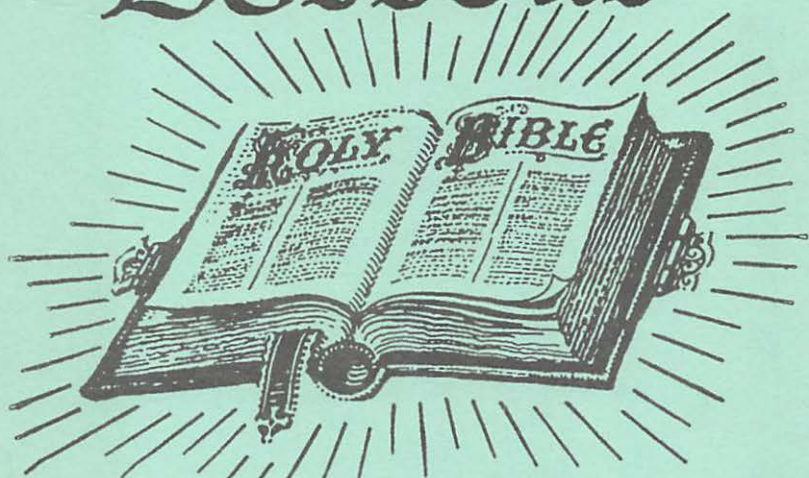


Bible Lessons



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

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

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THEME FOR SECOND QUARTER, 2007

For this second quarter of 2007 we are inspired to set forth a series of lessons from the wonderful New Testament book entitled, "THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE HEBREWS." The truth contained in this writing is so vital and important to the faith of the saints. It shows the office and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ to His Church as it was prophesied in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament. It is exciting and very interesting to note the way in which the writer applies the various Old Testament Scriptures to Christ and His great plan of salvation. I am persuaded to believe that if we will earnestly seek the Lord for understanding and open our minds and hearts to Him, the Holy Spirit will bless these truths to our spiritual edification and reveal them clearly to us. It is our earnest prayer that the Lord will do that for everyone and bless this series of Bible Lessons to all who take a part in their study. —Bro. Leslie Busbee



APRIL 1, 2007

GOD SPEAKS TO MANKIND THROUGH HIS SON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 scepter of righteousness is the scepter 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 shall all 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: God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his Son*.... Hebrews 1:1-2.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The almighty God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth and all mankind, has spoken to all of us fleeting mortals the message of His love and righteousness through Jesus Christ, His Son, Whom He has set on high in power and glory above that of the angels.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 1:1), "*sundry times and in divers manners*": In many various times and in many various ways.

(Verse 3), "*express image of his person*": Jesus was the exact copy of God Himself, of His holiness, goodness, wisdom and every other wonderful attribute in Him. "*sat down*": Positioned Himself according as the Father rewarded Him, taking hold of the power and authority given to Him.

(Verse 6). Let us note the Greek rendering of this verse according to Adam Clarke: "But when he bringeth again, or the second time, the first-born into the habitable world....And let all angels of God worship him." Clarke says that this most manifestly refers to Christ's resurrection. "*let all the angels of God worship him*": The writer here is quoting from the Greek Septuagint version of Deuteronomy 32:43, which version includes this declaration. The Hebrew in the King James version says, "Rejoice, O ye nations with His people," and the Septuagint precedes this with these words: "Rejoice, ye heavens, together with him, and let all the angels of God worship him."

(Verse 8). "*scepter*": The rod of force and power of a king and his dominion. Christ's scepter was not a literal rod for an earthly kingdom. It was rather the power of a godly and righteous life in obedience to the heavenly Father. It was taking a throne preceded by humility and self-sacrifice.

(Verse 9). "*iniquity*": That which is contrary to the law of God, the opposite of goodness and truth." "*Your God*": This is the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "*fellows*": Associates, partners, and fellow beings.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we find several positive statements about Jesus Christ. First, the writer declares that God has spoken to us by His Son, Jesus. Then he asserts that Jesus has been appointed by God to inherit all things. Through His risen life and ascension to the right hand of God, Christ has been made the King of kings, Lord of lords and possessor of Heaven and Earth. Then he said that by Jesus, God made the worlds. And Christ is the brightness of God's glory and the exact image of the Almighty. Also he shows Christ upholding all things by the Word of His power, that by Himself He purged us from the power of sin, and that He has been seated on the right hand of God in the heavenly places. These statements concerning Jesus and the position He has attained form the main message of the book of Hebrews.

Then the writer quotes from several Old Testament scriptures, applying them directly to Christ. "Thou *art* my Son, this

day have I begotten thee" comes from Psalm 2:7. "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son" comes from II Samuel 7:14 and was referring to David's seed after him who would build a house for God's name, but is applied here to Christ Jesus. "And let all the angels of God worship him" is from Deuteronomy 32:43, a part of the song Moses composed and gave to Israel as a witness against them before he was taken from them. He quotes from Psalm 45:6-7 which Psalm can be called the "Wedding Hymn of the Church," and he says here that this is spoken unto the Son. Then in verses 10-12 he quotes from Psalm 102, a vivid prophecy of Jesus written in the distress and anguish of a tried and pressed soul. In verse 13 he quotes from the wonderful 110th Psalm, a glorious prophecy of the heavenly reign and intercessory priesthood that Jesus would carry on at the right hand of God. All of these prophecies our Lord Jesus fulfilled so completely and beautifully. Let us behold them and let them be written upon the tables of our hearts.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. By whom has God spoken to us in these last days?
2. What did Christ accomplish for us?
3. Where is Jesus Christ today?
4. What is the rod and scepter of His reign?
5. In what way is Christ superior to the angels?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

It is a blessed vision to see Christ as He really is and where He is just now. God spoke to men of old about His Son Who was to come in the fullness of time. Christ is declared to have purged the sins of mankind. This He did by giving Himself to the wicked men who thirsted to spill His blood because they hated and rejected Him. They did not realize that they were fulfilling God's will as Christ being the sacrifice to atone for their sins. And, because Christ humbled Himself to do the will of God and was obedient to the death of the cross, God highly exalted Him to His right hand in the heavenly places, and gave Him a name which is above every name, at whose name every

knee shall bow in reverence and submission. If we refuse to bow to His good pleasure and accept His sacrifice for our sins, we will bow in that day when He comes to judge the earth. It will be too late to save our souls in that day. Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation. Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Surely we need to do it now and be submissive to His holy will. Our lesson declares from prophecy that the heavens and the earth will perish and be discarded like a worn out cloak. But Christ is and will be the same; His years shall never fail. He is King of kings, and Lord of lords, Who only has immortality, to Whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In the ninth chapter of Luke it tells of Jesus taking Peter, James and John and ascending into a mountain to pray. As Jesus prayed a wonderful change came over His countenance and His clothing began to shine forth with a very white radiance. Moses and Elijah both appeared with Him, and they talked of His death and glory that was to be accomplished in Jerusalem. The disciples that accompanied Jesus had been asleep, and when they aroused they saw His glory and the two men with Him. As the men departed, Peter suggested that they build a tabernacle for each of them. As Peter was making this suggestion a heavy cloud came over them and an audible voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son: hear him."

Jesus told His disciples, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, *they are* spirit, and *they are* life." John 6:63. Jesus understood the things of the spirit and tried to reveal spiritual truths to mankind in a simple way they could comprehend. When Jesus taught a special principle He often used the expression, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." How careful we should be to open our ears and hearts to the Words of the Master, for truly they will bring life.

At the last earthly meal Jesus partook with His disciples He shared with them a concept that was dear to His heart. Judas had already left their presence and was on his way to

betray the Son of God. There, in the solemn quietness of a few precious moments remaining with those He loved, He gave them this injunction. "A new commandment I give unto you. That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:34-35.

He hath in these last days spoken to us and if we will "hear Him" and obey this new commandment of loving one another as He loved us, we will find pleasure in His sight. Then one happy day we shall see His glory with our own eyes and be allowed to dwell with Him throughout eternity.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



APRIL 8, 2007

ALL THINGS PUT UNDER CHRIST, BUT NOT YET

Hebrews 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 words spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward:

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

4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

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

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

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

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that*

is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

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

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. Hebrews 2:9.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: It should be a serious matter of vital importance to us that unto Christ, as the second Adam, has God promised all things of earth and heaven to be in subjection. And, though we see that all things have not yet been subjected unto Christ, yet we see Him, Who was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor after having tasted death for every man.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 2:1), "*give the more earnest heed*": Pay more abundant attention. "*lest we should let them slip*": Lest WE should slip or carelessly pass them by.

(Verse 2), "*stedfast*": Confirmed; forcefully established.

(Verse 4), "*also bearing them witness*": Testifying further jointly; uniting in added evidence.

(Verse 5), "*the world to come*": Ultimately this is referring to the eternal new heavens and new earth that God promised to make, that II Peter 3:13 says we should look for after this present world is destroyed. But, to attain to that dominion,

Christ had to subdue and overcome this present evil world by taking upon Himself human flesh and triumphing over the tempting powers of satan. In so doing, He brought about the dispensation of grace and the miraculous power of grace and truth, transforming the souls of men from sin and transgression to His new creation of righteousness and true holiness. "*whereof we speak*": This is what the gospel of Christ is all about, and what we should take heed to.

(Verse 6), "*testified*": Solemnly witnessed. "*mindful*": Count Him worth thinking of. "*visitest*": Observe or inspect; take notice of.

(Verse 7), "*a little lower than the angels*": More properly expressed as "lower than the angels for a little time." Christ counted not equality with God to be held on to, but emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. (Philippians 2:6-7.)

(Verse 8), "*now we see not yet all things put under him*": Christ has conquered death and has ascended up to the highest Heaven, but God is allowing the sinful world to go right on in its rebellious state unsubdued. His children, and those who yield to the gospel to be saved, have to live in this evil society for a little while, but Jesus is appearing in the presence of God for them, and through the indwelling Holy Spirit His Church overcomes the world and is kept by the power of God.

(Verse 9), "*But we see Jesus*": Though we see not yet all things put under Him, yet we see Him crowned with glory and honor at the right hand of God after suffering the death of the cross as an atonement for the sins of the world. "*taste death*": Experience and suffer death for every man.

(Verse 10), "*it became him*": It was fitting and proper for him. "*captain*": Author; chief leader. "*make perfect*": To complete or fully accomplish.

(Verse 11), "*all of one*": All have the same Father in Heaven.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our first lesson we had several prophecies mentioned from the Old Testament and applied directly to Jesus Christ. We should take special note of the prophetic writings mentioned in the book of Hebrews and how the writer applies them to Christ. This is a very vital part of revealing the gospel of

Christ. And our lesson today begins with an urging appeal for us to give earnest heed to these things and not slip away from them. This can be done if we fail to discern how serious and how correct are these prophecies, and how they are applied to our Lord Jesus. We are reminded that the Lord, through His teachings, brought out the truth of this great salvation, which was confirmed by His disciples who were with Him and heard Him. And, also, God testified jointly with them with mighty signs and wonders and miracles, and these, along with the various gifts of the Holy Spirit manifested in different ways, helps to make it so sure and undeniable.

The writer speaks then about Christ being given the subjection of the world to come. He quotes from Psalm 8:4-6. In surveying this Psalm one would think that it is speaking of Adam in the creation. But the writer applies it to Christ, as the Holy Spirit reveals it, even as we shall see in the many other Old Testament scriptures that will be brought out farther on in future lessons. It is not difficult to see, when we consider that Christ was the second Adam. Adam was a figure of Him (Christ) that was to come. (Romans 5:14.) I Corinthians 15:45, after quoting that the first man Adam was made a living soul, states that the last Adam (Christ) was made a quickening spirit. So we see Jesus being given the dominion of the world and the subjection of it, crowned with glory and honor. He is the Captain of our salvation and was given that position because He tasted death for every man. Both Jesus, (the Sanctifier,) and all who believe in Him to be made holy and pure from sin, are sons of the living God, and He is their Brother. For this he quotes from Psalm 22:22, which Psalm is a bright and vibrant prophecy of Jesus all the way through. He quotes from another Psalm that says, "I will put my trust in Him." This has been rather difficult to trace, but generally Psalm 18:2 is counted to be the source where he says, "my God, in whom I will trust." Then he quoted from Isaiah 8:18, which is part of an important prophecy of Jesus. These are all prophecies of Jesus that He wonderfully and completely fulfilled to the letter.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why should we give the more earnest heed to these things?
2. To whom has the world to come been made subject?

3. Why are all things not yet put under Christ?
4. How was Christ, our Captain, made perfect?
5. In what way is Jesus Christ our Brother as well as our Lord?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

What a great salvation the Lord Jesus Christ has brought to us in fulfilling the Scriptures as He did! He has been given the dominion of mankind for all time and eternity. He is our Lord and the Maker of our eternal destiny whether we accept Him or not. All things have been and will be subjected to Him. He will have the last word to say concerning everyone. If He is for us, who can be against us? Who can condemn us when we are justified and redeemed by His blood? It is wise for us, and makes all the sense in the world, to surrender everything to Christ and let Him be our all in all. He is our Brother, Lord and Friend. He tasted death on our behalf, and now sits enthroned with glory and honor. He will one day bring all things under His feet, and that last enemy to be destroyed is death, which He will fully and without fail accomplish when He comes again on that last great day.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I saw a lonely cocoon hanging on a dead vine in my garden. Investigating closer I noticed a brilliant thread of gold gleaming out of the dull brown skin. In a few days I found the empty cocoon still hanging by a thread, but the creature within had flown away. It spoke a message to my heart. Even in the state of "death," the caterpillar, metamorphosing into the beautiful butterfly, beamed out a ray of hope.

Jesus gave us a wonderful, golden ray of hope in all the suffering and death we experience in this life. It speaks to us as we stand at the graveside, the wind whipping the canopy over our heads, the closed lid of the flower-mounded casket so harsh, so stark, so final, staring us in the face. As we lift our tear-stained faces to the sky, we know that someday those clouds will break and a life that we only can imagine will begin, forever blotting out the pall of the dark valley.

Jesus truly became our Brother when He went through that valley for us. It was also how He was made perfect and completed our salvation. He tasted death for all of us. In doing so, He took the sting out of death. He hasn't yet taken "the last enemy"—death—away, even for believers. The disciples have all passed through death, Christians down through the ages have—some have even been tortured and martyred—and we will also one day pass through that valley, one by one. But the bitterness, the hopelessness and the terror of death is gone for those who trust in Him, and one day soon He will swallow death up in total victory! —Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



APRIL 15, 2007

JESUS CHRIST, THE FAITHFUL SON OVER HIS OWN HOUSE

Hebrews 2: 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

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

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

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

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

Hebrews 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.

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: ...Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. John 8:34-36.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Jesus Christ, as the Son of the living God, was faithful in what God had appointed Him, and is Lord of all, having made atonement by His death and conquering death by His risen life. He abides in His house forever, and makes those who trust and follow Him free indeed from the power of satan and sin.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 2: 14), "*destroy*": Render entirely idle or useless. "*power of death*": The strength, authority and dominion that death had over mankind. This was satan's reign over the soul of man, which he gained when our forefather, Adam, yielded to the temptation of sin. Through the death of the innocent Son of God as the atonement and ransom price for transgression against God, satan's power has been destroyed. All who believe in Christ and continue without ceasing in His truth can be made free from all sin.

(Verse 15), "*through fear of death all their lifetime subject to bondage*": The effort of carnal man is the preservation and extension of this earthly life. Death is feared and there is seen no hope beyond the grave. Through Christ, Who made no effort to escape death but faced it bravely and submissively to the will of God, we can face death with no fear. Christ conquered death and delivered us from the fear of death. As Paul said, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Philippians 1:21.

(Verse 16), The Greek says, "For indeed he takes hold not on angels, but he takes hold on the seed of Abraham." The seed

of Abraham means human flesh and blood, especially those who are of faith.

(Verse 17), "*reconciliation*": To bring together in fellowship and harmony what was at variance and enmity by paying the required price.

(Verse 18), "*succour*": To help and relieve.

(Hebrews 3:1), "*partakers of the heavenly calling*": Called to be sharers of heavenly things. "*consider*": Observe fully. "*Apostle*": An apostle is one who is sent forth on a special mission. Jesus was sent forth from God and eternity, to come into this world on a special mission, to bring deliverance to the souls of men who were under the bondage of satan and sin. "*our profession*": This means our confession or acknowledgement and acceptance of Christ's offered service. We accept and hold fast to what Jesus provided for us in His death on the cross and His resurrected life.

(Verse 4), The Greek says, "For every house is prepared by someone, but He having prepared all things is God."

(Verse 6), "*confidence*": Full assurance to be able to frankly and openly declare and testify of. "*rejoicing*": Boasting and glorying in triumphant joy.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we are entreated to fully observe and take into account our wonderful Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Who is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. Let us ponder and weigh carefully what He accomplished for us. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh so that He could exert His holy powers to conquer and subdue the one who held dominion over us, that is, the devil. He did not become like angels, but he became human. He had to be made like us, down on our level, if He would give us a hand of deliverance. We, in the flesh and under the control of satan, could not help ourselves. But if one holy and without sin could come into our stead, He could accomplish our salvation.

So we need to earnestly consider our Savior and look upon Him with wonder, admiration and respect. Notice how Christ was faithful to God Who sent Him as also Moses was faithful

in all his house. This is a quote from Numbers 12:7, a part of God's testimony about Moses and how highly He esteemed him. But Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses because He was the fulfillment of the ministry and service of Moses, used of God to build the House of God, the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (I Timothy 3:15.) He is the Son over the House, and we are that House if we will be faithful and hold fast to Him all the way. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Christ do to conquer the devil?
2. What kind of bondage did the devil have us in?
3. Why did Jesus have to be made like unto us?
4. Why was Jesus counted worthy of more glory than Moses?
5. How can we be a true part of Christ's House?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus came down from Heaven as the Bread of Life to give life unto the world. He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death so that He could rescue us from the dominion of sin and satan. Sin ruled over us and caused us to commit transgressions against the holy and righteous God Who created us and gave us life. We were in subjection under the devil's foot. But God had a plan, from before the world, that He would have His Son come and rescue us to Himself. We see in the prophets many things that foretold what Jesus would accomplish. He was to be made like unto us, as a Brother, and would break the power of the devil, and save us and give us a holy invitation to reign as victors with Him. There is no need for us to continue in the bondage of pride, selfishness, bitterness, hatred, lust, the love of money, adultery, fornication, lying, stealing, hatred, murder and such like. In Christ we can live a holy and righteous life of honesty, love, kindness, patience, forgiveness, mercy, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, humility and triumphant faith in God.

Let us fully and with all of our hearts consider what Christ has done, and do everything we need to do to lay hold of His

grace and truth. Moses was faithful, Christ was faithful, and we can be faithful as they were. Oh, let us get a vision of what Christ is offering to us! Let us step forward and take hold of His salvation and fight the good fight of faith, be a steadfast soldier of the cross, holding fast to the confidence and hope of the gospel, firm unto the end of life's journey. It will be worth it all to reap the reward of a faithful life for Jesus.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Bro. Clifford Wilson says it well in a passage from his book, *Moral Law*: "Man is the only being we know who has spiritual dimension, but all men have sinned. Justice demands that sacrifice for sin must be without blemish, which means that a thing which is steeped in defilement itself could not be offered as sacrifice for atonement from defilement and purchase anything, for it is not clean within itself. Sacrifice meant the shedding of blood or, in other words, the taking of life in order to avail, but the sinning soul is devoid of spiritual life itself. Thus it has no life to offer spiritually even though it were to give itself physically. This is where Christ enters the picture. God gave His only true offspring, His only begotten Son. Likewise the Son, of His own free will, gave Himself to pay the penalty for man's committed sin. He was a sacrifice without spot or blemish for He "...did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." I Peter 2:22. Yet, He paid the full price for sin as though He were the vilest of sinners. Consequently, He paid a price for sin although He had not committed sin. That price He used to pay the sin-debt of fallen man, who had no acceptable price to pay for himself. Hear the testimony of the Word: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:8-9. We must never lose sight of the fact that our salvation is not a thing we earned; it is a thing Christ bought and paid for and gave to us." Oh, what a Savior!

—Sis. LaDawna Adams

APRIL 22, 2007

BEWARE OF AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF

Hebrews 3:7 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 sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hebrews 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.

MEMORY VERSE: Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Hebrews 3:12.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Being partakers of Christ and the New Testament Salvation, we are faced with the same responsibility and challenge that faced Israel when it came time to enter and possess God's rest, the land of Canaan. We have a rest in Christ to enter into, and must hold our faith steadfast and not give over to unbelief as Israel did.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 3:7), "*Wherefore*": Consequently, or for this reason. In the previous verse the writer stated that we are Christ's House IF we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. In response to facing this fact, he is going to quote from Psalm 95:7-11, and labels it as the Holy Ghost speaking, and is giving it as a serious warning to us today. "*Today if ye will hear his voice*": The counsel of God in Christ is to hear and diligently give heed to the good news of His gospel.

(Verse 8), "*Harden not your hearts*": Let not your hearts become stiff or stubborn. "*provocation*": This was the time when Israel irritated and grieved the heart of God by drawing back and refusing to go forward to enter and possess the Canaan land that He had promised to them. "*day of temptation*": This was the day when God was testing and putting Israel to proof as to their willingness to obey them.

(Verse 9), "*When*": The Greek word really means "where," alluding to the wilderness where Israel spent about forty years wandering. "*tempted me, proved me*": Israel had seen God work and had been shown proof that He was Almighty and well able to help them. They should have been more responsible and willing to move forward at God's command. According to Deuteronomy 2:14 the space of time from Kadesh-barnea (where they were supposed to go over into Canaan and drew back) until the time just before Moses finished his course was thirty-eight years. So it was about two years after they came out of Egypt that they should have gone on over into Canaan. This is the time that God was so provoked that He swore that they were not going to enter into Canaan, His rest.

(Verse 10), "*grieved*": Vexed and angry. "*err*": Wander and go astray. "*they have not known my ways*": In Romans 3:17

Paul quotes from Isaiah 59:8 concerning the sinful nature and disposition of man: "And the way of peace have they not known." God gave Israel every possible chance to take possession of the land of their rest, but they would not cooperate and hardened their hearts in unbelief. With this God rejected them and deprived them of their inheritance.

(Verse 11), "*my rest*": The Canaan land, termed here as God's rest, but it was also *their* rest that God wanted them to enter into.

(Verse 12), "*Take heed*": Watch, be diligent and be attentive. "*unbelief*": Without faith.

(Verse 13), "*exhort*": Encourage, lovingly urge and implore. This includes being faithful and individually cheerful, loving, helpful and setting a good example before everyone else.

(Verse 16), Adam Clarke is persuaded that this verse should read: "But who were those hearers that did bitterly provoke, but all those who came out of Egypt by Moses?" The word "all" must be taken with great propriety, for there was Joshua and Caleb who did not provoke, and to these also we could very well add the "*priests*" and the whole tribe of Levi who were entirely devoted to the service of the sanctuary. But, for the most part, it was those who had come up out of Egypt "from twenty years old and upward" (Numbers 14:29) who perished in the wilderness.

(Verse 17), "*carcasses*": Corpses or dead bodies.

LESSON BACKGROUND

For our lesson today we are looking at one of the most serious texts of the New Testament. In our last lesson we were counseled to carefully observe the Lord Jesus Christ. The writer then paralleled Him with Moses; both were faithful in their responsibility to God. Moses served as a testimony of things to come, which things are brought out in Christ and in the ministration of His house. We who are saved are His house, but it is imperative for us to not allow anything to cause us to be moved from the faith and hope we have in Him. For this reason he quotes from Psalm 95:7-11. Let us observe why this

scripture from Psalm 95 is so serious and why it is presented to us.

It is dealing with one of the saddest events of the Old Testament. It is an appeal and warning to us to not allow what happened to Israel of old to recur in us concerning our progress in attaining to what God is offering to us. And this was the time when Israel provoked God's anger by drawing back from going forth to take the promised land. The account of this tragedy is found in the book of Numbers, chapters 13 and 14. The writer in Hebrews labels this warning as the Holy Ghost speaking to us: "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." Many deceived souls believe that there is no way we can be lost once we believe in Christ. Why would this warning be given if that theory is true? It is a deception of the devil. We are responsible creatures before God and have an important part to fill if we are to partake of God's salvation. If we fail our part, we will not be saved in the end. The language in our lesson is explicit. It should be taken with great consideration. We conclude today's lesson with the first verse of chapter four for it summarizes the warning that it all brings to us in this our day of grace.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What are we warned about in the quote from Psalm 95?
2. What danger do we all face that called for this warning?
3. What must we do if we would be real partakers of Christ?
4. What happened to those who provoked God's wrath?
5. What should we fear lest we come short of?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostle and High Priest of our faith and hope for eternal glory, has accomplished the will of God on our behalf. In so doing He has made it possible for us to be saved and have a chance to obtain victory over this world, and an entrance into the world to come of eternal life. All of this has been brought out in the previous lessons of this study. Twice we are told, that to be as Christ's House and partakers

of Him, we must hold fast the beginning of our confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm and steadfast unto the end. What happened to Israel at the time they were to go forward to enter into God's rest can happen to us. And it has happened to many. God wants people to go forward and progress in the Christian life. He is not willing for us to be content with just being forgiven of our sins. He wants us to go on to perfection and completeness. It has been the sad tale of many a soul coming short of what God wants them to attain. God is calling us to die out to self and be sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit. Many people do not know that this is the plan of God for them. They are taught that you get it all when you are saved. How sad--sad that they fail to understand what the will of God is for them. Many come to the place where they realize that they need to make a complete consecration to God, and draw back from the death they must die. This is what we are being warned about in our lesson. We must follow on and carry this thing through all the way if we want to really know the Lord. There is a spiritual Canaan land that God wants us to enter into. It is complete sanctification and perfect holiness that God is opening up to us in Christ; a spiritual rest of ceasing from our own works and letting God work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. And just as they of old drew back in unbelief from entering into God's rest, even so it is possible for us today to draw back in unbelief and not attain to all that God is offering us in Christ. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There was a period in my experience of following the Lord that I began to draw back and harden my heart. The Lord had been especially close to me, blessing and guiding me; I felt His presence and knew it was Him. However, at a certain failure, I began to pull back from His leading. I remember thinking to myself, "I will not go back into the world, where I came from." I knew I didn't want to go back to what I came from and yet, I was unwilling to go forward. I was in this condition perhaps a month or two.

I continued to read my Bible and pray, but it was evident in my spirit that I lost the closeness with God. Bible reading

became like reading the newspaper, it was just information, it was no longer life. I became very confused about what was taking place.

I thank God for His longsuffering and mercy to me. One night upon going to bed, my wife started talking to me. I did not give my wife a reply that evening and fell off to sleep. The next morning, during prayer, the Lord gave me a vision of a mouse in one of those mazes trying to find its way through; that was definitely me. Then He brought back to me everything my wife had said the night before. It was like the Lord was saying, "Go right here, left there, and right here." He also brought a thought to mind that I had heard sometime before. It was someone's testimony of having to consecrate to be a failure for God. That morning in tears, I asked His forgiveness and mercy, and I consecrated to be a failure for Him. It was very difficult, but victory came. You know what else? My life hasn't been a failure. Oh, I have had my share of failures; but I have learned to get back up and go on. Don't allow the giants of fear, doubt and unbelief cause us to totally harden our hearts to the Lord's leading. —Bro. Bob Wilson



APRIL 29, 2007

ENTERING INTO THE REST OF FAITH

Hebrews 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 labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor 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 us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. Hebrews 4:1.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: We should let what happened to Israel be a lesson to us today. As they drew back in unbelief and did not enter into the rest of the land of Canaan, even so there is a danger of us drawing back in doubts and fears of unbelief, causing us to miss that sweet rest of the soul that Christ has made possible for us to enter into.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 4:1), "*come short*": Be deficient or inferior to the rest God wants us to have.

(Verse 2), "*gospel preached...unto them*": The promise of possessing the Canaan land was the gospel preached to Israel. It was a type of the gospel preached in the New Testament Covenant for us today. "*the word preached did not profit them*": This means it was not beneficial or useful. "*not being mixed*

with faith": God gives us the promises of His Word, but they will not benefit us unless we co-mingle them all with steadfast faith and obedience.

(Verse 3), *"we which have believed do enter into rest"*: We which have steadfastly counted the promises of God true, and have given ourselves wholeheartedly in confidence, trust, full assurance, submission and obedience, do enter into the spiritual rest of the soul that Christ affords. *"the works were finished from the foundation of the world"*: God finished the works of creation in six days and on the seventh day ceased from His works. For this cause He blessed the seventh day. It was His rest and He wanted man to enter into that rest with Him.

(Verse 5), *"And in this place again"*: Here the writer is joining together two things: First, the rest that God instituted at the beginning on the seventh day as His rest; and secondly, the rest that He wanted Israel to enter into by going in faith and possessing the land of Canaan, which He labels "My rest." He is uniting the two as types and shadows of the true spiritual rest that we must enter into in Christ Jesus.

(Verse 6), *"some must enter therein"*: God is desiring and wills ardently for the souls that He has created to enter into sweet rest, peace and happiness with Him in communion, fellowship and truth. *"they to whom it was first preached"*: This is speaking about those under Moses who had the Canaan land offered to them, but they drew back. *"because of unbelief"*: This word "unbelief" in this place takes in more than just a lack of faith, but it involves obstinate rebellion and disobedience, just what Israel manifested against Moses, Joshua, Caleb and God Himself.

(Verse 7), *"Again, he limiteth"*: God marks out again, that is, He is giving another chance, another invitation for the soul of man to enter into His rest.

(Verse 8), *"Jesus"*: This is speaking of Joshua, the man whom God used to lead Israel later into Canaan, the land of rest. The name "Jesus" and the name "Joshua" come from the same Hebrew word, Jehoshua, which means "Jehovah saves." Joshua did not give them the true rest. He led them in the conquest and possession of the land of Canaan, but it was all but a type of the soul rest that Christ is offering to us today.

(Verse 9). *"There remaineth therefore a rest"*: The real sense of this verse from the Greek is this: "We conclude from all of this that we today in Christ have a Sabbath rest to enter into."

(Verse 10). *"ceased from his own works"*: The works we as children of God today (born of His Spirit and called to be led by His Spirit, and not the flesh) need to rest and cease from are the works of self, the works of the flesh, the thoughts and ways of humanism, pride, worldly ambition, covetousness, hurt feelings, anger, wrath and all such like.

(Verse 11). *"labour"*: Use speed, make effort, be eager, prompt and earnest.

(Verse 12). *"quick"*: Living. *"powerful"*: Working with energy. *"dividing asunder of soul and spirit"*: This means separating and distinguishing and making a difference between that which is not spiritual and that which is spiritual. *"joints and marrow"*: This is a figurative comparison—The joints represent the outward bone structure, and the marrow (the inward part) is the essential life of the bone. The Word of God segregates between that which is alive and in fellowship with God, and that which is dead and rejected of Him.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we have the Canaan land rest and the Seventh Day Sabbath rest united as types of the spiritual rest that God wills for us to enter into in full salvation and sanctification of the Holy Spirit. He brings forth both of these Old Testament types and applies them directly to the rest of faith. It is a spiritual Sabbath, a soul rest, a ceasing from the works of self, the flesh and the carnal world in which we live. It is something that we should strive earnestly to enter into and partake of. We should fear lest we come short of it. To come short of the rest of faith means that we will not have the blessings of fellowship with God like He so desires. We must cease from our own thoughts and ways and be willing to learn and to go with God in His holy way. Let us open our hearts to receive and take heed to the truth that is revealed in this lesson.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of rest is it that God wants us to enter into today?
2. What two rests are mentioned that are pointing to the true rest?
3. What are our own works that we need to cease from?
4. What is it going to take on our part to enter into this spiritual rest?
5. Why is entering into God's rest such a serious matter?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Entering into God's rest for us is certainly more than just not doing any work on one particular day of the week. It is a ceasing from our own works and letting God work His works in us. And this is a daily Sabbath rest. It is, as Isaiah 58:13 says, to "honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own words*." Woe to any person who never comes to realize how vain and empty the heart and life that lives solely for self and one's own fleshly desires. The soul languishes in spiritual disease and death in such a person. But it is life and peace to follow and be led by the Spirit of God, following peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14.)

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When a soul desires to enter into God's rest there is generally an ugly specter of fear that is raised before their eyes. The enemy uses this tactic very successfully on many people, keeping them in bondage, sometimes for years. The more one tries to encourage someone under the spell of this fear to launch out on the promises of God, it seems the more they clutch to the things of this earth that they feel offer them security.

For those who may be struggling with these fears, it might be good to consider the keeping power of God that is demonstrated to those who trust Him. The poet wrote and we sing, "Mighty to save and mighty to keep...." Surely none of us doubt

the mighty power of God; the problem we face is believing it will work for us. Psalm 31:23 helps us see more clearly the nature of God. It says, "O love the LORD, all ye his saints: *for the LORD preserveth the faithful,...*" In John 10:27-39 Jesus spoke of His sheep hearing His voice and following Him and He said of them, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand." Jesus continued to point out that His Father is "greater than all" Be encouraged to believe that we are serving a God that is "mighty to keep" and He will safely keep the soul that is placed in the security of His powerful hands.

When one truly resigns to the will of God there is a wonderful peace that floods their soul. It need not be a great emotional demonstration that coincides with the exact time one meets the conditions of the Lord, but it will surely result when one ceases from their own labors and allows the Lord to work through them. They will soon understand by experience that the grace and providence of God is sufficient for their every need, and will find comfort in the knowledge that "...he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." Zechariah 2:8.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



MAY 6, 2007

JESUS CHRIST OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Hebrews 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.

Hebrews 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 honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron.

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

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

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

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: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16 (Blessed verse!)

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Aaron was chosen to be the mediator between God and His people in Israel of old, but God commissioned His Son Jesus Christ to be our great High Priest because He suffered and paid the price for our sins. Jesus passed into the heavens to the right hand of God and intercedes for us there so we can come to God for mercy and grace to help in every time of need.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 4:14), "*high priest*": Chief or leading priest. The word priest refers to one who administers as an intercessor or "go-between" relating to God and man. The priesthood under the law system served in the tabernacle in the various stages of the worship of God. "*profession*": acknowledgement and acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.

(Verse 15), "*touched*": Able to sympathize with.

(Verse 16), "*come boldly*": Draw near with confidence.

(Hebrews 5:1), "*ordained*": Appointed. "*gifts*": Things offered and given in love to God.

(Verse 2), "*have compassion*": Being able to feel in due measure. "*the ignorant*": Those not knowing, who are unaware of God and the things they need of Him. "*them that are out of the way*": Those who are gone astray from the truth. "*infirmity*": Weakness.

(Verse 7), "*days of his flesh*": While Christ was in this mortal body. "*heard in that he feared*": Accepted and heard of God for His piety and godly fear.

(Verse 8), "*learned obedience*": Gained knowledge and experience of true submission and self denial before God His Father. Christ valiantly and successfully accomplished this obedience as a measure to counter-act and defeat the spirit of pride and rebellion that came from satan. He had to do this in order to be our High Priest and the means for us to gain that same objective.

(Verse 9), "*being made perfect*": Having completed and fully accomplished the perfect will of God. "*author*": One who caused and brought it about, making it possible and available to us.

(Verse 10), "*called of God*": Chosen, commissioned and proclaimed by almighty God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our previous lesson we had the serious matter of our need to diligently seek to enter into God's rest, closing with the solemn thoughts of the power and majesty of the Word of God and its relation to us. When we are faced with the sobering responsibility that is ours relating to God, there is a tendency to wilt and throw up our hands in dismay. But this is where the Priest comes in. He ministers to help us in our relationship with God and what is therein required of us, and God respects the office of the priest and affords grace and mercy to those who come to Him by way of the Priest. We had in Lesson 3 in Hebrews 3:1 the counsel to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. And now in our lesson text today we will dwell on the thought of Jesus and how He is our great High Priest and has passed into the heavens to appear before God on our behalf.

This is a wonderful truth to take into our hearts. We have a great High Priest Who is touched with the feeling of our

mortal infirmities for, He was once as we are now, enclosed in this frail earthly body. What a wonderful privilege we have in Him! This is Jesus the Son of God. And we are encouraged to come boldly unto what he calls "the throne of grace" for mercy and grace to help in time of need. Yes, God has set up the throne of grace for us to come to at any time day or night. We can come with boldness and confidence that He loves us and will receive our approach unto Him.

Then we have the function of the priest and how he is to relate in mercy and kindness to man. The priest's function was the offering of sacrifices on his behalf and on the people's behalf. Aaron is mentioned, who was the first high priest under the law, and how he was called of God. Then he is compared thus to Jesus Who was called of God to be our great High Priest. And the writer applies the scripture, in Psalm 2:7, as the divine call to Jesus as the Son of God, plus the one in Psalm 110:4 that says He is to be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec (which we will consider further on in this series of study).

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Of what value is it to us that Jesus Christ is High Priest?
2. What privilege is granted to us at this throne of grace?
3. What are some of the qualifications of being the high priest?
4. What two scriptures are quoted referring to Jesus as High Priest?
5. How was Christ's prayers to be saved from death heard and answered?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

"What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear: what a privilege to carry every thing to God in prayer!" by Joseph Scriven. Jesus, being made a High Priest forever, having passed into the heavens to sit at the right hand of God on a throne of mercy and grace, is a blessed truth for us to know. We know it is the truth because of the scriptures that were fulfilled and because the Holy Spirit reveals it to us and makes us know it beyond all doubt. Therefore we will hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. We will go to Him in prayer continually at the throne of grace and receive of His

goodness and help in every time of need. Jesus, after He had suffered and made one sacrifice for sins forever by giving His life on the cross, rose up from the grave triumphant over death. And then He ascended up from His disciples on the Mount of Olives and passed from their sight into the eternal realm to sit at the right hand of God. There He has remained ever since. And what is He doing up there? He is interceding with God for us and receiving our prayers and offerings of thanksgiving and praise continually. He has never taken a vacation, break or furlough. He is on the job twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and 365+ days a year. He is taking prayers and holding them before the heavenly Father in our behalf from all over the world, and many come to Him at the same time. He can handle all that we give to Him. And that is not all that He is doing. He is dispensing the Holy Spirit down upon His saints and directing the operation of His work in this world. He is also expecting and looking forward to the day when He will leave the throne of grace and make His descent to call all men, dead and alive, to come forth to be judged by Him in eternal judgment. Woe be to the souls who disregard and have no use for Jesus! "Blessed are all they who put their trust in Him." Psalm 2:12.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I love to consider the wonderful work that is being done continually for us in salvation. First, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ. As High Priest for us, He pleads our case before the Father. He prays for us, He ever lives to make intercession for us, He makes access to the Father for us. He acts as our attorney. This is one half, you might say, of the circle of intercession.

The other half is accomplished by the Holy Spirit sent to us from the Father by Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is God's Advocate to us. He communicates the heart and mind of the Father to us, as Jesus communicates our hearts' needs to the Father. He then helps US to know what to pray, because we have no idea how to pray according to the Father's will. So He communes with our hearts, giving us utterance; we then pray, entering into Jesus' intercession to the Father, and so the circle of fellowship, communion and communication is completed.

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

MAY 13, 2007

LAYING HOLD ON THE HOPE SET BEFORE US

Hebrews 6:4 ...*It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: ...Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Hebrews 6:12.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Once we get started in the Christian race there is no turning back to the vanities of this world. But, with full assurance of God's Word, backed by His oath, we have a sure and steadfast hope of entering into that eternal world where Christ has already gone before us.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 6:4), "*impossible*": Unable and without strength.

(Verse 6), "*crucify afresh*": Crucify again. "*put to an open shame*": Expose to dishonor.

(Verse 9), "*accompany salvation*": To hold fast to salvation. He had just mentioned about people who fall away and crucify Christ again, and put Him to an open shame, and how the earth that brings forth herbs is blessed of God and that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected. But he was glad to know that those to whom he wrote this epistle would hold fast to the salvation of God.

(Verse 10), "*have ministered and do minister*": They had ministered to the saints in the past and are still at the present time ministering to the saints. And as they are continuing this holy practice, he wants them to maintain their Christian experience all the way to the end.

(Verse 11), "*diligence*": Eagerness and earnestness.

(Verse 12), "*slothful*": Dull and sluggish. "*patience*": Endurance and long suffering.

(Verse 16), "*oath for confirmation*": The practice of swearing about something by a higher power, or notable as an expression of confidence of the verity and truth of the matter. "*end of all strife*": Such swearing with an oath is a general way of ending all strife and dispute concerning the issue. He is bringing out that God likewise wanted His counsel to be made so sure to man that He confirmed it with an oath. And because there was no one greater than He, He swore by Himself.

(Verse 17), "*immutability*": Unfailing unchangeableness. There is no way that God can lie.

(Verse 18), "*two immutable things*": These two things are His Word (or promise) and His oath. "*strong consolation*": A strengthening comfort and assurance in the heart of man. "*hope set before us*": The earnest expectation, the intense anticipation the gospel of Christ provides set right before us!

(Verse 19), "*anchor of the soul*": That inward confidence and persuasion of the unfailing promises of God, concerning

our future world of eternal bliss, holds us through the raging storms of life. *"entereth into that within the veil"*: This anchor of the hope of God's saints reaches far up beyond the earthly elements, into Heaven itself, where Christ Jesus Himself has entered. As we shall see in future studies, the second and inward veil in the tabernacle was entered once every year by the High Priest with blood from the altar to be offered before God for the sins of the people. This was fulfilled by Jesus Christ when He passed into the Heavens to sit at the right hand of God.

(Verse 20). *"forerunner"*: That blessed One Who ran the race ahead, opening up the way for us.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The writer in the first few verses of this sixth chapter of Hebrews encourages us to pass on from the beginning and basic truths of Christ to the full development of His wonderful grace so we will not have to lay again the foundation of our Christian faith. We must not allow ourselves to be pulled back to the sinful things of life that the Lord saved us from, because, if we do, we put ourselves in great peril of never getting restored. There have been some that have returned to the faith after losing out with God, but there have been many that have lost their vision and their souls as well. The first three scriptures of our lesson express the danger we put ourselves in if we fall away after having experienced the grace of God. Let us not run that risk. We can be of those who go forth and develop their Christian life to maturity and faithfulness.

We are encouraged in our lesson to press forward diligently, and follow the example of those who have gone before us in their faith and patient endurance of waiting on God for the fulfillment of His promises. He mentions Abraham, that wonderful man who proved faithful to God in enduring and waiting on Him. He held on to the promises that God said He had sworn unto him. It was at the time when Abraham had offered up Isaac on the altar and God had stopped him from completing it, that God said this. "By myself have I sworn" was the Lord's word to Abraham. Genesis 22:16-17. Then the writer applies that to us in the New Covenant of grace by Jesus Christ. As God swore by Himself to Abraham, so He swears by Himself to us in the offering up of Jesus Christ once for all.

This, he brings out, make up two immutable things from God's good will to us—His Word and His oath—that gives us strong confidence and assurance of His eternal blessings and the hope of glory that Christ brings to us. This blessed hope is a sure and steadfast anchor that holds us secure through the storms of this fleeting life. And it reaches way beyond this vain earthly tread, into the realms of eternity, where Christ has entered before us. Let us then be encouraged to press on to glory as part of that throng who through faith and patience inherit that everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it such a serious thing to fall away from being saved in Christ?
2. What are we encouraged to do to make sure this does not happen to us?
3. Why did God confirm His promise to Abraham by an oath?
4. What are the two immutable things that God has given to us?
5. What have we, who in Christ have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

In Isaiah 5:4 God asked the question: "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" We can ask a similar question: what more could God have done for us to help us to take hold of His promises and run the Christian race and gain the promised prize? He has done everything that could be done to assure our hearts of His existence and the good will that He has for us. He showed in Abraham His faithfulness and loving concern for us. He has done, and is still doing, His part. Now it is up to us to come forward and do our part. We must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6.) We must be willing and obedient if we would eat the good of the land. (Isaiah 1:19.) We must endure unto the end if we would be saved. (Matthew 24:13.) We must prove ourselves faithful and responsible to God. It is only right that we faithfully do what we must do. God is not going to give His blessings to irresponsible and unfaithful people. We must flee

from this wicked world, and its folly, for refuge to the Lord, and lay hold on the hope He is setting before us. There is no other way. We must be faithful unto death and He will give us a crown of life. (Revelation 2:10.) —Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"...Knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope. . ." Romans 5:3-4 Experience is brought about many times by failing. We do nothing perfect the first time. How many times does a toddler fall before he learns to walk well? How many times does a child fall off a bicycle before he actually masters riding one without falling? How many times does a good cook fail before making that perfect cake? Even an avid fisherman does not give up on fishing tomorrow when he brings home 'no fish' today.

Spiritually speaking, how many times do we see a soul start out with determination to serve the Lord and turn back because of their own failings? Many times they stumble and fall and never try again. And yet, we are dealing with eternity here—a soul that will last forever. Isn't it worth trying again? This race is much too serious to quit or to give up. Eternity is just ahead.

Since we know how to expend our energies to persevere in physical things, why wouldn't we persevere in spiritual things as well. "I see a shining crown awaiting over there. I see a mansion all prepared and decked with beauties rare; Shall that which intervenes deprive me of my right? **Nay**, on I'll go until I reach that City of delight!" Never, never, never give up!

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



MAY 20, 2007

JESUS CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST FOREVER

Hebrews 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.

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?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: ...We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Hebrews 8:1-2.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Jesus Christ has been given, on our behalf, an unending and unfailing intercessory position at

the right hand of God. He fulfilled every qualification that God required such to have and He ever lives to be our connection for fellowship, favor and help from the almighty God.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 7:1), "*Salem*": This city of which Melchisedec was king is the same as was later called Jerusalem. The name "*Salem*" is from the Hebrew word "*shalom*" which means "peace." The name Jerusalem in the Hebrew means "founded in peace."

(Verse 2), "*King of righteousness*": This is the meaning of the name Melchisedec.

(Verse 3), "*without father, without mother*": Parents unknown and not on record. "*without descent*": Descendants are unknown. "*having neither beginning of days, nor end of life*": His date of birth is unknown and the day of his death unrecorded. He was a priest of the most high God, not because of his father, but because God had made him a priest. This is the reason why Christ is presented in prophecy (Psalm 110:4) as being a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. His priesthood was not that of Aaron, but solely and completely given and established of almighty God.

(Verse 14), "*evident*": Quite clear. "*sprang out of Judah*": Risen from the tribe of Judah.

(Verse 15), "*yet far more evident*": More abundantly still quite clear. "*similitude*": Likeness.

(Verse 16), "*Who is made*": Who has become. "*endless life*": a life that is indestructible.

(Verse 22), "*surety*": Unfailing pledge. "*better testament*": Stronger and safer covenant.

(Verse 25), "*save them to the uttermost*": Save and deliver completely, to perfection and to the maximum degree. "*that come unto God by him*": All who come in repentance and in poverty of spirit to God in the name of Jesus for salvation.

(Verse 26), "*became us*": Was made fitting and suitable for us. "*holy*": Wholly sacred and consecrated to God. "*harmless*": Innocent, pure, without any purpose to hurt or injure. "*undefiled*": Without any soil, stain or pollution from this world of sin. "*separate from sinners*": Having no fellowship or communion with the ungodly spirit of this wicked worldly society. "*made higher than the heavens*": So pure, so worthy, so

prevailing and pleasing with the almighty God was our Savior, Jesus, that He was raised from the dead and carried up to the highest position of eternal glory, that of the right hand of Jehovah, the Self-existent and Eternal God.

(Verse 28), "*consecrated for evermore*": Perfected and established as our Lord and Redeemer for the ages of the ages. So be it! Amen and Amen!

LESSON BACKGROUND

When Abraham returned from his victory over the foreign kings who had raided Sodom and Gomorrah and taken his nephew Lot captive, he was met, not only by the king of Sodom, but another king came out to meet and to bless him. It was this Melchisedec, king of Salem, who Genesis 14:18 related was "the priest of the most high God." He blessed Abraham, saying, "Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." And Abram gave this king, Melchisedec, tithes, or the tenth part, of the goods that he had brought back with those he had rescued. That is all we hear about this Melchisedec until his name comes up in prophecy, in the 110th Psalm, inspired to David. The first verse of that Psalm is a vibrant prophecy of Jesus: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The New Testament heralds this Psalm loudly as referring to Jesus Christ. And then in verse four David declares: "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

In our lesson today we have the essence of the reason God calls the order of Christ's priesthood after that of Melchisedec. The priesthood that God set in order for the children of Israel under Moses and the generations following was that of Aaron, the brother of Moses, and his posterity. With that priesthood was given the law of Sinai. Christ's priesthood was to be an eternal priesthood, thus to be different from the priesthood of Aaron that terminated in death and was renewed by sons born in Aaron's family afterward. For this cause He was to be a priest after the order of Melchisedec of whom nothing was said of parents or offspring. We must not conclude that Melchisedec himself was a man who was never born or did not die. It is just that his parentage had nothing to do with him being made a priest. It was God Who made him a priest, just as God made

Jesus a High Priest for eternity. And so it is, that Jesus Christ is a perfect and eternal High Priest at the right hand of God, interceding for us poor and needy souls in this world of sin and sorrow. God singled out our Savior to be this faithful intercessor, at His right hand, for our salvation and eternal happiness.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is the priesthood of Christ not after the order of Aaron?
2. Why was it then decreed to be after the order of Melchisedec?
3. How was Christ qualified to be made such a great High Priest?
4. What, as our great High Priest, is He able to do?
5. What privilege do we have with Jesus at the right hand of God?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of God, makes intercession with God for us poor and needy people in this world of sin, wickedness and suffering. He carries us on His heart continually in supplication and petition to almighty God. And, because He has so pleased His Father and obeyed Him even to the death of the cross, He is given access to the bountiful riches of His goodness, power and grace. All the power and majesty of the Almighty is dispensed through Jesus down to this realm of earth, and we can all have a bountiful share of His wonderful help and strength. It is our privilege to go to Him continually and receive grace and help for any and every need that we might have. He became poor for us that we through His poverty might be rich. (II Corinthians 8:9.)

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There is not a whole lot that is said about Melchisedec. We find in Genesis 14:8 that Melchisedec, king and high priest, came out to meet Abraham after the battle, bringing to him wine and bread.

Upon reading this account, I began asking myself if there is *any* significance to the wine and bread that Melchisedec, the priest of the most high God, brought to Abraham after the

battle. Ecclesiastes 10.19 says, "...wine maketh merry:" It is noted also, in Psalm 104:15, "...wine *that* maketh glad the heart of man...and bread *which* strengtheneth man's heart," Battles are often strenuous, difficult and many times wounding. This is a beautiful picture of the high priesthood of our Lord Jesus. Who will minister comfort and nourishment to our souls through the avenue of the Holy Spirit and Word of God,

—Bro. Bob Wilson

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MAY 27, 2007

CHRIST ENTERING INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES

Hebrews 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 shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.

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

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...the errors of the people:

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

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

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

13 For if the blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

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

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

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

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

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: For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Hebrews 9:24.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Just as the Old Testament High Priest went in once a year into the Most Holy Place with blood to offer for the sins of the people, so Jesus Christ our Great High Priest shed His own blood as a sacrifice for our sins, and passed into the Heavenly Place to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 9:1), "*worldly sanctuary*": The earthly or literal holy place which was the tabernacle that God instructed Moses to build.

(Verse 2), "*called the sanctuary*": Called the Holy Place. This was the first compartment of the tabernacle of Moses.

(Verse 3), "*Holiest of all*": The Greek expression is Holy of Holies. It is also called the Most Holy Place. This was the second part of the tabernacle into which the High Priest went alone once a year.

(Verse 11), *"not of this building"*: This meant Christ entered into a spiritual Most Holy Place, not of this earthly creation. This spiritual Holy of Holies was Heaven and the very presence of God.

(Verse 12), *"into the holy place"*: Into the Holy of Holies, the second part of the tabernacle.

(Verse 13), *"sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh"*: The blood of bulls and goats and sheep did not reach the real spiritual part of man, but was a fleshly ordinance for the time back then and a type of the real cleansing that Christ would bring about.

(Verse 23), *"patterns of things in the heavens"*: Examples or types of the spiritual things in Christ. *"heavenly things"*: Spiritual things of the hearts and souls of men before God.

(Verse 24), *"heaven itself"*: The very realm of the Eternal Spirit world, which was the right hand of the Eternal Throne of God.

(Verse 28), *"without sin unto salvation"*: This is referring to the second phase of our salvation. The first phase was from sin unto salvation, and this second phase is from our saved and sanctified state unto a new body fashioned like unto Christ's glorified body. Philippians 3:21.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our previous lesson we had the established truth of Christ as the High Priest of the New Covenant, called of God for a higher order than the Levitical priesthood. Jesus is our High Priest now for the salvation of our souls and for the attaining to the heavenly realm of eternal life. He is the One we must go to and look to for all the grace and blessings we need in living free from sin and overcoming this present evil world in the victory of faith. As chapter 8 and verse 6 says, Christ has "obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." The first covenant in Moses fell short of accomplishing the will of God, and Jeremiah 31:31-34 prophesied of a new covenant in which God would write His laws in the hearts and minds of His children. In this new covenant, which Christ was to bring in, everyone would know the Lord and He would be merciful to our unrighteousness, and our sins and iniquities He would remember no more. (Hebrews 8:8-12.)

In our lesson today we will consider the ancient Jewish tabernacle of worship that God instructed Moses to put together, in comparison with the true tabernacle that God would build in Christ. We have pictured in our lesson the Old Testament tabernacle and its two compartments, the first into which the priests went to perform the service of God, and the second into which the High Priest would enter once every year. This was always a serious and yet a wonderful thing for Israel to partake of once every year. But, as our scripture text reveals, this was but a type and a pattern of better things to come. We see Jesus entering in, by His death, resurrection and ascension, to the Holy of Holies, into Heaven itself, "now to appear in the presence of God for us." As the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies with blood from animals, so Christ by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, and with His own blood, entered once for all into the heavenly realm and sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

Oh, what a wonderful truth we have before us! Christ has purchased for us a perfect salvation and is the great High Priest that we are to come to for all the help and grace we might need in this life. We and all mankind are appointed once to die and to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. But Christ has made a way for us to be delivered from sin and condemnation, and we can look expectantly for His Second Coming when He will change us to immortality, that is, "without sin unto salvation." We must be completely cleansed from sin and this evil world to be counted worthy of that eternal salvation to be brought to pass in that last great day. Amen and Amen!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the high priest do once a year in Israel's time?
2. This was a type and a pattern of what?
2. What did Christ do to fulfill this Old Testament type?
3. What can the blood of Christ do for us?
4. What is Christ doing in the Holy of Holies that He entered into?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Jesus Christ made Himself obedient to His Father in submitting to the awful death of the cross. But God rewarded Him by raising Him from the dead, and setting Him at His own

right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality, power, might, dominion and every name that is named. (Ephesians 1:20-21.) He will be our final Judge. But while God allows this old world to rock along in its ungodly fashion, Christ is at the right hand of God as our High Priest interceding with God on our behalf. He will reign in this fashion until the last great day when God will make His enemies His footstool. In the mean time, we who are in this present earthly life have a Friend to rely upon and look to. We can go to Him in prayer, and seek His help and grace to master all the hard and bitter trials of this earthly tread. He lives and reigns at the right hand of God. He triumphed over sin, death and the grave and, if we will love, follow and obey Him, we will share in His eternal glory, and live and reign with Him for ages of the ages. Praise be to our God for this great salvation! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain
Could give the guilty conscience peace
Or wash away the stain.

But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.

My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of Thine,
While, like a penitent, I stand,
And there confess my sin.

My soul looks back to see
The burdens Thou didst bear
When hanging on the cursed tree,
And hopes her guilt was there.

Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing His bleeding love.

—Isaac Watts

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God." Hebrews 7:19. We too rejoice in the knowledge that Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, took away our sins. "Such love cannot be fathomed."

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



JUNE 3, 2007

JESUS MAKES ONE SACRIFICE FOR SINS FOREVER

Hebrews 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 wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

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

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

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;)

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

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

MEMORY VERSE: ...This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. Hebrews 10:12-13.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The animal offerings of the law could not make man free from sin, but Jesus came with a purpose to do the will of God, offering Himself as a sacrifice on the cross, which will help all who come to Him to be saved, sanctified, and ready for the great Judgment Day.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 10:1), "*shadow of good things to come*": An outline or likeness of better things in the future. "*perfect*": Complete; to the full development.

(Verse 5), "*when he cometh into the world*": The writer is applying the following scripture quoted from Psalm 40:6-8 directly to Christ's first coming into the world to accomplish the will of God. "*but a body hast thou prepared me*": The text in Psalm 40 that he is quoting from renders this phrase as "mine ears hast thou opened." Adam Clarke explains that this Septuagint Greek translation, that Paul is quoting from, is the true rendering because there was a mistake in the Hebrew translation that put "ears" instead of "a body." And the translator in translating the Hebrew to the Greek found the error and corrected it. So the true rendering is: "a body hast thou opened, or prepared for me." "Thus," states Adam Clarke, "the Hebrew text, the Septuagint version, and the apostle, will agree in what is known to be an indisputable fact in Christianity, namely, that Christ was incarnated (or given a mortal body) for the sin of the world." We want to sanction and agree with how the New Testament writer applies the Old Testament prophecies.

(Verse 10), "*by the which will*": Or, the will by which. He is talking about the will and good pleasure of God that Jesus

came into the world to accomplish, an offering by which we can be sanctified and made perfect in Him. Remember how Jesus prayed in the garden: "Thy will be done."

(Verse 11), "*every priest daily*": This is speaking of the Old Testament priests who ministered in the tabernacle every day, offering sacrifices and performing the service they were commissioned to.

(Verse 12), "*one sacrifice*": Jesus offered Himself as the one sacrifice that was sufficient for all. There is no further need for animal sacrifices to be rendered, and no other man needs to offer himself.

(Verse 13), "*from henceforth expecting*": From now on, looking forward to the day when Christ will come and judge the world and take His chosen Bride, the true saints, to Himself forever. And, as II Peter 3:12 says, it is something that we also can be "looking for and hasting unto."

(Verse 14), "*sanctified*": Made holy and pure from sin as Jesus is.

(Verse 19), "*boldness*": Confidence, assurance, and freedom. "*the Holiest*": The Holy of Holies, the Most Holy Place. Being sanctified, we can enter the Heavenly Spiritual realm beyond the second veil NOW! This is the wonderful second work of grace—the infilling of the Holy Spirit—and the glory in our souls that helps us to experience being in that heavenly place (Ephesians 2:6) and enjoy "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Ephesians 1:3.

(Verse 20), "*the veil, his flesh*": When Christ's body was rent in death, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom. Matthew 27:51 This symbolized that Christ was opening up the veil for Him to enter into the Holy of Holies, and that we would be able to enter therein also.

(Verse 22), "*true heart*": An honest, sincere and good heart and attitude. "*sprinkled from an evil conscience*": Having our sins blotted out by the application of the blood of Jesus by our faith. "*our bodies washed with pure water*": This is a spiritual cleansing by being obedient to all the pure doctrines of Christ.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today illustrates how much better was the sacrifice of Himself that Jesus made for our sins than those animal sacrifices offered under the law. The scripture quoted from Psalm 40:6-8 shows how dissatisfied God was with those

sacrifices, and pictures Christ saying that God had prepared a body for Him to come down to earth to, and He was coming, as it was written of Him in the volume of the book (the Holy Scriptures), to do His will. The language of Christ is: "The animal sacrifices for sin are not pleasing to Thee, but Thou hast prepared an earthly body for me to inhabit, so I come, as the prophets have spoken of me, I come to accomplish Thy will and good pleasure, for the souls of men to be saved, sanctified, and glorified with Me." The Old Law had failed and Christ came to replace it with a perfect sacrifice of His pure and sinless life on the cross of Calvary. It was sufficient before God, and by His body being rent in death, the veil to the Holy of Holies is opened up for us to enter and enjoy the blessings of salvation, sanctification and eternal glory. Let us then draw near with confidence and enter into the joys of victory, peace and the fullness of grace in our souls. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Christ say when He came into the world?
2. What was the will of God that He was purposed to do?
3. What was accomplished by Christ's sacrifice of Himself?
4. What do we in Christ have boldness to enter into?
5. What must we do to enter therein, and when can we enter?

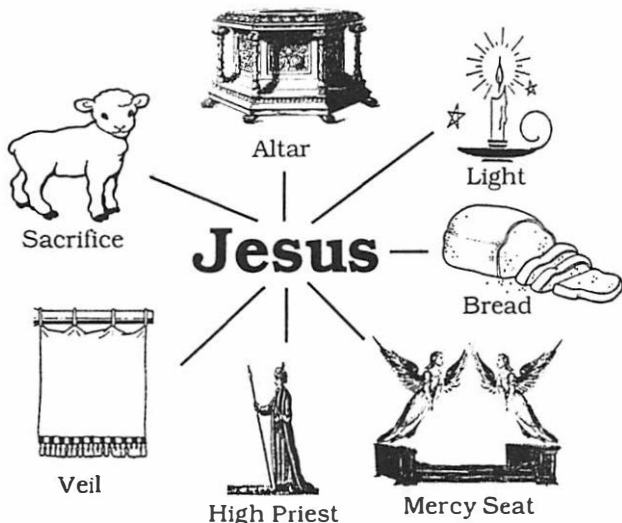
COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The law was a shadow of the good things that we can experience in our Christian life today. Through the atoning, cleansing blood of Christ we can be forgiven of all our sins and transgressions. Then there is a further cleansing that we can also obtain through His blood. We can be sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit, and be cleansed from the very root and nature of sin. Our lives can be lifted up to a spiritual, heavenly plane of joy, peace and victory. We can be raised up to sit with Jesus in the heavenly places, which is the Holy of Holies. We have boldness and freedom to draw near and come to Christ and enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus. We must be honest and sincere in our hearts, and know that we are forgiven of our sins, and be walking in the light of the Word of God and the doctrines of Christ. We must be cleansed by His blood and washed by the obedience to the Word. Thus we have

access to enter that Most Holy Place now and live in constant communion with Heaven. This is the most wonderful blessing we can ever enjoy in this life. May each one draw near and seek God for this fullness of grace and the indwelling Holy Spirit, and not be satisfied until we know it is ours!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Jesus is All in All! As you study the book of Hebrews, can you locate all the "shadows" that find their "substance" in Jesus? Here are a few. List the verses that go with each one, and then see if you can find some more.

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

JUNE 10, 2007

FAITH AND PATIENCE TO INHERIT THE PROMISE

Hebrews 10:35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

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

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

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

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

Hebrews 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.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

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.

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.

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he was* a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season:

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

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:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

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.

MEMORY VERSE: Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Hebrews 10:35-36.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: We must hold fast, and follow our faith through to the end, and follow the example of those who before us have exhibited the workings of faith and were richly rewarded.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 10:35), "*recompence of reward*": A requital; something given or done in return; repayment, reward or compensation.

(Verse 39), "*perdition*": Damnation and eternal destruction.

(Hebrews 11:1), "*substance*": Support, essence and assurance. "*evidence*": Conviction or persuasion.

(Verse 2), "*elders*": Saints of old who were followers of faith. "*obtained a good report*": Witnessed, testified, and gave evidence of the success of believing and trusting in God.

(Verse 3), "*worlds*": All creation. "*framed*": Thoroughly created and fully adjusted in perfect order. "*which do appear*": Which are visible.

(Verse 19), "*from whence also he received him in a figure*": Having been released from having to slay Isaac, his son, was like receiving him back from the dead. Isaac had been conceived from the seed of a past-age man in the deadness of his mother's womb, and this made him already an example of life from the dead. As Romans 4:19 said about Abraham, "...Being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb."

(Verse 23), "*proper*": Fair and handsome.

(Verse 24), "*come to years*": Having become great. Stephen in Acts 7:22 said, "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds."

(Verse 26), "*reproach of Christ*": The shame and suffering of the children of Israel, under Egypt's galling yoke of bondage, is on the level with the reproach that Jesus suffered in this world. "*respect*": Looking for the reward.

(Verse 40), The Greek renders this verse: "God having foreseen something better concerning us, that without us they should not be perfected." I believe that this indicates that in that great day of eternal rewards, we will share with these beloved saints of old the great reward of having faith in God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After beholding the fulfillment of prophecy concerning Christ, and the bringing in of the new covenant of Christ that is administered in faith through the Holy Spirit, we have for our lesson today the wise counsel of having this all-important faith. We have the scripture quoted in Hebrews 10:38 from Habakkuk 2:4. This is how it is expressed there: "Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." The writer here in our lesson is quoting from the Septuagint translation. Both of these renderings point to the same truth. One mentions the soul being lifted up, which means to be swelled or elated in pride. This is the kind of people who will reject and draw back from faith. The other speaks of one drawing back. One says that his soul is not upright in him, while the other says that my soul shall have no pleasure in him. It all speaks practically the same essence of truth. Habakkuk says, "The just shall live by HIS faith," that means one's own personal faith.

After this, in chapter 11, we have the wonderful listing of several of those of old who manifested faith in the living God. We did not include all of them in our lesson. There was Abel, Enoch, Noah, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph mentioned and then also there was Israel crossing the Red Sea and taking Jericho by compassing it seven days. The harlot, Rahab, is also mentioned who received the spies from Israel and begged deliverance for herself and all that would be with her. All of these are examples of people who triumphed for God's good pleasure by having and holding on to faith in him in the face of adversity, hardship, sufferings and even death. The latter part of this 11th chapter speaks of the awful suffering that many went through for their faith in God. Let us be strong and take hold of faith and confidence in God for our own lives, and be numbered with the faithful in that day.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why do people draw back from having faith in God?
2. What do we need to have along with faith?

3. Can you describe Abraham's faith and what it meant to him?
4. What did Moses have to endure because of his faith?
5. What kind of reward are those of old in line to receive?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

We have the wonderful examples of people who triumphed in life to please God and received His rich rewards for believing, obeying and fully trusting in Him. Good old faithful Abraham is a great blessing to us today. No wonder He is called by God the Father of many nations! What a glorious day it will be to meet in that mighty throng—whose number cannot be numbered—all of these wonderful people! But we today are going to have to take hold of faith in God for our lives. Jesus brought the fulfillment of all of these faithful ones to pass, and now we have the privilege of stepping forth and taking our stand for holiness and righteousness and the grace of God. We can have faith, triumphant faith, that overcomes the world; yes: we can have it now. But we are going to have to press our way and work hard at it. The slothful and careless soul will have no part in this great blessing. Only those who lay aside every weight and run with patience the race of faith will receive its shining reward.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A compass needle always points to the magnetic north pole. I don't have to see the North Pole to know that it is there. I may get lost or turned around in my sense of direction, but I can look at a compass and always know what direction "north" is.

The Word of God is our compass and the compass needle is our faith. The compass needle—faith—clearly marks our destination: Heaven. Even when we get turned around and lost in our sense of spiritual direction, we can look into the Word of God, and by faith find our way to that city "whose builder and maker is God."

Hebrews 11:13 "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." The compass needle of faith was working clearly for the patriarchs

mentioned in this chapter, and can work clearly for us in this evil day and time.

And just think, someday our faith will become lost in the sight. Someday, we will not need this compass. We will have arrived, and what a glorious day that will be! But until then, be encouraged to press on, by faith, to glory.

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



JUNE 17, 2007

WHAT WE ARE COME TO IN CHRIST

Hebrews 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.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

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,

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 not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven.

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

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Being changed to the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, we come unto God's holy Mountain of the Church that Jesus built, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is made up of all who are born again, written in Heaven and made just and perfect through the blood of Jesus, the Word of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 12:1), "*cloud of witnesses*": This is referring to the hosts of examples of faith previously mentioned in chapter 11. "*weight*": Hindrance and burden. "*sin which doth so easily beset us*": This could include, along with the competitive and

thwarting influence of sin around us in the outside world, the inbred nature of sin that we inherited from Adam. *"run the race"*: Press diligently to pursue the course toward the goal. *"with patience"*: Through hopeful and cheerful endurance.

(Verse 2), *"looking"*: Looking away attentively. *"for the joy set before him"*: The happiness and blessings He was to inherit as a reward for His obedience to the Father in the death of the cross. *"endured the cross"*: Held Himself determined to undergo the cross. *"despising the shame"*: Counting lightly the disgrace He suffered.

(Verse 3), *"contradiction"*: The dispute, opposition and pressure against Him.

(Verse 11), *"exercised"*: Trained.

(Verse 18), *"mount that might be touched"*: Mount Sinai where God gave the law to Moses

(Verse 23), *"general assembly"*: The mass worldwide companionship of all truly in Christ. *"firstborn"*: Christ Jesus, the first begotten from the dead.

(Verse 24), *"blood of sprinkling"*: The application of the atoning blood of Christ. *"better things than that of Abel"*: "The blood of Christ avails for the sins of the whole world, whereas Abel's sacrifice availed only for himself." Adam Clarke. Another thought is that the blood of Abel cried out from the ground for vengeance, while the blood of Christ cries out for mercy and pardon.

(Verse 29), *"consuming fire"*: The Greek says, "an utterly consuming fire": In Christ, the fire of God in the Holy Spirit can and will utterly consume sin out of our life, but if we fail to receive it we will be utterly consumed unto eternal damnation at His second appearing.

LESSON BACKGROUND

After the wonderful things brought out in chapter 11, of several of the many heroes of faith in ages past, chapter 12 starts off with an entreaty for us to strip off all hindrances and strongholds of sin that we had formerly acquired, and press forward in pursuit of the eternal prize. We have Jesus as a worthy example of enduring the shame and the humiliation of the cross with the joy of life eternal in His heart. We can keep Him before us as we meet the contradiction and persecution we will face in this earthly tread. And then the writer reminds

us of God relating to us as a father with his children. It is a very valuable thing to not forget. God will discipline us in our Christian life. The writer in Psalm 118:18 states: "The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death." And Paul observed in I Corinthians 11:32, "...When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." Let us not forget this, and give thanks to the Lord for His faithful dealings to keep us in line.

Then we have the comparison of the burning and smoking spectacle of Mount Sinai, where God spoke the burning words of His law, with the spiritual Mount Sion and the heavenly Jerusalem that was brought about in Christ. This glorious Church, and all of its blessings, is ours to behold with the eyes of our understanding in the Spirit of the Lord. He spoke on earth back there at Sinai, but now in Christ, and through the Holy Spirit, He speaks from Heaven. Let us see that we do not turn away from the message of the New Testament, for it is the final approach that God makes to us. There will never be another dispensation or work of salvation to be offered. It is a kingdom that cannot be moved, but will, as God showed to Daniel, "...stand for ever." Daniel 2:44. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What should we do in the face of the "great cloud of witnesses"?
2. How should we think and feel about the chastisements of the Lord?
3. What is the Mountain and City that we come to in Christ?
4. What are the various things included in this New Testament grace?
5. Why should we be so concerned and take it all so seriously?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

Let us notice the things we are counseled to do in our lesson. Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily besets us; run the race with patience, looking unto Jesus; despise not the chastening of the Lord nor faint when we are rebuked of Him; be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live; follow peace with all men, and holiness; see that we refuse not Him that speaketh; and let us have grace whereby

we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. All of these things we must be attentive to. To fail on any one of these things will spell our eternal doom. Look at them, consider them, and do not ever forget them. They are your life.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The importance of running for our spiritual lives should be a sense of urgency with us. "There once was a dog that chased a rabbit. Faster ran the dog so ran the hare. The rabbit ran so fine that he left the dog behind and soon he had escaped into his lair. I asked a wise old man who had been watching, could you explain this interesting sight? The dog ran fast but still, it was only for a meal, the rabbit he was running for his life. You better run for your life my brother, you better watch and pray and keep your soul on guard..."

Are we running with the understanding that it is for the life of our soul? The stakes are high. We only have one journey through. We don't have a rewind button that allows us to go back 20 or 30 years and redo. What are we doing with what we have left? Are we running hard with a determination that we must win at all costs? Are we willing to lay aside the weights and the sins that so easily beset us? Jesus told them not to go back in the house to get their cloak. We have to run. How are we running? Do little obstacles or things that arise give us excuse, or do we run right on by them?

I remember a dream that I had in which I was trying to get people to run. I was telling them, "You need to get out of here; there is danger here." I would come back around a few minutes later, and they were right back in the same old place, and it was like I had never spoken to them. Lethargy is the abnormal drowsiness or the quality or state of being lazy, sluggish or indifferent. Let us run.

—Bro. Bob Wilson



JUNE 24, 2007

BEARING CHRIST'S REPROACH FOR THAT CITY TO COME

Hebrews 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.

15 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.

16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

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: Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Hebrews 13:13-14.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Since Jesus suffered the rejection of the world in His sacrifice for the salvation of our souls, we should not draw back from bearing the cross and suffering the same shame that He did, for this world is not our permanent dwelling. We are looking forward to a better home in that blessed eternal world to come.

WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 13:1), "*continue*": Remain.

(Verse 3), "*them that are in bonds*": Prisoners. "*as being yourselves also in the body*": Let it be that we feel for others in their troubles as they are a part of us.

(Verse 4), "*honourable*": Valuable, beneficial, helpful. "*whoremongers*": Fornicators.

(Verse 5), The Greek rendering is very good: "Let the way of life be without money-loving, being satisfied with the things present, for He has said, I will not leave you, nor in any way will I forsake you."

(Verse 7), "*them which have the rule over you*": The leaders in the Church and the worship of God who are established ministers of the gospel. "*follow*": Imitate. "*considering the end of their conversation*": Looking again attentively to the final result of their godly conduct.

(Verse 11), "*without*": Outside.

(Verse 13), "*go forth therefore unto him*": Let us not draw back from bearing the same shame and reproach that Christ bore. "*without the camp*": Outside the circle of the favor and praise of the world, drawing their scorn and persecution.

(Verse 15), "*giving thanks*": Confessing, acknowledging, and giving due honor to His name.

(Verse 16), "*communicate*": Share with others

(Verse 17), "*watch for your souls*": Keeping wide awake to spiritual things that they might faithfully instruct you in the way of truth. "*give account with joy*": We all must give account of ourselves before God, but His ministers are going to have to give account of how they have handled the Word of God before others. It will be joy and gladness to know of those who have obeyed and submitted to the truth, but it brings grief to know of those who have rejected it. "*unprofitable for you*": To go against God's Word and His Holy Spirit will mean eternal loss to the soul of man.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In our final lesson today we find a rich conclusion to the wonderful truth that this epistle has brought out. These counsels are very vital and important to remember and faithfully observe. Take the first one: "Let brotherly love continue." II Peter 1:5-7 brings out brotherly kindness as one of the eight things that Peter says will make us to be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ. Also he said in I Peter 3:8 to "...love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." Let brotherly love remain. And our love must reach out to the outside world, too. Let us be faithful to do good unto all men as we have opportunity. (Galatians 6:10.) The writer also gives a warning against the awful evil of impure relationships between men and women. Marriage is a blessed thing that God has given to mankind. To have a pure and holy companion in marriage is one of the greatest joys that a man can experience. But the devil has defiled this sacred relationship with lust and evil. Our society is stained with fornication and adultery. It is wise for young people to give their hearts to God and let Him lead them in selecting a companion. Wait on the Lord and let His will be done. It pays great dividends of love and happiness.

Watch out for covetousness and the love of money. That is another evil that infests humanity. Learn to be content, remembering that the Lord knows how to supply your needs if you will wait on Him.

Twice in our lesson we have the exhortation to hold proper and due respect for our leaders, the ministers of the gospel who labor in Word and in doctrine. It is vital that we have this honor and respect. No man can prosper spiritually if he refuses to listen to the counsel of Holy Spirit led ministers. Then we are encouraged to follow the Lord Jesus "without the camp" and be willing to bear the reproach of the cross as He did. This is because we are not of this world, and our affections are on things above.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why must we be so careful how we live and treat others?
2. What is so critical about marriage and man and woman relations?

3. Why should we be submissive and obedient to our spiritual leaders?

4. Why did Jesus suffer reproach and why must we suffer also?

5. What does God want to accomplish in our lives through Christ?

COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The almighty God has spoken to us through His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus fulfilled the prophecies that went before about Him. Many of them are brought out in this series of lessons. We should take note of how the writer applies these prophecies to Jesus, and behold what a picture we have of Him! He is the Son of God and all the angels worship Him. His kingdom is forever. All the earth and the heavens shall perish, but Christ remains. God has given Him to sit at His right hand and all things are put in subjection under His feet. He has been given an eternal priesthood, at the right hand of God, as a throne of grace that we have freedom to come to for help in time of need. He has a rest that He wants us to enter into. The old seventh day Sabbath is not enough. We need to enter into a spiritual rest and cease from our own selfish works. The law of Moses was but a type and a shadow of a greater law that Christ would bring, a law that is to be written in our hearts and minds, that will enable us to really live up to them. We must believe God and obey Him and the Word of His Son, even as Abraham believed and obeyed God. Christ sits on His throne of intercession as our great High Priest, and is able to save completely and perfectly all who come unto God through Him. Jesus died for our sins and rose again in power and glory and passed into the heavens. He came into this world in a body prepared for Him, and He was faithful to fully accomplish the will of God. He was obedient to His Father in going to the cross and giving His life. Through Him we can enter into the heavenly life of holiness and communion with God. We can join the ranks of the faithful of all ages, and in that last great day be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and thus ever be with Him. Behold what a heritage we have in Jesus Christ our Lord!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We rejoice in the knowledge today that Jesus has entered into the heavens and sits at the right hand of God. We are so thankful that He intercedes for us and has obtained the audience of our heavenly Father. We praise Him for His righteousness, justice and fairness when dealing with mankind. He heareth the widows' pleas and the sinners' requests for mercy. His heart is moved with compassion for those who are suffering affliction and He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He weeps with the one who has lost a loved one when their heart is overwhelmed with grief. He hears the cry of the abused child and the moans of the one languishing in despair. The homeless and the orphans do not escape His notice. The pitiful petitions of those suffering from broken hearts and broken marriages likewise ascend to His throne and touch His heart.

Oh, that we could be more like Christ and be moved with the things that move Him. That we could be touched with the cries that reach His ears and by those things that rest heavily upon His heart. Surely we would respond differently than the callous hearts of those around us. Surely we would be more liberal than the ones who are infatuated with the pleasures of this world and have little concern for the pain of others.

If we would truly be like Christ, and desire to walk the path that ascends to the portals of Glory, then we are going to have to come to grips with some real issues. Selfish ambitions and desires must be placed on the altar of consecration. Our hearts must be conformed to the spirit of Christ and His Word must have a predominate place in our lives. Sin must not reign any longer in our mortal bodies. When we are like Christ, we must realize that the same enemy that hated Him will also hate us. Those spirits that motivated the evil society Jesus lived in are still ruling the lives of the wicked today, and they will treat us no more benevolently than they did Him. Those who are being abused today have an abuser, and that abuser will not love us when we stand for what is right and just. May God help us to stand true in the face of evil opposition and be willing to bear the reproach of Christ. —Bro. Willie E. Murphey

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