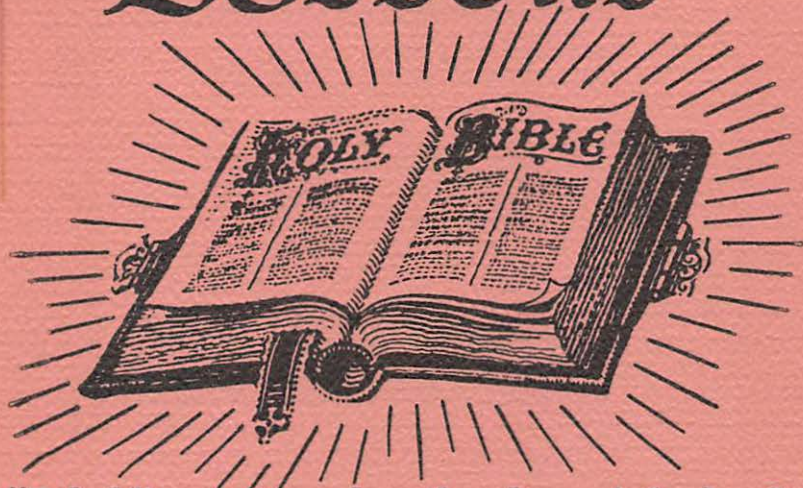


Bible Lessons



**"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED" II Cor. 3:18**

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 14, No. 4
Oct., Nov., Dec.
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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Volume 14

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**Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of
Jesus Christ and His Church**

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Theme for Fourth Quarter, 1982



We are greatly inspired to set forth a series of Bible Lessons on the truths contained in the book in the Bible entitled "The Epistle to the Hebrews." We are persuaded that this epistle (whomsoever wrote it, and to whomsoever it was initially written) is a divinely inspired volume of spiritual wealth, beneficial to us today. The manner in which the Old Testament sayings and prophecies were handled and applied to Jesus Christ and His dispensation of grace, we should carefully note and consider. The difference between the old Jewish law system and the new covenant of grace in Christ Jesus is herein expounded in full. It could be that this epistle was directed to the Jews who were proving to be very difficult in accepting the teachings of Jesus that seemed to conflict with the old law. Let us remember that the law spirit is not dead in this world today. It is still possible for us to be ignorantly endeavoring to be under the law and not comprehending the real workings of the grace of Jesus Christ. We pray the Holy Spirit to enlighten each heart as we study the Book of Hebrews.

—Brother Leslie C. Busbee

October 3, 1982

CHRIST MADE BETTER THAN THE ANGELS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. 1 Peter 3:22.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ has been given by the Heavenly Father a name and a ministry far above that held by the angels who minister for the heirs of salvation. The prophets have borne witness and testified beforehand of His superior position of power and authority.

Word Definition: *Sundry times:* Different times. *Divers manners:* Various ways. *Express image of His person:* Exact impress of His substance, Greek. *Oil of gladness above thy fellows:* Oil of extreme joy beyond thy associates. *Vesture:* Outer or upper garment, a mantle.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus Christ and His ministry are the supreme topics of this epistle. The belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the Almighty God speaking to mankind in the flesh was a priority belief to the early Church. The Jewish nation as a whole recognized that their religion was of the true and living God. Through the ministry of angels their nation had been established in religion and in civil life as a nation among nations. God

communicated with mankind through the medium of these heavenly beings. The angel of the Lord appeared in the burning bush to Moses. The angel of God went before the camp of Israel as they left Egypt. God spoke through an angel on Sinai giving them the law. The writer declares that Jesus Christ has a name greater than the angels. Note carefully each quotation from the Old Testament. Were these spoken to the angels? Note that all the angels of God were to worship the first-born. Just where this Scripture is taken from is uncertain; but it is evident. Consider how the angels rejoiced the night of the Saviour's birth and bore the message to the shepherds. Who were the fellows mentioned in verse 9 that Christ was to be anointed above? Could these have been the angels referred to? Think of the expressive prophecies such as the one in Psalms 110:1. "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This was not spoken to the angels. It was a pure prophecy of Christ. God started His great work through the ministry of angels and fulfilled it in the ministry of His beloved Son. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. By whom has God spoken to us in these last days?
2. Why is Christ being compared to the angels?
3. What is said of the angels?
4. How is Christ addressed as God?
5. How is it obvious that the prophecies quoted were not spoken to the angels?
6. What did Jesus do before He sat down at the right hand of God?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

How reverent should be the name of Jesus to us! It is because of what His glorious name stands for that we should honor Him. He has been exalted above the heavens and all the host of them. The mighty angels that excel mortal beings in strength pay homage to Him, the King of Glory. God has spoken unto us by His Son. That Son was Jesus of Nazareth. He was the exact impress of the Father's essence and life; He was God manifest in the flesh. It was on account of Him that the Father created the world and planned the ages of mankind. He was with the Father and was made manifest to us. Because of His death and resurrection He has secured eternal Sonship with the Father for our benefit. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I

begotten thee." Psalms 2:7. Behold the glorious exaltation of Christ at the right hand of the Father. "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Psalms 110:1. The angels are made subject to Him. They desire to look into the things that have to do with His redemptive work. 1 Pet. 1:12. Hear God Almighty speak on two different occasions: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But the angels that God worked through heretofore are labeled as ministering spirits that serve those who believe in Christ. See how much superior is the ministry and the office of Christ? As we shall see in the next lesson, we had better take heed and place the proper value on Christ and His power. The quotation from Psalms 102 shows the incorruption and eternalness of the gospel. Not only will the earth fade away, but He, Christ, will be the One who will fold it up and bring it to an end. Let us behold with awe the magnitude and glory of the Son of God held aloft by the writer in our lesson today. Let us bow in reverence and devotion to Him, consecrating and surrendering all to His control.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Jesus Christ is worthy of all the worship and praise that mortal can direct toward Him. He is worthy of homage by inheritance. Just as the son of a literal king is revered by subjects of his kingdom, so is Christ, who reigns at His Father's right hand.

Christ is also deserving of our adoration because of His willingness to leave the throne of God, and as our lesson states, "when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Because of this act of self-denial, He is due all the praise that we can ably bestow.

Our lesson declares that God spake in times past through prophets. These individuals did what they could to bring the Word of God to the people. Those under the old law were able to please God. Job was a man who was perfect and upright. David was a man after God's own heart. Yet there was something lacking. In spite of the role of priests and prophets, God did not have a complete communion with man. Sin came between the creature and the Creator. Christ came to tear down the sin barrier so that the communication line could be opened, and then ascended back to the throne of God. Paul, in writing of Christ, said that He was, "Far above all principality, power, and might, and dominion, and every name that

is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.”

—Wayne Murphey

October 10, 1982

CHRIST CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR

Heb. 2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

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

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

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

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

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

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

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 should taste death for every man.

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

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

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

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

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful

high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

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

Memory Verse: Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. Luke 21:36.

Central Thought: Because of man's sin he lost the dominion of the earth. Christ Jesus, as the Son of man, came to restore man to his rightful place in the honour of God. His suffering and death atone for man's sin and bring him to glory and immortality, which is the dominion of the world to come.

Word Definitions: *Subjection:* subordination, obedience, submission. *Succor:* to render aid.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our last lesson we learned that Christ has more authority, glory, and power than the angels. We were given a number of Scriptures that were applied directly to Jesus Christ. In our lesson today we see that this matter of Christ's being above the angels makes our dealings with Him and our response to His Word so much more weighty and serious. If what was spoken by angels was so important and carried such weighty consequence, how much more carefully should we pay attention to that which has been spoken by Jesus Christ? How shall we escape? The answer is obvious. We shall not escape. Then he speaks of the subjection of the world to come. The rulership, the oversight, the management, the jurisdiction, the control, and the constitution of the world to come is not given to the angels. It is given to Christ. Then the Scripture is quoted from Psalms 8:4-6. This Psalm was evidently originally written with man's first estate in mind from the creation. But let us notice how the writer applies this Psalm to Christ, the Son of man. Although he concedes that not all has been subjected to Christ as of yet, he declared that the other parts of the quotation from Psalms 8 could already be applied to Jesus in His suffering and death. And quoting from Psalms 22:22, perhaps from Psalms 18:2, and from Isaiah 8:18, he declares that Jesus is to bring to glory all who follow and trust in Him. And not only so, but as it will be stated over and over, Christ is

presently our faithful High Priest, interceding for us and offering His divine aid to us passing through the temptations of this world.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How serious and steadfast was the word spoken by the angels?
2. Can you scripturally define the meaning of the phrase: the world to come?
3. Unto whom has God put in subjection the world to come?
4. If all things were to be put under Christ's feet, why does the writer say that we see not yet all things put under Him?
5. How was Jesus crowned with glory and honour?
6. What was His purpose in partaking of flesh and blood?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

In the beginning God created man for His own pleasure and purpose. He made him a little lower than the angels. The Greek text reads: "Thou didst make him less than the angels for a little while." He crowned man with glory and honour, and put all things under His feet. This indicates rule, authority, jurisdiction, judgment, and oversight. As long as man was obedient to God and had the right to the tree of life, he maintained the subjection of the earth. He was king and lord of all nature. In his holiness and fellowship with God he shared the security of life forever. But, sad to say, man listened to the voice of the devil, and disobeyed God. The result of this was the loss of his power and dominion over the earth. Death came into the world thereby. Man had to submit to the decay of nature and the final effect of death. He lost his rulership and power. He fell into sin and the clutches of evil. These things dominated his life. But, thank God, the promise was not given just to man, but to the Son of man as well. Jesus was this Son of man. The very things that were given to man in the beginning were given to Christ in the power and position of a Saviour. We see Him made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour. And although we see not yet all things put under Him, those alive at the end of time when the dead are raised, shall see the final enemy destroyed. Paul used this thought in dealing with the subject of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:24-48. He states that Christ must reign, till He (God) hath put all enemies

under His feet. This is referring to the quotation we have already had from Psalms 110:1. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And then he quoted our text: "For he hath put all things under his feet." This He had accomplished for our benefit, so that we can be brought to the same glory that was given to Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

This series of lessons is for the purpose of explaining the difference between the old Jewish law system and the new covenant of grace in Christ Jesus. The question is asked in our lesson, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Under the old system, failure to observe the law could result in one being stoned to death. If we reject a much superior plan of salvation, how can we expect to escape without a penalty? Some become comfortably complacent when no punishment for the sins they have committed is meted out. They feel that they have escaped detection. Often, however, it is simply an extension of God's mercy and grace that gives them further opportunity to accept Christ and repent.

This great salvation "first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." Christ brought salvation to the world and established it in the hearts of His followers. They in turn spread it to others. Whether or not Paul saw Jesus is an uncertainty, but there were those who proved and confirmed the gospel of Christ. We notice that Paul was present at the stoning of Stephen. Perhaps this incident influenced Paul to accept the reality of the strength of the gospel. Stephen was willing to lay down his life for the cause of God. Ananias and others of the early morning Church confirmed an assurance of the truth of the gospel to Paul.

The ministers of God and those who are in contact with the Spirit of the Lord are still confirming to our hearts the realities of salvation. Their messages serve to convince us that there is no escape if we neglect God's offered redemption. Let us "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."

—Wayne Murphey

October 17, 1982

CHRIST THE SON OVER HIS OWN HOUSE

Heb. 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

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

5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 1 Cor. 10:12.

Central Thought: Moses was faithful in all his house, the house of Israel. But the house of Israel provoked God through unbelief and was barred out of the Canaan land rest. Christ is the Son over His own House, and we are warned not to harden our hearts like the Israelites did, but rather to hold fast the rejoicing of the hope in Christ firm to the end.

Word Definition: *Provocation:* time of provoking, when Israel provoked God to anger by their unbelief.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our last lesson we saw that Christ was brought down in the flesh, made like unto us so that He could be a merciful and faithful High Priest. He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death so that He could bring us to His eternal glory. We are now enjoined in our lesson today to consider our High Priest, Christ Jesus, who was faithful even as Moses was faithful in his house, the house of Israel. God spoke this of Moses in Numbers 12:7. As Moses was faithful as a servant for a testimony, so Christ was faithful as the Son over His own House. But the key thought concerns our faithfulness to Him. We are His House IF we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Then a warning is inserted. It is a quotation from Psalms 95:7-11. Seeing that we are only partakers of Christ if we hold fast the faith unto the end, this is a dire and serious warning. Israel hardened their hearts in the wilderness and drew back from going all the way with God through failing to continue to believe His Word. The same thing can happen to us today. This is the essence of the apostle's warning here. Pay close attention to the parentheses beginning in verse 7 and ending with verse 11. This is an inserted thought. It is inserted in the midst of the warning, "Wherefore take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Verse 14 repeats about the same as verse 6. It is not just starting out, but it is keeping true to the end. Israel started out, but they did not stay true. If there were no danger of one losing out with God, would a warning be needed here? Israel started out for God, but drew back from going all the way through unbelief. It is still a warning for us today.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is Christ compared to Moses in our lesson?
2. We are Christ's house if we do what?
3. How did Israel provoke God?
4. What are we to hold steadfast unto the end?
5. How can we be hardened?
6. What rest were the Israelites kept from because of unbelief?
7. What does their failure have to do with us today?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Israel came out of Egypt with a high hand. By the hand of Moses and Aaron they were led through the Red Sea and through the terrible desert. It was wonderful to behold the great miracles in the land of Egypt and the Israelites' deliverance from such woeful bondage. These same people provoked God through their unbelief. He bore with them time and time again. He forgave them in answer to the prayers of Moses. But when they came to the place and the time when they were to cross over into the land of Canaan, they were moved by the evil report that the ten unfaithful spies brought back. Their courage failed. They refused to go forth to conquer and take the land that God had promised to them. Moses was faithful, and would gladly have led them right over into the land of their rest, but they drew back in unbelief. This was the last straw. God was absolutely and eternally finished with them. He willed to destroy them, but spared them in answer to Moses' prayer. But their doom was sealed. He told Moses to march them right back into the wilderness. There they were to wander for many years until their dead bodies lay in the wilderness. When you stand face to face with the reality of this thing, it can make you tremble. We are faced today with much more serious issues than just a literal land to conquer and inhabit. We have the Kingdom of God, the grace, the promises, the life, the truth, the ways and example of Christ to possess. The temptation to draw back is always there. Unbelief is always ready to assert itself if we allow it to. Taking counsel and warning from the account of Israel's failure, we should press with all of our hearts to keep the faith of Christ all the way. It is possible if we listen to the flesh and look at how things appear and listen to the evil reports that so many bring, it is possible, I say, to draw back in unbelief just as Israel did. But let us consider the High Priest of our profession. Let us keep Him before us always. As we behold His blessings and glory, our faith will be inspired and we can daily pursue the goal of life.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Why is it that an individual would draw back from the inheritance that Christ desires to share with each one? Many hesitate because they fear what may be required of them. The fifth verse of our lesson says that Moses was faithful as a servant. In order to reign with Christ, we must also suffer. The

Christian life demands continual servitude. We must be willing to further the cause of God even if it means bearing shame and reproach.

To suffer with Christ involves more than physical pain. It means rejecting all that Satan has to offer. This is why many draw back in unbelief. Their courage and faith cannot sufficiently surmount the suffering of the cross in order to grasp the glory of it.

Most everyone desires to go to heaven. The question is, how many want to take the path that Jesus trod? God will not unjustly condemn anyone to hell. He gives each person an opportunity to believe in Him. When an enlightened individual hardens himself, he knows what he is turning away from. In the first chapter of Isaiah, verse 4, the Lord said that the children of Israel had gone away backward. That lets us know that they were aware of what they were retreating from. They possessed a knowledge of God's plan and desired will, but they slowly backed away from it and hardened their necks. It means much to heartily accept the commandments of God and believe to the saving of our souls. —Wayne Murphey

"PRAY"

In Arkansas there lived a little boy called Ernest. His mama taught him to pray, and always before he went to bed he would pray.

He read "Our Darling's A B C Book" and "Light on the Child's Path." Often he would quit reading and say, "Mama, I just love to read these good books; they make me feel good." His parents noticed the effect they had on him and how the words burned in his little heart. He would be so kind to his mother, and so willingly assist in the little duties of the home. He was dearly loved by his parents and those around him.

But there came a sad day to Ernest's home when he was eight years old. He became very sick. He did not want to take medicine, and he asked that prayer be offered for him. His papa was not saved, and his mama did not believe in divine healing (at that time). The people in the neighborhood did not believe God would heal. So father and mother sent for the doctor and had Ernest take medicine. But the poor little boy would raise his hands toward heaven and pray until tears would roll down the doctor's cheeks and fall on the bed. Sinners were made to weep as he would pray for those around him.

He was sick only a few days until he died and was buried; but his life and words still live in the hearts of those who knew

him. They still talk of Ernest, his words, and his prayers, and say, "That was a Christian child."

The day he took sick he stood up to the window and wrote on it, "Pray." He has been dead more than a year, but the word still remains upon the window just as his little hand wrote it. Can you think of a word that he could have written that would have given better advice or admonition to his parents and all who see it, than the word, "Pray?" You know the Bible says, "Watch and pray." If boys and girls would pray more, I am sure they would be brighter lights for God, and enjoy more of the good things of God. So let us take heed to the word Ernest left us.

—Vienna Roberts

Dear ones, it took this boy's death to show me (his mother) and his papa where we stood. Oh, we were so far from what God wanted us to be. We both used tobacco and were not the right examples before him. I was so blinded.

Ernest's cousin, who was thirteen years old, was killed August 15, 1913, one year and six days after Ernest died. He was killed at two o'clock in the afternoon. That morning Clarence got in his school lessons, then put his books in a book sack made of a white duck cotton sacking. On it he wrote, "Johne Papa Pray." John, his nine-year-old brother killed him accidentally with a rifle. When he killed him, his papa said, "Johnie, you killed brother. What will we do?" And he said, "PRAY, Papa, PRAY." The man who was working with his papa said he never heard as sensible a prayer out of a child's mouth. Oh, we had a praying mother, and God worked many ways to save us, her children. I can see His guiding hand. Bless His dear name.

I wish to tell a little more about Ernest. This was at the time he wrote the word "Pray" on the window. He was afraid of a storm. I was writing a letter and I heard him say, "Pray when the sun shines." I had read him a piece where a little girls was afraid of a storm and her mama told her to pray. She answered, "I can't, I'm afraid." Her mama told her to pray when the sun shines and when the storm comes she would not be afraid. There was a bad looking cloud coming up, and if he hadn't said, "Pray when the sun shines," I would not have known that he printed "Pray" on the window. But again I can see God using that little hand to point me to Luke 22:46. We had mortgaged our farm to build a barn and I studied more about getting the mortgage paid off than my children's souls. So

I lost my boy, also the farm, but I found what I needed to know, and what was best for me, my boy, and my husband.
—Neva Buchanan

October 24, 1982

JESUS CHRIST, THE REST GIVER

Heb. 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but

the body is of Christ. Col. 2:16, 17.

Central Thought: When God created man, He ordained a rest for man to enter into. The Seventh Day Sabbath Rest and the Canaan Land Rest were types of the spiritual soul rest that Christ has brought for us to enter into today. It is a rest of faith, entered into when we cease from our own works of sin and self, and let God work His work in us.

Word Definitions: *There remaineth therefore a rest:* (a keeping of the sabbath, Greek) *for the people of God.* verse 9. *Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest:* (We should earnestly endeavour, Greek). *He limiteth:* defines, marks out, affords a certain day.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In the previous chapter we were told to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. It was stated that He was faithful as also Moses was faithful in all his house (the House of Israel). But the warning was given that just as the House of Israel was not faithful, even though Moses was, so we today who profess to be the House of Christ can prove unfaithful. He brought in what the 95th Psalm stated about God swearing in His wrath that Israel was not going to enter into His rest, which in that case was the Canaan land rest. They could not enter in because of their unbelief. Our lesson today turns to us with a warning that we also can be denied entrance into the rest left us because of unbelief. It is a clear note that we have the gospel preached unto us, and that we enter into the rest of God by believing in Christ according to His Word. Believing the gospel and obeying Christ brings a rest to the soul. We cease from our own self works, the works of the flesh, the works that promote the strife and evil that work in our world today. Just as unbelief pulled Israel back from going forward and enjoying the rest that God was giving them, so unbelief can cause us to harden our hearts today from obeying the truth of Christ. The Sabbath day rest on the seventh day is not the rest that we are to seek in Christ. We are to enter into a soul rest with God and the ways of His Spirit. We are called to earnestly endeavour to enter into the rest that remains to the people of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. When did God institute a rest for mankind?

2. What bearing did the seventh day rest and the Canaan rest have concerning this rest of God?
3. Do you know the consequences that occurred when they failed to enter the rest offered to them in Israel?
4. Is it a fearful thing to fail to enter into the rest that is offered to us in Christ?
5. In your own words tell what entering into Christ's rest means to us today.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Jésus Christ was the well beloved Son of God. He came to fulfill the law and the prophets. He came to accomplish in man and for man what the law and the prophets could not do. Under the law was the Seventh Day Sabbath rest. Israel was given promise of a land of rest, the land of Canaan. But unbelief spoiled the good plan that God had for these different types of rest. Our lesson today declares that there is still a rest that the people of God must enter into. Just as Israel was called to enter into the rest in her day, even we are called to enter into the life of faith and trust in God concerning all things. Does it not bring a soul rest to be able to surrender one's life to Christ and cease from his own miserable selfish life? Surely while the individual is gratifying the selfish fleshly lusts, the soul finds not rest, but languishes and sighs for peace. God wants us to enter into His rest. He wants us to come away from the vain pursuits of men in their lust for pleasure, wealth, and worldly honour. He wants us to hide in His love, securely resting in faith and humility that is a guage for our every word and action. You show me a man that has entered into this rest, and I will show you a man that does not worry, fret, murmur, nor strive. I will show you a man that rises above every obstacle that the devil might throw in his way. He has faith and confidence in the providence and care of God. I will show you a man who is not laying up for himself treasures in this life, but is seeking for that city built above. "Godliness with contentment is great gain." I will show you a man who is thankful and full of praise and worship to God. He will not dwell on the dark side of life. He sees God in everything. Oh, it means something to enter into this rest. Let us fear that we do not come short of this rest. Those in Israel's time failed to enter in because of their unbelief, and they were destroyed. How serious and solemn is our lesson today!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Let us consider the rest which Christ had planned for the Israelites in the land of Canaan. The first requirement was to gain possession of the land. God's plan was for the Canaanites to be completely driven out. It did not mean that Israel would never be challenged by them again, but that any further trouble would originate from outside of their borders.

The Israelites were destined to be partakers of many blessings. Some of Canaan's benefits were the grapes, milk, and honey. These were the things that impressed the spies.

Today we can possess spiritual rest. Through the grace of God, every enemy of our soul can be driven out, every hindrance and even the very root of sin. The Christian life is not free from temptation, trials, or difficulties. But these problems come from outside of us. The battleground will be in our minds and not our hearts. By the power of God, we are victorious over the devil's suggestions to our minds; thus stifling him on every side.

Through the rest that we enter, we become possessors of the fruits of the Spirit, which are: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

The Israelites wandering in the wilderness had no true home. They were constantly traveling from one place to another. There was no real security. They were unable to enjoy the abundance of those things that awaited them in the land of Canaan.

So is a soul without his Maker. He wanders from one place to another, seeking something that will satisfy. We are thankful that through God's rest, which is His salvation and sanctification, we know the value of a home for the soul.

—Wayne Murphey

THE LITTLE SOUL WINNER

Three-year-old Betty Lou was crying. Her mother asked, "Why do you run off and cry whenever Grandma or anyone else is praying?" Betty Lou answered, with a sob, "Because I am not saved and I am going to Hell." Mother and Grandmother tried to tell her that little children are all saved, but Betty Lou was not satisfied.

One day, when she was four years old, she told her aunt about it. "I am lost," she said, "and I will have to go to be with the Devil." "Do you want to take Jesus into your heart?" asked

her aunt. With a happy "yes!" Betty Lou slipped to her knees and confessed her sins, putting her trust in Jesus Christ as her Saviour. Then how happy she was!

At once Betty Lou started out to win souls. Of everyone she met at home, on the street, or on the bus, she would ask, "Are you born again?" She went from house to house, talking about Jesus. Some listened, others laughed. She was often seen kneeling down, crying and praying. Often she sang the chorus "Lord Lay Some Soul Upon My Heart." Her favorite hymn was "My Jesus, I Love Thee."

When she went to school Betty Lou talked with her teachers and schoolmates and won many of her schoolmates to Jesus. Her brother and sister say that it was not an unusual sight to see Betty Lou in a corner of the schoolroom praying with another child.

After school hours, Betty Lou held services for the children in a garage. After that she would go out on the street to speak to the people. When she came in one night she said, "Mother, don't worry if I don't come right in when Grandma calls me. I may be dealing with some soul, and that is far more important."

When Betty Lou prayed, she believed the answer would come. Her mother was very ill for seven weeks and not expected to live, but Betty Lou kept praising the Lord that her mother was going to get well. And she did!

When anyone died, this little girl would ask if she was a child of God. If so, she would say, "Well, then it's all right. We must not cry." When her father came home one day from a funeral, Betty Lou surprised him by asking, "Was it a good service, Daddy? How many souls were saved?" When told there was no altar call, she said, "If there was ever a time for an altar call, it would be at a funeral."

When Betty Lou was eight years old, she became very ill and was sick for eight weeks. She prayed, "Have Thy way with my life. If you want to take me Home, that's all right." Often she would say, "I hope that Jesus will take me soon."

The Sunday before Betty Lou died, she said to her grandmother, "I asked Him to wait just a little longer, but"—with a happy laugh—"He may take me yet this summer. How glad I am that I know I'm saved! If I had died when I was three, I would have gone to Hell. I was lost, and I knew it. Now I'll go to be with Jesus! Heaven is a million, million times better than here; there is no sorrow, no heartache, no pain."

Her last week on earth was spent at a hospital. When leaving home she said, "I may get to talk to the doctors and

nurses about Jesus," but she was too sick to do that. But when the Lord took her, doctors, nurses, and "sisters" were all called in to look at the "wonder child." She looked as though she were just ready to laugh and her face fairly shone. So remarkable it was that even the priest was called in to see her.

Betty Lou had spent all the money she could to buy Bibles for those who had none, so at her Homegoing several sent Bibles instead of flowers. Young and old came and wept over her, many of whom her parents had never seen. Like Abel, she "being dead, yet speaketh," and souls are being saved through hearing her life story. —Selected

October 31, 1982

JESUS CHRIST OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Heb. 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

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

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

Heb. 5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Heb. 4:15.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ is the great High Priest between God and man. His office of High Priest affords security, mercy, help, and grace for all who look to Him and trust Him in every time of need.

Word Definitions: *Infirmities:* feebleness, weakness, frailty. *Profession:* confession, acknowledgement, testimony. *Priest:* One who mediates or goes between God and man.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After learning that Christ has come to fulfill the literal sabbath and give us soul rest, we will now take up the thought of Christ being our High Priest. Between these two themes in verse 12 of chapter 4, is the serious thought of the Word of God being the discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Jesus Christ is labeled the Word of God. Through Him the Word of the Father takes its true effect. This decisive knowledge of the depths of men's hearts and minds clears the way for reality and truth. A man-made system can easily overlook the secrets of men's hearts. "All things are naked and open in the eyes of him with whom we have to do." We are not dealing with men, but we are dealing with the All-seeing God. Therefore we should fear and yet we should recognize Christ's priestly bearing in His open, loving approach to us. God hates hypocrisy and pretense. He is a God of truth. He not only knows all our hidden faults and secret ways, He also is well acquainted with our needs and infirmities. All dishonesty and pretense is in vain. This should be settled in our minds ere we approach the throne of grace. God is greater than our hearts and knows all things. We ought not be afraid to approach Him with our needs, whatever they might be. If there is sin, He is our Intercessor as High Priest with the Father. Let Him search out our hearts, and bare our souls before Him. He is our High Priest. He seeks not to condemn, but to save and give us victory.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why should we hold fast our profession?
2. How can Jesus be qualified to be our High Priest?
3. What is the throne of grace and how do we reach it?
4. Who appoints the High Priest?
5. In what was Christ's need of learning obedience and being made perfect?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Of all the different aspects of the office and ministry of Jesus Christ to us, that of the High Priest of the souls of men seems to be the most important and beneficial to us. Man so vile and low down in the degrading ways of transgression and darkness helplessly languishes, cut off and desperately separated from His Maker, the Almighty God. He has departed from His Maker and each succeeding generation finds him farther down the road of destruction, sinking deeper into the mire of wretched sorrow because of the folly of his doings. The holy Almighty Creator will not fellowship man. The 59th chapter of Isaiah is an expression of the pitiful condition men were in. An intercessor was not found, but Christ as the arm of God brought salvation. He offered up His stainless life as a victim for atonement of the sins of mankind, then triumphed over death to ascend to the right hand of God as our High Priest. Christ triumphed first over sin. He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet He sinned not. And because we were partakers of flesh and blood, He took part of the same. And because He triumphed over sin, we can triumph over sin also. We can come to Him in earnest prayer, repenting of our sins and turning away from them with all of our heart. We can find victory over past sins, deliverance from the sin nature, and the infusing in of the divine life. All this could not have been possible had Christ not suffered and died for us. Let us not take the plan of salvation for granted. Think of the price that was paid. Think of the suffering that He went through. He had to be encompassed with infirmity, so that He could have tender feeling for His own. He took not on Him the nature of angels. He took on Him the seed of Abraham, the flesh. He is for us to come and trust in today. No matter how you have failed, if you will sincerely come to the High Priest, Jesus Christ, and truly believe and follow Him, you will find the victory and help you need. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What a mediator we have in Christ Jesus! He is an experienced diplomat. Having been "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," He is more than qualified to render assistance to those who humbly submit to His guidance.

During the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the High Priest filled an important role. He functioned as an intermediary between God and the people, and interceded for their sins. He was one in whom the children of God could place their hope. Sad to say, some of the chosen priesthood failed to merit the respect and confidence of the people. Christ, however, is worthy of all the faith that we can place in Him. He has never failed one of His trusting children, but has sought the will of the Father for our best interests.

Galatians 3:20, speaks of Christ, saying, "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one." A true mediator will see that the benefits of his mediation are not in favor of one party alone. He works for the equal good of all concerned. Christ is a High Priest who will bring us before God and represent our case in all justice.

—Wayne Murphey

"GET MY MOTHER IN!"

A well known preacher was about to retire one night when there came a knock at the front door. Upon answering it he found a poor little girl drenched with rain. From the slum district where she lived she had come through the storm to find the preacher. As he stood looking into her thin, haggard little face, she inquired, "Are you the preacher?"

"Yes, I am," he replied.

"Well, won't you come down and get my mother in?" she asked.

The preacher wisely answered his little inquirer: "My dear, it is hardly proper for me to come and get your mother in. If she is drunk, you should get a policeman. He is dressed for the occasion."

"Oh, sir," she replied in haste, "you don't understand! My mother isn't drunk; she's at home dying, and she's afraid to die. She wants to go to heaven, but doesn't know how. I told her I would find a preacher to get her in. Come quick, sir; she's dying!"

The preacher could not resist the appeal of the little night caller, so he promised her he would come as soon as he was dressed. As he walked with the little girl through the night, she

led him into the slum district to an old house, up a rickety stairway, along a dark hall, and finally to a lone room, where the dying woman lay in the corner.

"I've got the preacher for you, Mother. He wasn't ready to come at first, but he's here. You just tell him what you want, and do what he tells you, *and he'll get you in!*"

At that the poor woman raised her feeble voice and asked, "Can you do anything for a sinner like me? My life has been lived in sin, and now that I'm dying I feel that I'm going to hell, but I don't want to go there; I want to go to heaven. I'm sorry for the wicked life I've lived. Oh, if only I could live it over! But what can I do now?"

On his own confession the preacher declared, "I stood there looking into that face and thought, 'What can I tell her. I have been preaching salvation by reformation, but this poor soul has gone too far to reform. I have been preaching salvation by character, but she hasn't any. I've been proclaiming salvation by ethical culture, but she wouldn't know what the word means and besides she hasn't time for that.' Then it came to me. Why not tell her what your mother used to tell you as a boy. She's dying, and it can't hurt her even if it doesn't do her any good."

So bending down beside her, the preacher began: "My dear woman, God is very gracious and kind, and in His Book, the Bible, He says, 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' "

"Oh," exclaimed the dying woman, "does it say that in the Bible? My! That ought to get me in. But, sir, my sins, my sins!"

It was amazing the way the verses came back to him. "My dear woman," he continued, "the Bible says that 'the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' "

"All sin, did you say?" she asked earnestly. "Does it really say, ALL sin? That ought to get me in."

"Yes," he replied, kneeling down beside her. "It says ALL sin. The Bible also says that 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.' "

"Well," she said, "if the chief got in, I can come. Pray for me, sir!"

With that the preacher bent down and prayed with that poor woman. She wept in repentance to Jesus, who never turned any one away, and SHE GOT IN.

"And in the process," added the preacher, "while she was getting in, I MYSELF GOT IN. We two sinners, the preacher

and that poor woman, were saved together in that little room that night."

—Selected

November 7, 1982

JESUS, OUR FORERUNNER, LEADING US ON TO PERFECTION

Heb. 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Prov. 4:18.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ is not only a means of saving a sinner, but He also wills to lead us on into a

perfected, accomplished, and finished state, even to the entrance of that beyond this present life.

Word Definitions: *Perfection:* Completeness, finished, performed, absolute, *Immutability:* unchangeableness, un-failing, unmoved.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our last lesson we viewed Christ as our great High Priest, the Mediator between God and man. Inserted between our last lesson and that of today is found a cautionary statement concerning the tendency of man to fail to progress and grow as he should. "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." This has been a weakness of mankind, the failure to progress and grow according to the plan of development. It seems to be something that man overlooks. Once again the history of Israel illustrates this point. It was one thing to escape from Egypt, and it was quite another thing to keep going forward and progress as God wanted them to. In this they were at fault many times. As we have already learned, they were denied entrance into God's rest because of their pulling back. Even after their later entrance into Canaan, the nation of Israel never did go forward all the way for God. It is the same today. Our lesson shows that God wants to lead us onward to perfection and final victory. There is always danger of falling back or failing to progress as we should. He gives Abraham as an example of going forward and patiently enduring to obtain the promise. From the time of Abraham's departure from Ur of the Chaldees until Isaac his son was born over twenty-five years later, it was going forward and holding fast his faith. Verses 2-9 of this chapter we did not include in our Scripture text, but we can read it from the Bible. These verses contain a dire warning of the awful condition that can develop when one falls away from grace. But we need not fall back. Let us go forward and obtain. —Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Is there any danger of one not progressing in spiritual things as he should?
2. How far away should we carry our full assurance and hope?

3. What two things do we need to be able to inherit the promises?
4. What does God's oath mean to us today? How can we explain God's oath relative to Christ?
5. How far does our hope reach in Christ?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

How easily we can forget that the Christian life is a progressive thing. Christ not only came to forgive us our sins, but He has also provided a way that we can progress to perfection. We must consecrate our lives all on the altar to Him, and by faith receive the Holy Spirit into our hearts. Through the Holy Spirit we enter into the heavenly life, a spiritual experience and relationship with God. The Holy Spirit will lead and guide us into all truth. As we are led by the Spirit of God we will add to our faith all the virtues of godliness, righteousness, holiness, love, meekness, and patience. We will go forth to possess the true Canaan land rest, the spiritual life of maturity in Christ. A person who is continually progressing on toward the goal is a person who will succeed in the Christian life. To cease to move forward is to cease to live. Stale and lukewarm professors of religion are such because they cease to move forward. They retain their profession, but lose their spiritual life. God confirmed His promises to Abraham by an oath. He has confirmed the promises likewise to us by an oath. By the two immutable things (the oath and the promise) we possess a strong consolation. We are reaching forth for the hope that is set before us. The future is bright. Our hope extends beyond this present life clear into the heavenly element, "within the veil." Christ, our forerunner, is thereunto entered. We follow in His steps. By our faith and hope we can enter now into a life that is heavenly and pure. Fellowship with God calls for separation and purification from all sin. In our future lessons we will learn just what Christ's Priesthood after the order of Melchisedec means and what entering into that within the veil holds for us.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Anything that is perfect must be handled with precision. The prophet Jeremiah was instructed to go to the potter's house to learn a lesson. A potter shapes clay with a steady, methodic motion. When he begins a vessel, he must complete it or the clay will dry and be worthless. If we are pliable in the

hands of God, He will mold our Christian life into perfection and we will advance in our spiritual experience.

Something thrown together hastily and without a premeditated order will not be perfect. Nature itself teaches us some valuable lessons. Take note of the weeds that spring up within a short span of time. Soon they wither and die. A tree, however, requires years to grow, but it produces hardy roots that enable it to endure the elements. Let us be deliberate and careful in shaping our attitudes and character. Always seek God for more of His grace. This will develop a strong spiritual life that endures.

Retain this picture in your mind; a vision of Christ's leading you from one experience to another, discarding that which is worthless, and molding and shaping that which is usable. Christ allows us to go through the furnace to strengthen us into an enduring quality. He decorates us with love, joy, and meekness. Then when we are perfected and have grown serviceable, He takes us home to join that heavenly multitude.

—Wayne Murphey

Taken from Many Years of Life's Pathway

By Elmey Murphey

It was about 18 years after I was saved before I was privileged to hear a real sanctified preacher explain God's plan of salvation. The preacher was from Mississippi and put up a tent and held a meeting near our home. His name was Farmer, and I thought that was the best preaching I ever heard, and it was.

We invited him to our home to have dinner with us and we got to talk personally with him. I acknowledged that I would like to have the experience of sanctification and he said I could. He did not know I had been taught that women must keep silent in church and not speak in public.

At that time we lived about one hundred miles from Mama, but I wanted to talk with her about what I had heard. I took some of my little children with me and went on the train to visit her.

As we talked together on the subject she was interested, of course, but she had been taught that women should keep silent in the church. Her advice weighed heavily with me, for I knew she loved me and was so faithful to help me with all my problems, but I knew she had not heard the gospel story as I had heard it. Oh, if I could tell it to her so she and I could both get sanctified! What a joy we could enjoy together. I had always shared my joys and sorrows with Mama.

She encouraged me by saying she thought I would be with her in heaven. I said, "But Mama sometimes I need more grace than I have when people do things I don't like. When I try to pray for them I don't seem to have all the love for them that sanctified people claim to have." I wanted to be sanctified.

Now it is different since sanctification has come. I feel sorry for people that are spiritually blind who don't know that it is a dangerous thing for them to offend God's people. God has said to His people: "Beloved, avenge not yourselves but rather give place unto wrath for vengeance belongeth unto Me. I will repay saith the Lord." I am glad justice is left in God's hands, for He knows all about the case and just how to deal with it. He has told us to overcome evil with good. He sends His Holy Spirit to talk to people and many of them will repent. But if they do not, then they may expect the wrath of God poured out upon them, and it will be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

I am glad He has made a way and left us His Word. We can please Him and have His approval on us. Then His blessings will be poured on us and not His wrath. He will let us pass through some trials along life's way to test us and see how we will act under pressure, but He has promised us grace for every time of need. We can be sure He will watch over us when we are being tested, and will not let the pressure come on us more than we can bear.

I remember hearing Sister Mary Bartlett preach on the Christian life. She compared it to oxen. She said when the load was heavy for the ox going upgrade he often went down on his knees and could carry a heavier load. We find that true in the Christian life.

Another compared the Christian race to a boy on a bicycle—if he stopped he would fall off. There is no standstill in the race. We must press forward and grow in grace or we will lose what we do have. We are not saved just to go to heaven on flowery beds of ease. We are saved to serve, and if we have that love of God in our hearts we are glad to testify to it in words and deeds to help others know about it.

Just imagine, the very next year after the man preached sanctification to us, the Lord sent a lady preacher. She started her meeting in a little school house near us Aug. 6, 1914. She really preached sanctification as a definite second work of grace in our hearts by faith in God. She was an elderly lady. She had as her companion in the gospel work a young lady who led the song service. Now I was convinced it was for ladies to

have sanctification, too, for they both had it. Sister B. A. Jordan said men might get out and preach the gospel for a profession, but not so with women—they had to have it before they would venture out. They just had to be pushed out to preach the gospel.

Now that I was convinced that ladies had a perfect right to sanctification I went to planning on getting it. It was a busy time for us, canning as well as our home work to do. I didn't want to miss a service of that meeting for I was learning much about God's plan of salvation that was new to me, so we attended regularly.

I thought after I had listened to the gospel truths a few days, I would venture up by faith and get that sanctification if I could. I went to the altar for prayer. I carried my baby son in my arms. My little four-year-old daughter followed me there and knelt by my side. The workers told me there to put all I had on the altar for God to use—myself and all I had or ever expected to have—just consecrate all to God. The devil was there, too, telling me his lies. So, I didn't get the blessing I was seeking at that service, but I kept pondering all these things in my heart. I knew some of the things the devil was telling me was part truth. I did have a husband and five children and a home to take care of, therefore I didn't need to be cleansed and made ready to work for the Lord, as I had plenty to do already.

To Be Continued

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NOVEMBER 14, 1982

THE ETERNAL PRIESTHOOD OF JESUS CHRIST

Heb. 7:1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. Heb. 7:19.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ has a priesthood not given through lineage, nor taken away by death. But it is a priesthood that is eternal, never to pass away.

Word Definitions: *Melchisedec*: From two Hebrew words, *Melek*, meaning king, and *Tsedeq*, which means right or righteousness. Thus it means King of Righteousness. It is generally believed that he was king of the city that later became Jerusalem. The word *Salem* is from the Hebrew word *Shalom*, which means peace. *Such an high priest became us*: The Greek text reads: Such a high priest was proper for us. Verse 28 in the Greek reads: "For the law appoints men high priests having weakness, but the word of the oath, of that after the law, (maketh) a Son, who forever has been perfected."

LESSON BACKGROUND

The apostle in this 7th chapter goes at length dealing with the thought of Christ's ministry and priesthood being after the order of that of Melchisedec. The statement to the effect of this priesthood is taken from the prophetic 110th Psalm and the 4th verse: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." It is worthy to note that this is the same Psalm from which we have already drawn an important prophecy of Christ, namely, verse 1. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Connect these two verses together and you will see the effect of Christ's eternal office of High Priest. He could not have been after the order of Aaron, the priesthood under the law. Notice he said "after the ORDER of Melchisedec." The word "order" here in the Hebrew means "suit, or style." His priesthood was to suit that or be styled after Melchisedec. It is not to be taken here that Melchisedec had no father, mother, descent, beginning of days, or end of life. This is important. To interpret this literally is error. The main point is that there is no record of these things concerning this man Melchisedec. All we know about him was that he was a priest of the most High God. He was not an Israelite, but a Canaanite. Adam Clarke states that a certain Jewish writer, Suidas, confirmed that Melchisedec, after reigning in Salem for 113 years, died a righteous man. But the order of His priesthood was a type of Christ, not being made a priest by genealogy, but because of his venerableness, righteousness, and acceptance with God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was this Melchisedec? How was he a priest?
2. Why is Melchisedec a type of Christ in His priesthood?

3. Why was there a need for a priesthood other than that of Aaron?
4. What is Christ doing in His role of High Priest?
5. How is Christ the proper High Priest for us?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

While there were many priests under the law, none of them were permitted to continue by reason of death. Christ Jesus is the one High Priest for all men and for all ages of time, and for all eternity. Such sublime and wonderful words: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." From age to age, from one generation to the next He abideth the same. He does not pass off with one group and rise back up with another. He inhabiteth eternity. He has been granted by God eternal Sonship at the right Hand of eternal majesty. Unto Him we can go by faith as unto the throne of grace. Seeing the great power of His majesty and knowing that nothing is hid from His all-seeing eyes, we need not fear to confess to Him our needs. We need not try to justify ourselves, but trust in His mercy and grace to help us correct every fault and failure in our lives. Oh, how wonderful it is to know this truth of the eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ. He is accepted of God in our behalf. We could not come to God on our own merits. We have none. But Jesus was well pleasing unto the Father. When He arose from the grave by the glory and power of the Father, He was perfected for us, that we, too, might come to the same perfection and completeness. There is no excuse for any failure or sin in our lives. A perfect plan has been wrought for us to gain victory over everything. There is no evil in our lives but what He can and will subdue if we are willing and obedient. Let us come to Him with all of our heart and bow before Him to His will and receive the touch of His power.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Little has been written concerning Melchisedec, but from what we do know, there can be drawn many comparisons to Christ.

The 14th chapter of Genesis contains a record of the dealings of Melchisedec with Abraham. As Abraham returned from the battle in which he rescued Lot, his nephew, Melchisedec met him and brought forth bread and wine. This refreshed Abraham, who was weary from the battle. When we are sore pressed in our

spiritual warfare, we can approach Christ and be renewed by partaking of the bread of life, which is His Word, and pleading the merits of His blood on our souls.

Melchisedec blessed Abraham and then blessed God. Is not this an attribute of a mediator? A mediator's job is to bring two individuals together. In order to do that, he must share a close relationship with both parties.

We find that Abraham gave a tithe of all he possessed. It is not written that Melchisedec demanded a tithe, but I believe Abraham gave willingly. As we are partakers of Christ's blessings on our souls, we also are prompted to return a willing service of sacrifice and gratitude.

Melchisedec was King of Salem. As stated in the word definitions, Salem was later to become the city of Jerusalem, or Zion. The City of God today recognizes Christ as the head. Shalom means peace. Christ, who is the "Prince of Peace," has brought peace to our souls, and is content to abide in us forever if we crown Him King of all.

—Wayne Murphey

Continued from *Many Years of Life's Pathway*

How I did wish I could have sanctification! I just kept meditating on these things day and night, at the church and at home. One day I was rubbing some clothes on a rub board in the shade of a peach tree in the garden. I had been told I must be willing to do anything the Lord wanted me to do. But the devil said, "But suppose the Lord requires you to do something you can't do? Then you will be the laughing stock of the people."

As I busied myself with my clothes washing I said something like this: "Lord, I don't know what I can do, but I will do what you want me to do or I will die trying." That went through; I felt the lift. Then the Lord said through His Spirit: "How about your singing a song at the meeting and show the devil you can do something?" I said: "Yes, Lord, I will try."

He suggested a song we had in a book there, so that evening when we started to church I carried my song book. When we got to the church the song service had already started. They were standing singing. After we finished that song, I told Sister Jordan I had a song I wanted to sing. She smiled and nodded her approval. I think she knew I was getting near the Canaan land. I opened my book and this is the song I started:

*"A fount of cleansing flows so free
From that blest mount of Calvary,
What virtue in its stream I see.*

*Its healing waters cover me.
Whiter than the snow, the beautiful snow,
Whiter than the snow He has made me.*

Well, the glory of the Lord fell. Not being room in my heart to receive it all, it filled the house. I was not the only one that recognized that heavenly light that shone in that house over us all.

The heavenly light touched other hearts and as it was on the day of Pentecost, they were gathered together in the upper room all praying in His name with one accord and they were baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire which gave them power for service. Now what He did for them that day He will do for you today. I am glad that I can say, "I'm one of them."

Sister Jordan didn't get to preach that evening. The Lord had taken over and she just went around instructing the people how to get the victory in their own hearts as they were kneeling and praying. Three young ladies claimed to have gotten saved that evening. I am happy to report to you that sanctification is the greatest thing that ever happened to me in this life. It not only cast out fear and doubt, but it has been such a sweet comfort to me, filling my heart with divine love that makes it easy for me to keep the commandments. It has given me a clear title to a mansion in the sky. Who had not rather have this than all the treasures this world can hold?

My little four-year-old daughter said she was sanctified, too, and she and I had good times together singing and talking of the goodness of our God. She often mentioned to me: "Mama, you and I are sanctified and when we get our work done here we will go to that beautiful city where Jesus is."

One of her favorite songs was: "I will meet you in the morning just inside the Eastern gate." In our dining room we had a long bench between the table and the wall. I sat at the end of the table with the baby in a high chair at my left side. The bench was on my right side. That is where our other children sat when we took them from the high chair to make room for the baby. The older children would move down on the bench and make room on the end next to me for my big baby.

Elsie often went to sleep on that bench before the other girls and I got the dishes washed and the kitchen cleaned up after supper. For a few nights she had sat there and cried, for no apparent reason. She would say to me: "Mama, something just makes me cry and I don't know why, for I am as good as I know how to be. She would again mention about our being sanctified

and that when we get through with our work here we would go to where Jesus is. That occurred two or three different nights.

Saturday morning I went in and took my chair at the sewing machine. I did much of the sewing for the school girls on Saturdays while they were home and I could get a better fit. Elsie came in and threw a piece of wood on the hearth and said to me: "Now, Mama, who is going to bring in your wood?" I said, "You, dear." But she said: "No, Mama." She had not been told that morning to bring in wood. She was such an obedient child and so loveable, but I was too blind to know she was getting these warnings from the Lord.

The big day's work of Saturday was over and after supper we had gathered in the living room and had our family prayer. Elsie had gone to bed and was soon asleep. She awakened in a short time and rose up in bed struggling for breath. I ran to her, as I thought she probably had croup. We did all we knew to do for her, but to no avail. She just seemed to have a bad bronchial cold. It lingered a few days. We kept hoping the cold would loosen up. We also prayed and had others help us pray.

(To be continued)

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November 21, 1982

JESUS CHRIST AND THE NEW COVENANT

Heb. 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

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

3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

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

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

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

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

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. Heb. 8:6.

Central Thought: The old covenant under the Law given by Moses was written on tables of stone and had to be obeyed, but the new covenant in Jesus Christ is written in our hearts by the Spirit of the living God with obedience moved and inspired by love.

Word Definitions: *Covenant:* A contract or agreement, testament, will.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have established the fact that God has instituted another priesthood than that of the old law system. Thus the necessity is made for a change of the law and the covenant. This is what we will consider for today's lesson. Once again the writer draws his conclusions from the Old Testament. The apostle reasons that there was no need of a Priest on earth since there were already such in operation. But our High Priest is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister (One who cares for and Who serves) of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. It is a different priesthood, a different tabernacle,

different sacrifices. Since all of this is changed, it is evident that a change in the law is forthcoming. What kind of law must attend this Heavenly Priesthood, this spiritual tabernacle in the hearts of men, and the holy sacrifice of the blood of Christ shed for the cleansing of men's souls? It cannot be a carnal commandment, a set of rules inscribed merely on a tablet of stone. It must be much more than that. Thus from Jeremiah 31:31-34, we have the wonderful news resounding: "A new covenant will I make, saith the Lord!" In Christ Jesus, our High Priest sitting in the heavens, is this new covenant to take effect. With the Spirit of the living God that is sent into the hearts of His people the laws and precepts of the Almighty God become the vital principles of each one. Thus the law is established. To merely write it down on stone or on paper and say, "Obey!" is not sufficient to bring that which satisfies God. But the tender love and inspiration of His sweet Spirit within the deep affections of man will produce holiness and righteousness as God so graciously designs.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Where is our great High Priest today?
2. Why did God tell Moses to follow closely the pattern given to him?
3. Where are the laws of God under the new covenant to be written?
4. What does it mean to have the laws of God written in our hearts?
5. How can we understand verse 11, and how far can we take it in the thought of our having no need for anyone to teach us?
6. What happens to the old covenant when the new comes in?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Whatever is done with regard to the Almighty God, must be done from the heart and from a principle of love and devotion. If it is just a form void of sincere affection and earnest submission to Him, regardless of how grand and impressive the outward show may be, it does not meet God's approval and is a stench in His nostrils. The old law and its ceremonies were but types of the true ways of the Lord brought forth in Jesus Christ. The animal sacrifices, the literal tabernacle with its furniture and all the provisions, all these things were to pass away before the New Covenant. God's laws inscribed on tables

of stone were broken so many times by the desperately wicked hearts of the people that they meant very little thus written. Only the darkened deceived minds of the carnal Jews could not face up to the truth that the old law system had long lost its efficiency. How foolish and blinded they were to want to crucify the One who sought to bring them the real truth! The law must needs be inscribed within the very inmost affections of man. In other words, man must obey and keep the statutes of God willingly and with joy. A change must be wrought. The scales must fall from his eyes, and the veil must be lifted from his vision. Man must be transformed from the fleshly to the spiritual. Great problems erupt here. Man wants to cling to his selfish ways. It is difficult for the carnal mind to even turn toward spiritual realities. But the gospel has enlightened the souls of men. Thank God for those who have proved the new covenant true. The Spirit of God can come into a man's soul and take up His blessed abode. He can begin to teach and inspire His truths and write them in the heart. Then and only then can a man truly live up to the law of God.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The New Covenant is far superior to the old. It gives each one of us an access into spiritual things. In the Old Testament, we read that when the 120 trumpets, cymbals, psalteries, and harps were played in unison, the glory of the Lord filled the house. In the New Testament, we find that when two humble men, Paul and Silas, sang songs at midnight in a prison, God's presence shook the place.

"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Paul and Silas were filled with the knowledge of the New Covenant. They sang through the night, though they were fastened in stocks. The joy of salvation came from their hearts, and God was pleased to deliver them. Isn't it wonderful to be a chosen people of God; those in whom He delights to dwell? When Paul and Silas prayed and sang, the prisoners heard them. The gospel truly carries a convicting power. This episode illustrates one manner in which the power of the New Covenant was operative.

No longer are we saved by our works, but by the sincere acceptance of a soul-cleansing salvation. —Wayne Murphey

Continued from Many Years of Life's Pathway

Having done the best we knew, we hoped that Elsie would soon show signs of improvement and the cold would clear away. One of her sisters did not think she would get well again, for she thought Elsie was going to that beautiful home. My husband ran down to the store near us to telephone for the doctor to come. I took my place on my knees by the side of my sick child's bed as I pleaded with the Lord for help, and if it was not His will to not let the doctor get the telephone call. About the time my husband had returned, the doctor drove up. He prescribed medicine that we started giving her, but it seemed to make her worse.

We then called for a man and his wife that were preachers and had prayer again. We tried to believe she was improving, but it didn't last long.

One night just our own family went to prayer for her and the Lord sent a healing touch. She got off her bed and walked on the floor. We were so thankful for that healing touch. She slept sweetly and peacefully in my arms that night.

The next morning while we were preparing breakfast, one of her sisters helped her dress and put on her little shoes. They brought her into the dining room and she ate a good breakfast. But she soon took bad sick again that day. It seemed I just could not stand to give her up. I loved her so much and I coveted her for the Lord's work. She was so willing I just felt she could do so much to help others find the Lord. I kept pleading with God to spare her to us. Her suffering became very great. We went down on our knees by her bed and I cried out: "Oh, God relieve her suffering if it has to be in death."

Then the death angel came in. She was saying something and I understood, "tiss me," but no, that was not it. I kissed her but it was Sister she wanted. Her sister came and lifted her in her arms, but as she was going so fast I wanted to hold her. As I took her, her little soul flew away. That was on Dec. 22, 1914.

After I had time to consider it, I knew it was all the Lord's doing, and I was reconciled to His will. I would not have taken her back into this sinful world if He had offered her back to us, for I knew she was safe and would be waiting in that home for us where there will be no sickness nor death.

I didn't realize she was doing her work for God in this world in such a short time. The witness she left of God manifesting His ways to her and that He was soon to take her home and the fact that she tried as best she could to tell us of it is a miracle within itself. I could not lock all this true story of

her little life away in my mind and heart to just use for myself. She left this all in my hands to use and I would feel like I imagine a criminal would feel if I didn't send it forth with my prayer that it might be the means of helping many to believe and be saved.

We left her little body to rest in the Belah cemetery about five miles from Jena, La., to await the resurrection of the dead in Christ. She sleeps just inside of the Eastern gate there.

As humans, we shirk or draw back from sorrow and hardships, but I assure you that I have grown stronger spiritually while under heavy clouds of sorrow more so than when it was all smooth sailing. I attribute it to the very presence of God with us while our hearts are torn and suffering.

(To be continued)

November 28, 1982

JESUS CHRIST ENTERS THE MOST HOLY PLACE

Heb. 9: 1 Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

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

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

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

5 And over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb. 9:14.

Central Thought: Just as the High Priest under the law entered the Most Holy Place once every year to appear before God for the people, so Christ entered in once into the Most Holy Presence of the Almighty, into the Heavenly element to appear as High Priest for all who believe and obey Him.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have learned that Christ, in fulfillment of the many prophecies that went before concerning Him, was faithful to God and was endued with the divine commission of the High Priest of our profession. He was exalted at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us and be our mediator with God. The sacrifice of animals was not sufficient for atonement of sin, but the blood of Jesus was deemed by God effective and satisfying. Because of His faithfulness and obedience to God through the things that He suffered, He was conveyed to the Heavens to sit at the right hand of God as a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This brings to us the thought of Jesus entering the Most Holy Place. In our lesson is a vivid description of the old Jewish tabernacle and its setting.

In Exodus, chapters 25—31, we find the instructions of God being given to Moses concerning the erecting of the tabernacle. Although history reveals a dark account of the journeys of the tabernacle until it finally fades from view, the blueprint that God gave to Moses is filled with spiritual types and shadows vital for us today. The writer enlarges on the thought of the High Priest and his annual entrance through the second veil into the Holiest of All. He applies this to Jesus entering into the Heavenly Places, into the presence of God. Jesus ascended up on high. He passed from the wondering sight of the disciples. He ascended up and sat down on the right hand of God. There He is contained and faithfully remains until the end of this world. Praise the God of Heaven for Jesus Christ, His Son, and our faithful High Priest! —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How often did the High Priest enter the Most Holy Place?
2. What was the purpose of His entering the Most Holy Place?
3. What Holy Place did Jesus enter?
4. How many times did Jesus have to enter?
5. What is Jesus doing at this present time?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

As we think over the ceremonies and sacred services of the olden times at the tabernacle in Israel, we are made to marvel at the wonder of it all. And then to think that it all was a type of what Jesus Christ was going to do in the fullness of time fills us with awe and reverence. We feel the weight of the words of our lesson. We seem to sense the seriousness of the apostle thundering out this truth. To stand by and say that all the law system was a type and a shadow to fade away before the fulfillment of those things in Jesus Christ, was indeed a serious thing to say. No doubt people gave their life for taking their stand for this truth. Stephen, the first Christian to spill his blood for the gospel, died for this kind of issue. He told them in Acts 7:42—44, that though Israel had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, yet they took up the tabernacle of Moloch. They were not a faithful people. Their hearts wandered from lust to lust. Those who sought to remain faithful to God and the real truth were hated and persecuted. Oh, this is the truth. Jesus is the High Priest for us today. He has passed into the Heavens. He is at the right hand of the Father right today making intercession for us who live on earth, who trust

in Him. Oh, may the Spirit of God emblazon this truth in our souls. It is appointed unto man once to die. This is our first appointment. After this comes the judgment. That is our second appointment. Both of these appointments we must make. But there is something else. Just as sure as judgment follows death, even so Christ is coming for His own. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." What wonderful words for us to cherish today! Christ is coming again! He may tarry long, but soon He will come for His own. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

God desires to bestow many rich blessings on His people. Isaiah 55:9, says, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Since there exists such a distance between the Creator and His creatures, how can God deliver these blessings to us? When Jesus Christ entered into the Most Holy Place, He bridged the gap between God and man.

Those who serve our country in the armed forces reap benefits from their service. They are paid a salary which has been set aside, in the national budget by the President. The President is initially responsible for supplying the pay. However, his duties are so complex that he requires the aid of many intermediaries who determine one's rank and designate the appropriate pay.

Christ has experienced the same difficulties that we must face, and He knows just what is required to get us to Heaven.

Our lesson enumerates some of the articles that were in the holiest place of the tabernacle. Unless a priest was available to fulfill the ordinances of divine service, these articles were of little use or sacred value. Likewise, our religion would be worthless without the advent of Christ into the Holiest Place.

—Wayne Murphey

Continued from *Many Years of Life's Pathway*

February 28, 1924, we had a 17-year-old daughter and two little sons attending school. She came in from school and told me the top of her head felt so light and strange somehow. I said, "Well, I have just been telling your papa I was feeling so much better that I didn't know but what I was going to get well." (I was in poor health so much of my time.)

I had a quilt in the frames in the living room and was quilting on it. She insisted that I should let her fix supper, but

she and her brother wanted to go to church that night and hear a missionary sing a song in a foreign language. After we had eaten supper, I told the children they had better go on now and get with a group of children on up the street and go with them to church that night. But she wanted to wash up the supper dishes so I would not have them to do. It was only a short distance to church and they were soon on their way.

The two little sons had pulled off their shoes and were crawling on the floor under the quilt with their baby sister. In just a few minutes after the children had started to church, a messenger came running to our gate and calling, "Mr. Murphey!" He said a car had run over our children. He said our daughter was dead and he didn't know how bad the little son was. He was crawling on the ground and praying for his sister. Some man had picked him up and taken him to a home near there. I told my husband to run on to them, and that I would come with the little children.

I picked the baby up in my arms and told the little boys to put on their shoes. I turned into the bedroom to get the baby's cap and cloak. As I reached up to take them off the hanger, a voice spoke to me. It was as clear as if it had been spoken aloud. I didn't have to ask who it was, for I knew it was the Lord. He asked: "Have you tried to raise your daughter for Me?" I said aloud: "Yes, Lord." Then He said: "Well, I will see that she doesn't die at this time." There my faith and anchor held.

The little children and I were soon on our way to that awful scene. My husband had seen our daughter lying on the ground as dead. Two doctors had seen her and pronounced her dead. My husband had turned back to meet and comfort me the best he knew how. He said: "You will have to brace up, for she is dead." I said: "No, Daddy, she can't go at this time." Of course, he thought I was beside myself in trouble. A group of the school children came to meet us. They cried and said: "Oh, Mrs. Murphey, she is killed." But I said, "No, she can't go at this time."

Another girl came to meet us and she said: "Mrs. Murphey, Mavis has caught her breath." I said, "Yes, the Lord is not going to let her go at this time." Some of the neighbor men had picked her up and carried her into a home near there and put her on a bed just before we got to her. The church was across the street from that house and the people from the church had come over. They were standing in the yard and on the porch, but they made room for us to pass in to her.

I saw her lying as one dead on that bed. I fell on my knees beside her, with a sad, bleeding, but rejoicing heart. Even though she was as one dead, I knew she would not go at this time for the Lord had told me. Two other doctors were called in which made four doctors in all that gave no hope that she would live again. But I was held steady by faith.

We had a daughter and her husband living at Georgetown and another daughter boarding with them and teaching school. They were notified and came to us that night. After getting the little boy from the other home where he had been taken, they took all the little children to our home to care for them there. I was permitted to stay with my daughter five days and nights almost constantly.

Our children visited us each day and my husband stayed with us at night. We never knew we had so many friends that loved and sympathized with us and were ready to do what they could. I love them yet for all they did for us to make our sorrows lighter.

Life returned slowly as her pulse gained a few more beats each day. Yet they were not strong enough to move her. Just before daybreak, after the friends that sat up with us went home and the folks of the home were still in bed, I would leave her daddy to sit by her, and I would slip out to pray. In the closet I continued to ask the Lord to spare her life. One morning while I was praying the Lord spoke to me, saying: "Haven't I told you she would not die at this time?" I said, "Yes, Lord." I felt so bad about the way I had kept asking Him to spare her life when He had told me to start with that He would.

About the fourth day I was almost given out in body. I was so tired I was sick. I told some of the friends there that I felt the Lord would let us take her to our home the next morning, where I could get more rest.

That morning three doctors were there. Her pulse had gained up to 53 beats, but they would not agree to have her moved. If we did, we would do it at our own risk. Men walked and carried her home that day on a stretcher. She continued to improve. Within about two weeks she was able to be up.

She did not get to finish school with her classmates, but in June she entered business college, and later went to work as a bookkeeper. That is proof the Lord did a complete work in healing her. She is at the present time living in Dallas.

I write not these things to boast of anything within myself. For it is in Him that we are taught to make our boast. Without Him we can do nothing. I desire to help others understand

God's plan of salvation, believe and be saved; to present their bodies a living sacrifice and have their hearts filled with divine love, for without that charity we are nothing.

The End

—o—

December 5, 1982

JESUS CHRIST THE NEW AND LIVING WAY

Heb. 10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually. make the comers thereunto perfect.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Memory Verse: For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Heb. 10:14.

Central Thought: Jesus Christ offered to God the perfect sacrifice for sins when He offered up Himself. By His death, resurrection, and ascension on high, He opened up the way for us to enter into the Most Holy Place which is the heavenly, Spirit-filled life of entire sanctification.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In this chapter we will reach the summit of our study and thought. From the beginning of this series of lessons in the book of Hebrews, we have been climbing the mountain of pure inspiration. Beginning with the numerous prophecies from the ancient writings—we have been able to pursue a wonderful path of knowledge concerning Jesus Christ and His ministry for us. It has been an ascending path, higher and higher, with Christ revealing Himself as Soul Rest-Giver, High Priest forever, and Mediator of the Better Testament. Today we will stand on the summit of truth where a grand and glorious view of the working of God is spread out before us. We will see Christ, not only entering into the Most Holy Place for Himself, but as a new and living way for us who believe in Him to enter into the Most Holy Place also. And we will find out that this entrance is not ours to make when we leave this world, but it is a present time experience that God would have us all enjoy. We have a quotation from the 40th Psalm in our lesson today. It is interesting to note how the apostle quotes. He renders the phrase in Psalm 40:6, "Mine ears hast thou opened" thus: "A body hast thou prepared me." A clearer sight from the pure Hebrew says: "Ears hast thou bored for me." But the Septuagint Greek translation of the Old Testament renders it just as the New Testament writer put it. It has been shown by those who are well acquainted with the Hebrew writings that the word for "ears" could have been very easily similar to the word for "then a body." It is very possible for the Hebrew text to have been corrupted in this way. If this be the case, then we have the Hebrew, the Septuagint, and the apostle's application as a triple witness to our Lord's incarnation!

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How did God feel about the animal sacrifices for sin?
2. Why did Christ have to have a body?

3. What did Christ come to do?
4. What does this will and the offering of Jesus Christ do for us?
5. What do we have boldness to do?
6. And having a high priest over the house of God, what should we do?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

We are viewing today one of the greatest testimonies of the truth of sanctification we have in the Bible. People could be forgiven of their sins under the old law, but their redemption was on the terms of what was going to take place at a later day. They look forward to Christ's sacrifice, and the animals that were offered were but types and shadows. Psalm 40 was a psalm of David. The Holy Spirit inspired and anointed him to utter these words of prophecy, declaring that burnt offerings as under the law were not really accepted of God. Then Christ said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God (in the volume of the book it is written of me)." Yes, in the volume of the prophecies of the Old Testament were many things written of Christ. He came to fulfill the highest peak of God's pleasure concerning the salvation of the souls of men. He came to offer Himself as the sacrifice and victim for man's redemption. And by that perfect will of God being done in Christ's death and sacrifice, we who give our hearts and lives to Him can enter into the Most Holy Place of entire sanctification. "This is the will of God even your sanctification." 1 Thes. 4:3. We can say this with all confidence. Sanctification is the entrance into the Most Holy Place. Feel the weight of the apostle's words, and notice how inspiringly it is put together. Recall the fact that at the moment of the death of Jesus, the veil of the temple was rent in twain. Matt. 27:51. Did this not have great significance? The way into the Most Holy Place is now opened for us. It is not the literal holy place in the literal Jewish tabernacle that Christ opened up. But it is the entrance into perfected love and life in God. It is the entrance to the Spirit-filled and Spirit-led life. It is entrance to heavenly life and victory. Let us draw near with all confidence, being washed from our sins through the blood and the doctrine of Christ. We will find full salvation in the Most Holy Place with Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The second verse of our lesson asks a question. If the first law was perfect, why the necessity for the perpetual sacrifices? The Scripture explains that the people continued to offer a sacrifice because their consciences convicted them of sin. Herein is the difference between the old law and the new living way. In the gospel dispensation, we can live with a conscience void of offense.

Paul knew what it meant to keep the old law. His conscience convicted him of things he knew he shouldn't do, and as he failed to obtain perfection because of the weakness of the flesh. Under the law of grace, he was able to bring his body into subjection and be free of the torment of guilt.

It is only with a clear conscience that we can fulfill the 22nd verse of this chapter. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." Because of the remission of sins that Christ brought about, we can "boldly approach the throne of grace" with all of our needs.

When a child disobeys, his conscience warns him to avoid the presence of his parents. If a child is obedient and compliant, he will enjoy parental association and will not hesitate to ask favors. Surely we owe a debt of gratitude to Him who has made available to us the new and living way. —Wayne Murphey

"ARE YOU A SOLDIER OF THE CROSS?"

In a quiet village a little band was gathered some twelve months ago for prayer. Tears filled many eyes, and voices were sometimes almost choked with sobs as petitions went up to the throne of grace for God's blessing to rest on the dear ones so far away on the tented field. Brave young hearts had gone—and alas, some were not clad in the armor of the Lord. With more than usual fervor were the prayers offered that evening, and at its close the faithful waiting ones went to their homes refreshed and strengthened.

Present at the meeting was Ellen M—, a resident of a distant city, but there on a visit. Moved by the influence of that meeting, she returned to her home determined to do all in her power for the spiritual interests of the soldiers. One favorite method was giving good books and papers. As she was riding in the cars, she noticed near her a young man in the garb of a soldier. Entering into conversation with him, she found he belonged to the regiment of N.H., to which he was returning, just having been discharged from the hospital. After

chatting some time, she asked, "Are you a soldier of the Cross, as well as of the Union?" The question evidently did not please the young soldier, who declined answering; and after a few kind words on the great need of a Saviour's presence at all times, and His pardoning mercy to insure the soul's safety, she left him, giving him at parting a copy of that delightful little book, *Soldier's Hymns*.

Again the little praying circle is gathered in the vestry of the church in D—. A year has fled since we met with them before. Again Ellen M— is present. Holy exultation seems to breathe in the opening prayer. Then a chapter is read, a hymn sung, and the pastor rises, holding an open letter in his hand, which he says he wishes to read. "This letter," he continued, "is from John R—, whom you all know. You remember how anxious his poor mother was when he left home some eighteen months ago to join the army. You remember how wild and reckless he was, and how he seemed to spurn all reproof. Many prayers have been offered for him, and our other dear ones who have gone forth, we fear, unguarded by salvation. His mother yesterday received joyful tidings, and as she was unable from illness to come here herself tonight, she sent this, that it might be read, so that you could rejoice with her."

After leaving home, the young man stated, he had cut loose from all restraint, and had trod boldly the broad and downward pathway. The passages in his mother's letters which in such loving words pointed out his need of a Saviour and the depth of his love, were scarcely glanced at. Persistently he strove to harden his heart. At last he was taken ill, and was sent some distance to a hospital. When returning to his regiment, a young lady, a stranger, spoke to him in the most earnest manner as regards his soul's welfare, commencing her remarks on the subject by the question, "Are you a soldier of the Cross, as well as one of the Union?" In parting she gave him a tiny hymn book, which he took, half angry with himself for allowing his feelings to be so touched by her remarks and question. Carelessly he opened the book, and the first words his eyes fell on were, "*Am I soldier of the Cross?*" With a half-muttered oath he closed the book and thrust it into his pocket. Buying a paper of a newsboy, he tried to read, but the troublesome question would keep coming up, "Are you a soldier of the Cross as well as one of the Union?" He could not forget it.

In the first engagement his regiment was in after his return, he was wounded, and again in the hospital the

question haunted him. He remembered the despised hymn book. Asking for his coat, he found the little volume uninjured. Not now scornfully did he open its leaves. How he wished the peace portrayed in the sweet hymns it contained might be the language of his soul. The billows of a great anguish well-nigh overwhelmed him. He had wandered so far from God he almost despaired of salvation, but still he strove to find the way out of the thick darkness. The Bible, the gift of his mother, and his little hymn book grew very precious to his heart. For days he could only read and pray; he dared not hope. At last the great plan of salvation seemed to dawn upon his mind. He had been a great sinner, but God's mercy was greater, and he could trust all in His hands. Jesus was willing and mighty to save. He felt his pardon was complete: now he was happy as he had never been before. He so wished he could see that young lady; he could answer her question now. He felt sure he should be a better soldier for his country, now he had put God's armor on also. He trusted the rest of his life should be spent in God's service.

There was hardly a dry eye in the room as the pastor finished. And how rejoiced was the soul of Ellen M—— as the recital of the soldier's spiritual birth went on. She had cast her bread on the waters, and here, in an unexpected moment, it had come back to her "after many days." Silently her heart sent up its tribute of praise to Him who had thus blessed her simple deed done for his honor.

There is a broad field, and the laborers are few; why not imitate Ellen M——, and scatter the good seed? It may, with the Master's blessing, yield an abundant harvest.

—From *Sketches from Life*

December 12, 1982

**JESUS CHRIST, THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER
OF OUR FAITH**

Heb. 10:38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

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

Heb. 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

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

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

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

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

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

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

Heb. 12:1 Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Memory Verse: But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is,

and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Heb. 11:6.

Central Thought: Seeing that the Old Testament saints were saved because of their faith, we must be determined to have faith in Christ for all that He has promised and provided in the New Testament Plan of Salvation.

Word Definitions: *Faith:* It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word for faith denotes firmness, security, moral fidelity. It is the same word translated for faithful, faithfulness, and faithfully. The Hebrew word "emoonah" is kin to the Hebrew word "amane," from which our word "amen" is derived. It denotes constancy, trustworthiness, dependability. *Weight:* A bending, bulging mass or load, a hindrance.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today covers much area in the apostle's discourse concerning faith and the faith of the Old Testament saints. We start with a quotation from Habakkuk 2:4. Let us quote it from the Old Testament, comparing it with the apostle's rendering. "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith [or faithfulness]." It is very important for us to gain proper perspective of this term "faith." Proverbs 20:6, states: "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" God is looking for faithfulness. He is looking for men to believe His promises and cling faithfully to them. He is not pleased with a man who wavers and doubts. He is not interested in doing business with someone who will not wait faithfully on Him. He is looking for constancy. It means a lot to be faithful. We have already dealt with the sad story of Israel, how that though Moses was faithful in all his house, the house of Moses was not faithful. Moses testified of them in Deut. 32:20 that they were children in whom is no faith (or faithfulness). After all the plan of salvation has provided, it will be in vain unless a person accepts it with all honesty and sincere faith and persuasion, and faithfully continues to follow, obey, and support the truth all the way. Unless we hold the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end, the promise is of no effect. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." "His soul which is lifted up is not upright in him." It will take this constant unwavering and faithful faith to make it into heaven.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is there to draw back from in Christ and what makes one draw back?
2. Is there any substitute for faith?
3. How long are we to believe?
4. Where does faith place one's confidence?
5. Who is the author and finisher of our faith? Why should we look to Him?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is a catalog and historic panorama of the faithful saints of the past. By faith the elders obtained a good report. The Greek text renders this verse like this: "By faith[fulness] the ancients were attested [proven]." Oh, these Scriptures reveal the vanity and fruitlessness of many lives today. For us to have favor with God we must be steadfast people with endurance, patience, and unmoveable faith. Look at Abraham. Through all the 25 years of waiting for a son, he held fast to God's promises. Then when Isaac was a young man, Abraham obeyed God in going about to offer him up as a sacrifice. Abraham was a man of faith. He was a faithful man. God was not skeptical about him. He was called the Father of the faithful. We that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. But as our lesson reveals, Abraham was not the only one who possessed this faithful spirit. Many others were in the line. Their faith stood firm even though they received not the fulfillment of the promise. It was not time for them to receive the promise. God was reserving the fullness to come to those who would embrace the gospel and the teachings of Jesus Christ. But in the ultimate end we shall all share the triumph together. Those who had faith back there will be rewarded with those who have faith in the gospel day of time. If they could have faith back there, how much more can we have faith now in its full appearance! We are surrounded by this great cloud of witnesses. They have proved that their faith was real. They laid down their lives for it. We are called upon to do the same. Jesus was the Author (Leader, Beginner) and Finisher (Completer or Perfecter) of our faith. He was faithful to God, and by His gracious help (as we keep our eyes on Him) we can prove faithful to God, also.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The writer has written eleven chapters explaining the office and function of Christ. He states factually that Christ is the "author and finisher of our faith." He indicates that Christ has performed His service, and now it remains for us to take advantage of salvation. Christ has done all that is required to lay a foundation on which we can believe.

Satan is ardently working to destroy our faith and turn us from the way. Once I was driving down a country lane. I approached a railroad crossing that was constructed on a steep embankment. Upon reaching the top of the embankment, I was unable to see the opposite side of the road and was uncertain where the road continued. I simply had to believe that the road existed and keep going straight. Many times we cannot see the end of a trial but we must steadfastly keep living the life we have lived from the time we have gotten saved.

The devil is intoxicating people with what the world has to offer and causes them to waver from the faith. A couple of nights we observed the police as they stopped automobiles near our home. Their purpose was to determine whether or not the drivers of the vehicles had been drinking. One of the tests they administered was to see if the individual could walk a straight line, since an intoxicated person will not manifest full control of himself. The lusts of the flesh will affect one's spiritual life. Some become drunken on position or prestige, and many are drawn away from the faith by compromise or fanaticism.

This is why Paul gave the warning, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."
—Wayne Murphey

December 19, 1982

JESUS CHRIST WHO SPEAKETH FROM HEAVEN

Heb. 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should

not be spoken to them any more:

20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

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

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall we not escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

Memory verse: See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall we not escape; if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

Central Thought: In the gospel of Jesus Christ, we are dealing with something far more serious than what Israel dealt with at Sinai under the law. For God is not speaking on earth in audible tones, but He is speaking through Christ Jesus in the Spirit. To reject the message of Jesus Christ puts one in danger of the consuming fire of God's wrath.

LESSON BACKGROUND

An exhortation to holiness and a warning against failing of the grace of God precedes another dire distinction between

the old law administration and that of the New Testament. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. This is a basic truth of godliness. "Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:16b. If it were not possible to fail of the grace of God, a warning would not have been given here. Our approach to the grace of God and the plan of redemption should be one of reverence and godly fear. The bold confidence of the fleshly minded is forbidden. Jude spoke of those who were spots in the feasts of charity (love), who fed themselves without fear. Jude 12. Our manner of life and conversation must be consistent with the verity and soberness of our profession. Although the outward terror is gone in our approach to God as it was in the Sinai administration of the law, yet extreme caution and holy regard should be employed by everyone. The Mount Sion (Greek form for Zion) and the Heavenly Jerusalem that we come to in Bible salvation is a spiritual reality worthy of the greatest love and respect that our souls can bestow. Pay particular attention to verses 22-24 in our lesson. Weigh each one of the things listed that we come to in this New Testament dispensation. Are we really willing to accept the challenge and responsibility of these things?

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is holiness such an important ingredient in the Christian life?
2. What will a root of bitterness do for a soul?
3. To what are we come in Christ?
4. Where is God speaking from today?
5. How is God shaking the heavens?
6. Why should we serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

When we give our hearts to the Lord and take up our cross to follow Him, we enter into a realm of the Spirit. Spiritual blessings and realities begin to unfold before our hearts as we continue in His words and ways. The fleshly outward form fades before the magnitude of spiritual influences that we experience in prayer and study of the Word of God. The holy design of the Church of God begins to come into focus in our understanding. We are made aware of what the real Mount Zion is. We see that it is not a literal mountain over in Palestine, but it is rather an elevated plane of holiness and

heavenly communion known only to those who are made perfect in Christ. The outward demonstration viewed by the Israelites at Mount Sinai did very little for them spiritually. It put a holy awe and a fear in their hearts. But it did not effectively work righteousness and holiness in their souls. It is of the flesh to desire outward forms and signs as promoters of righteousness and the work of the Lord. God sees fit to work in signs and wonders at times when He deems it beneficial to His cause. But as a general rule the work of righteousness is in a quiet peaceful manner in the Spirit. Noise and commotion excite the emotional and nervous part of a person. But God sees it best to speak in a still small voice as He did to Elijah. So it is vital for us to have proper understanding of God's working and the nature of His operations. The souls of men are His realm. The hearts and lives of people are His habitation. This is where He wills to work. The kingdom that He wants us to receive is to be set up in the souls of men and women. He wants them to serve Him in an acceptable manner. All that refuse to do this are in danger of His wrath. When He says, "I shake not the earth only, but also heaven," He is referring to the souls of men. The souls of men are the spiritual ecclesiastical heavens that He wills to work in today.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We read of instances in the Old Testament where God spoke. The words: "hear," "hearken," and "behold," are found many times. The difference between the old and new Word, is that now His Word carries more responsibility. Christ brought about a perfect plan, and paid such a price for it, that God is very particular that we honor it. There were times in the Old Testament that God winked at disobedience, but now there remains no excuse.

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." It is important that we take heed to every word that God speaks. The current events that make the news, are those associated with important people. The reason for this is because what the leaders say will affect us. These individuals have the power to alter our life styles; consequently, we are concerned with what they have to say.

There is no escaping the fact that what God commands will definitely affect us. We would be wise to listen. In the dispensation of grace, God not only speaks through the oracles of men, but He also speaks to our hearts. Let us retain a clean heart that we might understand the thoughts of God. —Wayne Murphey

December 26, 1982

**JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY,
AND FOREVER**

Heb. 13:1 Let brotherly love continue.

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

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

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

5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

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

7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

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

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

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

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

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

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Memory Verse: By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. Heb. 13:15.

Central Thought: In view of all that we have learned of Jesus Christ, we should live faithful to Him, being willing to

bear His reproach with respect to our blessed hope in Him and the everlasting covenant that He, the great shepherd of the sheep, has made with us.

Word Definitions: *"Considering the end of their conversation"*: Considering and remembering the purpose of their way of life.

LESSON BACKGROUND

All the commandments of God that are given in the gospel of Christ reflect the holiness of God's character and His benevolent love for mankind. His love for humanity must be a reality in the hearts of the redemptive body of people saved through His Son. Thus we have in our final lesson today the precepts of love, purity, holiness, humility, faith, and obedience set forth. We should be aware that the gospel is a dispensing of benefits and responsibilities. To partake of the benefit calls for faithfulness to the responsibility. We realize that Jesus Christ is the Inheritor and Giver of Eternal Life. He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. The apostle mentions the bodies of the beasts whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin. He said that they were burned without the camp. He likens this to Jesus' being crucified outside Jerusalem, shedding His blood that we might be sanctified. Then he draws a parallel to this of our being willing to bear the reproach of Christ "without the camp," that is, beyond the line or the praise of men and the honor of people. To be led by the Spirit is to often violate the principles of worldly minds. This is something that every one of us must face and accept. There is no way to get around it. But in all of our suffering and self-denial, we can remember that we are serving Christ, the Eternal One. Verses 20 and 21 contain the essence of the whole epistle to the Hebrews. It is the purpose and plan of God to do just what these verses reveal.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Is brotherly love consistent with Christ?
2. Why does He warn against covetousness?
3. What does Christ's Eternal State mean to us?
4. Where is the real home of the people of God?
5. What all does Christ through the blood of the everlasting covenant will to do for us?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

God is calling His people to a high and holy way of life. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary carries great consequences. Those who will accept this offer of mercy and forgiveness, and embrace the precepts of life and character that it upholds, are promised blessings unrealized and unknown before. For those who trifle with God and neglect the standard of His holiness as a vital part of their lives there is reserved great punishment and indignation. Our final chapter of the book of Hebrews is a call to us to conform to the standard of Christ. His unspeakable Gift is worthy of the greatest submission and service that one could ever render. It deserves to be in accord with the holy and pure manner of life. God is not interested in bestowing His favor upon anyone who is unwilling to accept the responsibility that such favor enjoins upon us. If Jesus was called upon to give His life with respect to the resurrection from the dead, then we that partake of the benefit of His resurrected life must bear that same attitude. The reproaches that come upon a Christian for his stand on vital issues of life and doctrine must be willingly borne bravely and resolutely. "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." What serious and weighty words! Where is our real home? Is it here in this world? No, for we are pilgrims and strangers here. There is none abiding here in this life. The treasures that we hoard and cling to will slip through our hands. Oh, we want the virtue of what Christ accomplished for us to work in our lives! We do not want His life and death and resurrection to be in vain concerning us. We want God to work in our lives the fulness of grace, love, mercy, truth, victory, and peace that Jesus purchased for us. We want to live so that we will be counted worthy of seeing face to face this Blessed One who did so much for us.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." The context of this could be stated in the following manner: Christ was the same "yesterday," in that people, since the beginning of time anticipated with faith the coming of the Messiah. He was the same "today," to the Apostle Paul, in that He was as a freshly slain Sacrifice and had ascended to the Father to be a propitiation for the sins of mankind. He is the same "forever," because of His everlasting Sacrifice, which is effective until the day of judgment, when time shall be no more.

No other religion can claim a Saviour such as this. The prophets of false religions were self-proclaimed messiahs. No one prophesied their births and they came upon the people unawares. None have influenced the world with physical and spiritual aid to the extent that Christ did and no other can claim to have "suffered without the gate" as Christ did. With the death of self-proclaimed messiahs, came the cessation of their ministries. However, we serve One who will remain the same forever. What a blessed consolation! —Wayne Murphey

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