad or evil; not to obey God; sins are the wrong things that we do.

soul ~ the part of a person that we give us life, intellect, will, mind, and emotion

spirit ~ that part of a person which we cannot see but which is immortal, eternal

teachings ~ lessons.

temple ~ a special building for the worship of God. A building that replaced the tabernacle. The Jews had one in Jerusalem for the worship of the true God.

throne ~ the special chair for the king.

Timothy ~ a friend of the apostle Paul. He was a leader in the church at that time. There are 2 letters to him, from Paul, in the New Testament

tribe ~ family from one man. Israel grew from the 12 sons of Jacob. These 12 families formed the 12 tribes of Israel.

trumpet ~ an instrument to sound an alarm or command the army.

vow ~ serious promise made with a proof of intention to keep it. People did this by making the vow in the name of some great person.

washings ~ the acts of washing in ceremonies.

witness ~ a witness is someone who sees an event and will tell of it. To witness is to tell what you have seen.

worship ~ to give honor to God with praise, thanks and respect.

Zion ~ another name for Jerusalem, but especially of Heaven.