

Hebrews Chapter 4

Verses 1-10: The second section of the writer's exposition of (Psalm 95:7-11), goes beyond the description of unbelief and its dire consequences (3:12-19), to define the nature of the "rest" which the disobedient had forfeited. The first section had dealt primarily with (Psalm 95:7-8); the second section deals primarily with (Psalm 95:11).

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."

"Promise": This is the first use of this important word in Hebrews. The content of this promise is defined as "entering His rest."

"His rest": This is the rest which God gives, therefore it is called "My rest" (Psalm 95:11), and "His rest." For believers, God's rest includes His peace, confidence of salvation, reliance on His strength, and assurance of a future heavenly home (Matt. 11:29).

"Come short": The entire phrase could be translated "lest you think you have come too late to enter into the rest of God" (12:15). With reverential fear, all are to examine their own spiritual condition (1 Cor. 10:12; 2 Cor. 13:5), and to actively press for commitment on the part of others (Jude 23).

We will see in many Scriptures throughout the Bible that it is possible for a person to have walked with God, and then turned their back on God and missed heaven. The best example is of course, Judas Iscariot. One of the best explained Scriptures of a person missing the Promised Land because of backsliding is:

Numbers 14:34 "After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, [even] forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, [even] forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise."

Numbers 32:13 "And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed."

The Promised Land of God is not for the sinful man, whether it be the Holy land promised to the descendants of Abraham in the flesh, or whether it be his descendants in the spirit, (Christians).

The thing that concerns me in our society today is that too many people believe that just the fact that they were baptized will get them to heaven.

They are really not living in the will of God. They act as if they have purchased their (fire insurance), and they will go ahead and live just like all the other people in the world. They

believe that they are safe, because they have made that one-time confession of faith. Salvation is a day to day walk. We will either grow stronger in the Lord each day, or we will return to sin.

This next few Scriptures in Jesus' own words tell it all.

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Matthew 25:1-12 "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." "And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish." "They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:" "But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps." "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." "Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps." "And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." "But the wise answered, saying, [Not so]; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us." "But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

This leaves absolutely no doubt that our walk with God is every day until He returns.

Hebrews 4:2 "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]."

“Faith”: Mere knowledge of God’s message is not sufficient. It must be appropriated by saving faith. Later in the epistle a much longer exposition will take up this topic of faith (10:19-12:29).

The writer’s point of comparison is that, like the Jews who left Egypt (3:16-19), his generation had also received God’s message through the preaching of the gospel, they had been evangelized.

I truly believe, that all who are the true ministers of God desire, more than they desire life itself, to see everyone saved.

1 Corinthians 1:21 "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

There are two things that happen when we preach. Some, who hear the Word of God, receive it unto salvation: others do not receive it and are damned. We see in the next few verses that God

sent the message first to His chosen family. When they refused it, then God sent it to the unbelieving world that all who would receive His message might live.

1 Thessalonians 2:12-13 "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:"

Hebrews 4:3 "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."

“We ... enter”: Those who exercise faith in the message of God will enter into their spiritual rest. This is the corollary of (Psalm 95:11) which states the opposite side: that the unbeliever will not enter into the rest which God provides.

“Finished from the foundation of the world”: The spiritual rest which God gives is not something incomplete or unfinished. It is a rest which is based upon a finished work which God purposed in eternity past, just like the rest which God took after He finished creation (verse 4).

“If they shall enter into my rest”: should be rendered exactly as it was (in 3:11): “They shall not enter into my rest.”

Revelation 20:4 "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received [his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

We see in this next Scripture that God Himself established 6 days of work and one day of rest. It really does not matter whether this day is 24 hours or one thousand years.

Exodus 20:11 "For [in] six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them [is], and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

One of the greatest promises that Jesus made was the rest for the believer. We find this in His own words (in Matthew 11:28-29).

"Come unto me, all [ye] that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Verses 4-5: By way of explanation for the statement in verse 3, the writer cites the illustration of the seventh day of creation and quotes (Gen. 2:2). Then he repeats the last part of (Psalm 95:11).

Hebrews 4:4-5 "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." "And in this [place] again, If they shall enter into my rest."

We cannot say enough about this rest of the Lord. Work for the night cometh, when no work can be done.

John 9:4 "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

Verses 6-9: "Today": Long after Israel's failure, David (in Psalm 95), was still looking for a rest in his own day. Likewise, the author of Hebrews uses that word repeatedly in this passage to declare that a rest can still be experienced. The reference to "Jesus" (in verse 8), is to Joshua of the Old Testament. The names Joshua and Jesus are identical in Hebrew and Greek.

The context certainly involves Joshua the son of Nun. Joshua brought the second generation into Canaan, and they did enter into a rest as the Scriptures record (Deut. 12:9-10; Josh. 21:44; 22:4; 23:1). Yet the author suggests that there must be a permanent, better rest for the people of God, or David would not have still been looking forward to it in his day.

Verses 6-7: The opportunity to enter God's rest remains open "a promise remains" (in verse 1). It is not yet too late. God had offered the rest to His people in Moses' time and continued to offer it in David's time. He is still patiently inviting His people to enter His rest (Rom. 10:21).

Quoting (Psalm 95:7-8), once again (see 3:7, 15), the author urges an immediate, positive response. The themes of urgency and obedience are thus combined in a clear invitation to the readers.

Hebrews 4:6 "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:"

Abraham believed, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. There is only one way to heaven and this rest with our Lord Jesus Christ. We must believe, not only with our mind but in our heart, the Lord Jesus.

Hebrews 11:6 "But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

One of the best Scriptures, in all the Bible on this is:

Romans 10:10. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Matthew 21:43 "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

Jesus came to His own in power and great glory and they did not receive Him. John 1:11 "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

We know that Jesus did everything He could to show them who He was and they just did not believe. Their lack of belief opened the door for the Gentiles to receive salvation.

Romans 11:11 "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but [rather] through their fall salvation [is come] unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy."

Hebrews Chapter 4 Questions

1. What lesson are we to learn from Hebrews chapter 4 verse 1?
2. Who is the best example of someone walking with God and then turning against Him?
3. Where in the Scriptures, do we find a people losing their chance to enter the Promised Land for backsliding?
4. The Promised Land of God is not for whom?
5. Why did God make the doubters wander 40 years?
6. What is the thing that concerns the author in our society today?
7. What does Matthew 7:22 tell us about those who profess Christianity, who do not really live it?
8. Who are all 10 virgins in Matthew chapter 25 symbolic of?
9. Why were 5 of them not acceptable to Jesus?
10. Who are the "them", in Hebrews 4:3?
11. Why did the message given not become profitable to them?
12. The world by wisdom knew _____ .
13. What are the two things that happen when we preach?
14. God hath chosen you from the beginning to salvation through what?
15. For how long have the works of salvation been done?
16. What does Revelation 20:4 say the Christians will be doing, during the thousand year rest?
17. Who established the 6 days of work and one day of rest?
18. What is one of the most wonderful promises Jesus made the believer, found in Matthew chapter 11?
19. What caused the people of the earth to have to work the land for a living for the last approx. 6000 years?
20. Where do we find the Scripture that a day can be as a thousand years with God?
21. When is the return of the Son of man?
22. Abraham's _____ made him righteous in the sight of God.
23. He that cometh to God must _____ .
24. Without what, it is impossible to please God?
25. With the _____ man believeth unto righteousness: and with the _____ confession is made unto salvation.
26. What did the Jew do, that opened the door to the Gentile for salvation?

Hebrews Chapter 4 Continued

Hebrews 4:7 "Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

Those who hear the Word of God have an obligation to receive the Word. God will not always strive with man. God offered salvation to the Jew first, but when they refused to accept it, He turned from them and sent the message to the Gentiles, who readily accepted it.

God deals with each of us on an individual basis. There is a time when God will say, That is enough, and will not call us any longer. We must accept salvation, the day it is offered.

2 Corinthians 6:2 "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation".

How can we neglect so great salvation, knowing that today might be the last time it is offered to us?

Verses 8-10: God's true rest did not come through Joshua or Moses, but through Jesus Christ; who is greater than either one. Joshua led the nation of Israel into the land of their promised rest. However, that was merely the earthly rest which was only the shadow of what was involved in the heavenly rest.

The very fact that (according to Psalm 95), God was still offering His rest in the time of David (long after Israel had been in the Land), meant that the rest being offered was spiritual, superior to that which Joshua obtained. Israel's earthly rest was filled with the attacks of enemies and the daily cycle of work.

The heavenly rest is characterized by the fullness of heavenly promise (Eph. 1:3), and the absence of any labor to obtain it.

Hebrews 4:8 "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day."

This is just explaining that this day of rest offered to the believers is not for their time here in the flesh, but is a promise of things to happen in the future at the second coming of Christ. This time of rest is not for the world to experience, but for those who endure to the end, and remain faithful.

Acts 14:22 "Confirming the souls of the disciples, [and] exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

1

Verses 9-11: "Rest": involves more than mere inactivity. It follows the satisfactory completion of a task. Salvation-rest is the gift to the believer, resulting from Christ's finished work (Romans 5:1-2).

Hebrews 4:9 "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

"Rest": A different Greek word for "rest" meaning "Sabbath rest" is introduced here, and this is its only appearance in the New Testament. The writer chose the word to draw the readers' attention back to the "seventh day" (mentioned in verse 4), and to set up the explanation in verse 10 ("rested from his works, as God did for His").

This means that the people of God will have a time when they cease from labor. In fact all of the troubles of this sinful world will be no more for those who have chosen Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Revelation 7:14-17 "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat." "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Hebrews 4:10 "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God [did] from his."

Revelation 14:13 "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed [are] the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

We know that after we are dead we can do no work for the Lord. We must do our work while we are alive, because after we are dead, it is too late. Work is for this earth, and the rewards come in heaven, as we see in Jesus' own words in the next Scripture.

Revelation 22:12 "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward [is] with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

The earth, and heaven, and all therein contained were created in 6 days and God rested; Jesus worked 6 hours on the cross, and now is resting, sitting at the right hand of the Father. We, also, will rest with Him at the right hand of the throne, if we continue in the faith of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 3:21 "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

2

Verses 11-13: The concluding third part of the exposition of (Psalm 95:7-11), emphasizes the accountability which comes to those who have heard the Word of God. Scripture records the examples of those in the wilderness with Moses, those who entered Canaan with Joshua, and those who received the same opportunity in David's day. It is the Word which must be believed and obeyed and the Word which will judge the disobedient (1 Cor. 10:5-13).

Hebrews 4:11 "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

2 Peter 1:10 "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:" "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

The sad thing sometimes, is that some who start out with Jesus do not remain steadfast. When troubles come, they falter. Trials of this world have a way of separating those who truly belong to God, from those who are just pretenders.

Verses 12-13: "For the word of God:" The reason given for one's careful scrutiny of his life involves the reality that God is intently scrutinizing it. His word is "Quick" (living). This word is first in the Greek and is the emphasis.

God's Word is not old or archaic; it is alive. It is not inept or inactive; it is "powerful" (active). It reaches into the inner secrets of man's mind to discern even his "thoughts and intents." Likewise, God's eye sees man as though he were naked, unable to hide behind excuse or pretense.

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

"Twoedged sword": While the Word of God is comforting and nourishing to those who believe, it is a tool of judgment and execution for those who have not committed themselves to Jesus Christ.

Some of the Hebrews were merely going through the motions of belonging to Christ. Intellectually, they were at least partly persuaded, but inside they were not committed to Him. God's Word would expose their shallow beliefs and even their false intentions (1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Pet. 4-5).

"Dividing asunder of soul and spirit": These terms do not describe two separate entities (any more than "thoughts and intentions" do), but are used as one might say "heart and soul" to express fullness (Luke 10:27; Acts 4:32; 1 Thess. 5:23). Elsewhere these two terms are used interchangeably to describe man's immaterial self, his eternal inner person.

3

Throughout the Bible, we are taught that the weapon of the Christian is their Bible; the Twoedged Sword. Christians are in a battle between the flesh and the Spirit. You might even say that this war is between the world and God's people. Christians make up God's army. The object of this war is the salvation of the people. We are in the last hours of battle.

True Christians must put on their uniform and come forward to the front lines. Our uniform is the same one mentioned (in the 6th chapter of Ephesians), except we have patches on our knees from praying.

Ephesians 6:13-18 "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;" "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

We must keep our powder dry. We must not water down the Word of God as many of the new Bibles do. Some are watered down to the extent that Jesus is no longer God. The battle is in the last hours and all good soldiers of the Lord are needed in His army now. This army must be willing to fight to the death, if necessary. There is no time left for fun and games, we are at war.

The heart of man is really what he is. If you have a wicked heart, then you are a wicked man, if you have a good heart you are a good man.

Luke 6:45 "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."

Sometimes to be a Christian, a person has to give up family and friends. Christianity divides families sometimes. The two great powers in the world are the spoken and the written Word. The power of God is in His Word.

Hebrews 4:13 "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."

“Opened unto the eyes of him”: “Open”: is a specialized term used just this one time in the New Testament. It originally meant to expose the neck either in preparation for sacrifice or for beheading. Perhaps the use of “sword” in the previous verse triggered the term.

Everyone, is judged not only by the Word of God (John 12:48), but by God Himself. We are accountable to the living, written Word (John 6:63, 68; Acts 7:38), and to the living God who is its author.

God knows not only what you have done, but He knows your thoughts and He knows the desires of your heart. His eyes look into the very soul of man.

4

1 Peter 3:12 "For the eyes of the Lord [are] over the righteous, and his ears [are open] unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord [is] against them that do evil."

Verses 14-15: At this point the author begins his discussion of Christ as “high priest”. His priestly ministry is far superior to any other priests, because of the intercession He provides. The earthly high priest, with fear, once a year gained access to the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies; Christ not only has access to but is seated in the very presence of God the father.

Yet, prior to this position, He partook of man’s nature and temptations so that He might sympathize (2:14-18), “yet without sin”. To imagine that since Jesus could not sin He could not suffer, misses the point of the passage. Temptation can be a reality apart from sin.

“God cannot be “tempted with evil” (James 1:13), yet God is tried or tempted (Greek peirazo), by men (3:9; Acts 15:10). Yet, beyond the statements of this passage, He who was God, though made like man, could not sin (being impeccable); and indeed, He need not sin to be human.

Before Adam sinned, he was completely human. The glorified saint will never again be able to sin, yet he remains human. Temptation is greatest in duration and intensity when one does not accept the “easy” way out by sinning. If man’s temptation is greater when he endures it, surely Christ’s was great since He had no alternative in His humanity, but to endure it.

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."

“Passed into the heavens”: Just as the High-Priest under the Old Covenant passed through 3 areas (the outer court, the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies), to make the atoning sacrifice, Jesus passed through 3 heavens, the atmospheric heaven, the stellar heaven and God’s abode; (2 Cor. 12:2-4), after making the perfect, final sacrifice.

Once a year on the Day of Atonement, the High-Priest of Israel would enter the Holy of Holies to make atonement for the sins of the people (Lev. 16). That tabernacle was only a limited copy of the heavenly reality (8:1-5).

When Jesus entered into the heavenly Holy of Holies, having accomplished redemption, the earthly facsimile was replaced by the reality of heaven itself. Freed from that which is earthly, the Christian faith is characterized by the heavenly (3:1; Eph. 1:3; 2:6; Phil. 3:20; Col. 1:5; 1 Peter 1:4).

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

Hebrews 9:12 "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]."

5

Romans 8:34 "Who [is] he that condemneth? [It is] Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

These Scriptures above tell us that Jesus Christ is the High Priest for all believers. He is our way into the holy of holies. He is constantly pleading our case to the Father. Jesus' sacrifice of His body on the cross was our payment for all time. He is our High Priest forever.

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

"Tempted like as we are": The writer here adds to his statements (in 2:18), that Jesus was sinless. He was able to be tempted (Matt. 4:1-11), but not able to sin.

Impeccability of Christ: Two words, temptability and impeccability, describe Christ in His temptation. The basic idea of temptability is "to be appealed to." Christ was in this sense tempted, but He was not tempted with evil nor was He tempted by evil desires (James 1:13).

As God, He could not be tempted with evil. The word impeccability means Christ as God could not have sinned. The comparative attributes of God made it impossible for him to sin when He was tempted.

As you read about Christ's temptation, notice that He did not rely on His attributes, but on the Word of God to resist the temptation of Satan. In this same way, the Christian today can overcome temptation (Psalm 119:9-11).

Jesus Christ the Righteous "our Lord", took on flesh so that He might relate to us in our flesh. Jesus fasted 40 days and was tempted by the devil. Jesus Christ was the only one who ever lived above sin.

Philippians 2:7-8 "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:" "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

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

"Come boldly unto the throne of grace": Most ancient rulers were unapproachable by anyone but their highest advisers (Esther 4:11). In contrast, the Holy Spirit calls for all to come confidently before God's throne to receive mercy and grace through Jesus Christ (7:25; 10:22; Matt. 27:51).

The Ark of the Covenant was viewed as the place on earth where God sat enthroned between the cherubim (2 Kings 19:15; Jer. 3:16-17). Oriental thrones included a footstool, yet another metaphor for the ark (Psalm

132:7). It was at the throne of God that Christ made atonement for sins, and it is there that grace is dispensed to believers for all the issues of life (2 Cor. 4:15; 9:8; 12:9; Eph. 1:7; 2:7).

6

“Grace to you” became a standard greeting among believers who celebrated this provision (Rom. 1:7; 16:20, 24; 1 Cor. 1:3; 16:23; 2 Cor. 1:2; 13:14; Gal. 1:3; 6:18; Eph. 1:2; 6:24; Phil. 1:2; 4:18; Col. 1:2; 4:18; 1 Thess. 1:1; 5:28; 2 Thess. 1:2; 3:18; 1 Tim. 1:2; 6:21; 2 Tim. 1:2; 4:22; Titus 1:4; 3:15; Philemon. 3, 25).

Only Christianity provides such boldness for sinful men before a holy God, and that boldness is possible only because of our High Priest. The figure of a “throne” suggests place of authority and provision. It is the place to obtain God’s grace when it is especially needed.

Jesus Christ tore down the curtain separating God from mankind when He died on the cross.

Matthew 27:51 "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;"

The way to the Father is provided through the name of Jesus. Jesus gave us the right to use His name. We pray to the Father in the name of Jesus. When we pray in the name of Jesus, God answers our prayers.

John 14:13-14 "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]."

Hebrews Chapter 4 Continued Questions

1. What is the warning given in Hebrews 4:7?
2. What is the obligation of those hearing the Word of God?
3. When is the acceptable time of salvation?
4. When is this day of rest for the believers?
5. We must through much _____ enter the kingdom of God.
6. These who have come out of great tribulation have done what to make them righteous?
7. Who is the Lamb?
8. Describe the problems that we had on earth, that we will have no more in heaven.
9. Work is for the earth, and what is in heaven?
10. God is going to give us according to what?
11. How long did Jesus work on the cross?
12. Who will sit with Jesus on His throne?
13. What is a sad thing about some Christians?
14. What is the Word of God called in Hebrews 4:12?
15. The battle that Christians are in is between whom?
16. What is the object of this war?
17. What is the difference in our uniform, and the one in Ephesians chapter 6?
18. Describe the uniform in chapter 6 of Ephesians.
19. What is meant by keeping our powder dry?
20. Why is there no time for fun and games?
21. Out of the abundance of the heart the _____.
22. The power of God is in His _____.
23. The eyes of the Lord are over the _____.
24. Who is Jesus called in Hebrews 4:14?
25. With what did Jesus acquire eternal redemption for us?

26. Why is Jesus able to relate to our feelings?
27. Jesus was obedient to what extent?
28. Where do we read that the veil of the temple was torn from the top to the bottom?
29. When did this occur?
30. What was the purpose of the veil being torn?

Hebrews Chapter 5

Verses 1-10: Three qualifications for the Levitical priest are presented (in verses 1-4). First, he must minister in behalf of other men by offering “sacrifices for sins”. Second, he must have “compassion” on those who inadvertently sin out of ignorance. Third, he must be appointed by or “called of God”.

No angel or supernatural power could serve as High-Priest. Only men with the weaknesses of humanity could serve as High-Priest (verse 2; 7:28). The position of High-Priest in the Levitical system was by appointment only. No man could legitimately appoint himself High-Priest. The use of the present tense in these verses would seem to indicate that the Levitical system still was being practiced at the time of this epistle.

In (verses 5-10), the author demonstrates that Christ meets these requirements. He reverses the order showing. First, Christ’s divine appointment (verses 5-6), second in (verses 7-8), His compassion, probably relating His Gethsemane experience (Mark 14:32-42). And third (in verses 9-10), His perfect offering for sin.

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:"

“Gifts and sacrifices”: The first term might refer especially to the grain offerings under the Old Covenant, which were for thanksgiving or dedication. That would leave the second term to refer to blood offerings for the expiation of sins (see Lev. 1-5).

However, “gifts” is used (in 8:4), to refer to all the various sacrifices (8:3). The 3 occurrences of the phrase in the New Testament (8:3; 9:9), employ a Greek construction which expresses a closer relationship between the two terms than is normally indicated by the word “and.” This could indicate that no distinction should be made between the terms, and the “for sins”, should be taken with both.

We know that the high priest in the temple was the only one to go into the most holy place. He was not to go in unworthily, and he must carry the blood with him into the most holy place. This blood was not only for the people, but for his sins, as well.

The high priest was the representative of the people to God. God spoke to the people through the Urim and Thummim which was behind the breastplate worn by the high priest. This was symbolic of God speaking to the people through the heart of the high priest. The people had no direct contact with God at this time, but were represented by the high priest.

Hebrews 5:2 "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."

“Have compassion”: This verb occurs only here in the New Testament. It carries the idea of maintaining a controlled but gentle attitude in the treatment of those who are spiritually ignorant

and wayward. Impatience, loathing, and indignation have no part in priestly ministry. Such moderation and gentleness comes from realizing one’s own human frailty. The priest would be reminded of his own sinful humanity every time he offered sacrifices for his own sins (verse 3).

The high priest was not a perfect man, but was chosen of God to represent the people. Aaron was a good example of the weakness of the high priests. He was the first high priest. Even though he was chosen of God for this job, and had actually heard the voice of God, he still built the golden calf which God had forbidden.

Moses was gone to the top of the mountain to receive the 10 commandments from God. Aaron and the people decided that he was not coming back, and they did this terrible thing. We find that Aaron's 2 oldest sons were no better than he was. God killed them for their sin.

Leviticus 10:1 "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not."

Numbers 3:4 "And Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered in the priest's office in the sight of Aaron their father."

Most people believe this strange fire, that they offered was that they were drunk when they made the offering. This is not in the Bible, however. Some of the other sons of high priests sinned and were killed, but we have already covered that here. It is enough to say these were not perfect men.

Hebrews 5:3 "And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins."

This Scripture should cover this fact that even the high priest was many times guilty of sin.

Leviticus 4:3 "If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering."

Hebrews 5:4 "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as [was] Aaron."

“Called of God”: A High-Priest was selected and called by God into service (Exodus 28; Num. 16:1-40; 1 Sam. 16:1-3).

Ministry, for the priest, or for preachers today, should not be undertaken as a profession. Those who minister must be called of God. To go into the ministry without God calling you to that job, would be a sin.

2 Chronicles 26:18 "And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, [It appertaineth] not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither [shall it be] for thine honor from the LORD God."

This Old Testament Scripture shows that not even a king could take it upon himself to minister in the temple; God is the only one who can ordain someone to minister. I will give one New Testament Scripture on this and then go on.

John 3:27 "John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven."

We see that even the Christians must be called to be God's children.

1 Thessalonians 2:12 "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."

Verses 5-6: With the quotations of (Psalms 2:7 and 110:4), the writer demonstrates that Christ's Sonship and His priesthood were both by divine appointment (John 8:54). That means that the two titles are titles of

subordination, the subordination not being in regard to essence or nature (John 10:30; 14:9, 11), but in regard to the fulfillment of the program of redemption.

Neither office diminishes the eternal deity of Christ or the equality of the Trinity. Both offices had a beginning. It is noteworthy that (Psalm 2), recognized the Son as both King and Messiah. Christ is the King-Priest.

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

There are so many Scriptures that pertain to this, that it is difficult to choose just one or two. Jesus Christ (for His stay on earth), was the Son of God. In heaven, He is the Word of God. We know that the birth of Jesus was not a natural birth. Jesus was born of a virgin. The Holy Spirit hovered over Mary and she conceived of the Spirit of God.

It was planned by the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost from the foundation of the world for Jesus to die for the sin of the people. In fact, not only did Jesus not glorify Himself, but all 3 of the Godhead glorified Him. The people were the Word's creation, so it was only proper for Him to save them.

John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "The same was in the beginning with God." "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

We can easily see from this that not only are we all, the creation of the Word of God, but that Word took on the form of flesh and dwelt among us as Jesus Christ, The Son of God. He took the name of Jesus, for His stay on the earth, because Jesus means Savior.

Hebrews 5:6 "As he saith also in another [place], Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec."

(Quoted from Psalm 110:4), from which this whole section is expounded.

This Melchizedec is the same as Melchizedek in the Old Testament. The name is different, because the Old and New Testaments are translated from different languages. This Melchizedek has been a mystery for thousands of years.

Genesis 14:18 "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he [was] the priest of the most high God."

This Melchizedek appeared to only one man that we know of, and that man was Abraham; the father of all the believers. For us to be a spiritual son or daughter of Abraham, he would have to believe the same thing we do.

If this Melchizedec is an appearance of our Lord, then he would believe the same as believers do. This Melchizedek appeared approximately 2000 years after the birth of Adam. Jesus the Christ Child appears approximately 2000 years after this happening. The King of kings and Lord of lords will appear about 2000 years after the birth of Jesus.

Abraham paid tithes to this High Priest. This High Priest served Abraham the same elements that Jesus served the disciples at the Last Supper, bread and wine.

The Melchizedekian priesthood is discussed in detail (in chapter 7).

Hebrews Chapter 5 Questions

1. What are the 2 things the high priest does for the people in verse 1?
2. Who was the only person allowed to go into the most holy place in the temple?
3. What must he carry with him when he goes into the most holy place?
4. Through what, did God speak to the people?
5. Was the high priest a perfect man?

6. Who is a vivid description of how bad the high priest does sin sometimes?
7. What did He do?
8. What did Aaron's sons do, that was displeasing to God?
9. How did God punish them?
10. Was the high priest above the law?
11. What was the high priest's sin offering?
12. How did they become high priest?
13. Should our ministers today preach for the purpose of making a living?
14. Where do we find the Scripture that tells us it was wrong for a king to do the duties of priest in the temple?
15. Who actually glorified Jesus as High Priest?
16. Why was it important for Jesus to be the one to save us?
17. When was the plan made to save us by the way of the cross?
18. How do we know that the Word is Jesus?
19. What does the name Jesus mean?
20. Jesus was a priest after the order of whom?
21. What is the author's opinion of who this is?
22. Who was the only man that Melchizedek appeared to?
23. Approximately how many years after Adam's birth did He appear?
24. What two elements did He feed Abraham?
25. What did Abraham do that showed Melchizedek's priesthood?
26. What does Melchizedek mean?
27. Why was it important for Abraham to see Him and believe He existed?
28. How many different names in the Bible indicate Jesus?
29. Who is THE KING OF PEACE?

Hebrews Chapter 6

The readers are encouraged to go on to maturity by leaving the elementary teachings of the Word. The word for “perfection” (Greek teleiotes), has both an absolute and a relative sense. Its relative sense involving maturity is expressed here.

The six representative doctrines listed here involve three sets: the elementary teachings concerning conversion itself, the post-conversion experiences, and teachings on “last things.” Eschatology is included here among the first truths, rather than as deeper truth.

The mere study of last things does not demonstrate spiritual maturity. The practical changes these eschatological truths produce manifest maturity.

Fundamentalism is a movement growing out of the controversy with religious liberalism at the beginning of this century, when godly Christian leaders insisted that certain truths were fundamental to Christianity and could not be compromised.

This included divine substitutionary atonement, bodily resurrection, and physical return, and the existence of a literal heaven and hell. Though good Christians might disagree in other areas, to deny these essentials is to abandon the Christian faith.

History records the sad accounts of some who refused to accept scriptural authority and made shipwrecks of their faith. For example, Diotrephes opposed an epistle from John, and then began harming the ministry of faithful Christians under his influence (3 John 9-10). Christians are wise to build their lives and ministries upon the solid foundation of Christ's teaching (Matt. 7:24-25).

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

“Leaving”: This “leaving” does not mean to despise or abandon the basic doctrines. They are the place to start, not stop. They are the gate of entrance on the road to salvation in Christ.

“Principles of the doctrine of Christ”: As “the oracles of God” (in 5:12), refers to the Old Testament, so does this phrase. The writer is referring to basic Old Testament teaching that prepared the way for Messiah, the beginning teaching about Christ. This Old Testament “teaching” includes the 6 features listed (in verses 1-2).

“Go on unto perfection”: Salvation by faith in Messiah Jesus. The verb is passive, so as to indicate “let us be carried to salvation.” That is not a matter of learners being carried by teachers, but both being carried forward by God. The writer warns his Jewish readers that there is no value in stopping with the Old Testament basics and repeating (“laying again”), what was only intended to be foundational.

“Repentance from dead works”: This Old Testament form of repentance is the turning away from evil deeds that bring death. (Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23), and turning to God. Too often the Jew only turned to God in a superficial fashion, fulfilling the letter of the law as evidence of his repentance. The inner man was still dead (Matt. 23:25-28; Rom. 2:28-29).

Such repentance was not the kind which brought salvation (verse 6; 12:17; Acts 11:18; 2 Cor. 7:10). Under the New Covenant, however, “repentance ... toward God” is coupled with “faith in our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). Christ's atoning sacrifice saves from “dead works” (9:14; John 14:6).

“Faith toward God”: Faith directed only toward the Father is unacceptable without faith in His Son, Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; James 2:14-20).

Hebrews 6:2 "Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."

In the Old Testament Levitical system, there were many ceremonial cleansings, which were outward signs of heart cleansing (Exodus 3):18-21; Lev. 16:4, 24, 26, 28; Mark 7:4, 8). The New Covenant called for an inner washing (Titus 3:5), that regenerated the soul.

“Laying on of hands”: Under the Old Covenant, the person who brought a sacrifice placed his hands on it to symbolize his identification with it as a substitute for sin (Lev. 1:4; 3:8, 13; 16:21). There could also be a reference here to solemn priestly blessings (Matt. 19:13).

“Resurrection ... eternal judgment”: The Pharisee believed in the resurrection from the dead (Acts 23:8), but were still spiritually dead (Matt. 23:27). They also believed in the judgment of God and were headed for it. It is significant that all of the doctrines listed (in verses 1-2), can be associated with the Pharisees, who were attracted to and sometimes associated with Jesus (Luke 7:36-50; 13:31; 14:1; John 3:1).

Paul was a Pharisee before his conversion (Phil. 3:5). The Pharisees were products of the pursuit of righteousness by works of the law rather than by faith (Rom 9:30-32; 10:1-3). A portion of the Hebrews to whom this epistle was written may have been Pharisees.

We see from this, that basic Christianity includes repentance of sins, being baptized into new life, receiving the promise of the resurrection, being warned of the judgment to come, and even includes the laying on of hands by the presbytery whereby we receive the gifts, of the Holy Spirit. You might say then, what is left that is not basic?

This is where we walk in the knowledge of God producing fruit fit for the kingdom. We have already been saved, now it is time for us to work for the Lord in whatever job He has for us to do. We will find, that we, like the disciples of old, have been given a commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

I said in a previous lesson, that all who have passed beyond the basic Christianity and who have studied and know the Word of God, are obligated to teach those who do not know. This next Scripture tells us exactly what God would have us to do.

Matthew 28:19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"

We are in a war with the devil. We must do our best to win our young people back to God, before the devil enlists them.

Hebrews 6:3 "And this will we do, if God permit."

“Will we do”: The writer is likely both giving his own testimony about going on from Old Testament teaching to embrace the New Covenant in Jesus Christ, and also identifying himself with the readers. Salvation always requires God’s enablement (John 6:44).

Almost everyone who is studying this Bible study has already gone beyond the step of basic Christianity. We are all seeking for the deeper truths which the Holy Spirit of God teaches us.

The most important statement in this short verse above is, “if God permit”. Without His permission, we would not even wake in the morning. The first thing for a true Christian to do, is turn our will over to God.

James 4:15 "For that ye [ought] to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."

Verses 4-6: This passage does not teach that one can lose his salvation through disbelief or apostasy. These verses refer to a hypothetical situation whereby the author stresses what would happen to a saved person if he could fall away.

The author does not believe one can lose his salvation or that his readers had (verse 9); but he so speaks to demonstrate the folly some might have in imagining that they can turn back to Judaism without suffering loss. Though the author is not writing about his readers (verse 4; “those”), he still is writing for their sakes (verse 9; “you”).

“If they shall fall away” is the translation given to the fifth participle of the passage. This is a legitimate and even grammatical usage by the author within the warning passages (2:3; 10:26; and even 6:8). The first four participles refer to actual blessings whereas number five describes a potential situation, and so can be translated unlike the first four.

The important point about Hebrews 6 is that it agrees with the general tenor of Scripture concerning the security of the born-again believer. One basis for the security of the believer involves the promises recorded in God’s Word (verses 18-20; 7:24-25; 8:12; 10:10-14; John 10:28-30; Rom. 8:28-39; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; Phil. 1:6; 1 John 5:13).

Yet, an even stronger basis for security is found within the nature of the new life God gives. Though conversion involves man’s will, it is God’s will that produces regeneration (John 1:13).

Thus, salvation is infinitely more than a decision that one can make and then break. It is the work of God that transforms one from darkness to light (1 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:13), from death to life (John 5:24), from a child of the Devil to a son of God (Rom. 8:14-17).

It is a completed, regenerating work (10:14; Eph. 2:8 “you are saved,” or “you have been saved and stand saved”, Greek perfect tense).

Verses 4-6: Five advantages possessed by the Jews are yet insufficient for their salvation.

Hebrews 6:4 "For [it is] impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,"

“Enlightened”: They had received instruction in biblical truth which was accompanied by intellectual perception. Understanding the gospel is not the equivalent of regeneration (10:26, 32). (In John 1:9), it is clear that enlightening is not the equivalent of salvation (10:29).

“Tasted of the heavenly gift”: Tasting in the figurative sense in the New Testament refers to consciously experiencing something (2:9). The experience might be momentary or continuing. Christ’s “tasting” of death (2:9), was obviously momentary and not continuing or permanent. All men experience the goodness of God, but that does not mean they are all saved (Matt. 5:45; Acts 17:25).

Many Jews, during the Lord’s earthly ministry experienced the blessings from heaven He brought, in healings and deliverance from demons, as well as eating the food He created miraculously (John 6). Whether the gift refers to Christ (John 6:51; 2 Cor. 9:15), or to the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 1:12), experiencing either one was not the equivalent of salvation (John 16:8; Acts 7:51).

“Partakers of the Holy Ghost”: Even though the concept of partaking is used (in 3:1; 3:14; and 12:8), of a relationship which believers have, the context must be the final determining factor. This context (in verses 4-6), seems to preclude a reference to true believers.

It could be a reference to their participation, as noted above, in the miraculous ministry of Jesus who was empowered by the Spirit or in the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8), which obviously can be resisted without experiencing salvation (Acts 7:51).

Hebrews 6:5 "And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,"

“Tasted”: This has an amazing correspondence to what was described (in 2:1-4). Like Simon Magus (Acts 8:9-24), these Hebrews had not yet been regenerated, despite all they had heard and

seen (Matt. 13:3-9; John 6:60-66). They were repeating the sins of those who died in the wilderness after seeing the miracles performed through Moses and Aaron and hearing the voice of God at Sinai.

Hebrews 6:6 "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."

“Shall fall away”: This Greek term occurs only here in the New Testament. In the LXX, it was used to translate terms for severe unfaithfulness and apostasy (Ezek. 14:13; 18:24; 20:27). It is equivalent to the apostasy (in 3:12). The seriousness of this unfaithfulness is seen in the severe description of rejection within this verse: they re-crucify Christ and treat Him contemptuously.

Those who sinned against Christ in such a way had no hope of restoration or forgiveness (2:2-3; 10:26-27; 12:25). The reason is that they had rejected Him with full knowledge and conscious experience (as described in the features of verses 5-6). With full revelation, they rejected the truth, concluding the opposite of the truth about Christ, and thus had no hope of being saved.

They can never have more knowledge that they had when they rejected it. They have concluded that Jesus should have been crucified, and they stand with his enemies. There is no possibility of these verses referring to losing salvation.

Many Scripture passages make unmistakably clear that salvation is eternal (John 10:27-29; Rom. 8:35, 38-39; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:4-5). Those who want to make this verse mean that believers can lose salvation will have to admit that it would then also say that one could never get it back again.

John 15:6 "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast [them] into the fire, and they are burned."

To abide means to dwell continuously. It is not possible to have your name blotted out of the book of life. You have to be saved for your name to be written in the book of life. Read this Scripture and you will see it is very important to continue with Christ after you have received Him.

Revelation 3:5 "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

We must walk daily in the salvation that we have received.

Hebrews 10:29 "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" This says it all.

Verses 7-8: Here are illustrations showing that those who hear the gospel message and respond in faith are blessed; those who hear and reject it are cursed (Matt. 13:18-23).

Hebrews 6:7 "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:"

We hear so much about the devil being in control of the earth, but he has to get God's permission for what he does. Jesus is the ruler of the earth.

Philippians 2:10 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;"

Notice also, that God is the one who allows the rain.

Matthew 5:45 "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

We know that God withholds the rain, sometimes for years to cause repentance of the people.

Deuteronomy 11:17 "And [then] the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and [lest] ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you."

The earth receives the blessings of rain from God, just as our blessings come from God. We could go into this in greater detail by telling how Jesus told the sea to be still and it had to obey. Do not be deceived, God is in control of everything.

Hebrews 6:8 "But that which beareth thorns and briars [is] rejected, and [is] nigh unto cursing; whose end [is] to be burned."

“Rejected (or worthless)”. See the use of the term (in Rom. 1:28 “depraved”; 2 Cor. 13:5). “Fail the test”; and (2 Tim. 3:8), “rejected”.

The easiest way to explain this, is, by their fruits you shall know them. Thorns and briars are part of the curse on the ground when Adam fell. They are of no use to anyone, so their fate is burning to get rid of them.

Genesis 3:17-19 "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed [is] the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat [of] it all the days of thy life;" "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;" "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

We see here, that he is not just speaking of just plants which are thorns, but people, as well. As we said before, it is terribly important that we be doing the work God has called us to do. We

want Him to say when we stand before Him, Well done thy good and faithful servant. The fruit that should be showing in our life is spoken of in these next two verses.

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith," "Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

We can easily see from this what God has in mind for useless things. Are you a fruit bearer?

Hebrews 6:9 "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."

“Beloved”: This term shows a change of audience and a change from a message of warning to a message of encouragement. That the address is to believers is further confirmed by the expression of confidence that “better things” could be said of them (as compared to those who were being warned in the preceding verses).

The “things that accompany salvation” are their works which verify their salvation (verse 10; Eph. 2:10; James 2:18, 26). The very statement implies that the things described (in 5:11 - 6:5), do not accompany salvation but are indicative of unbelief and apostasy.

“Though we thus speak”: Though it had been necessary to speak about judgment in the preceding verses; the writer assures the “beloved”; those who are believers, that he is confident of their salvation.

We need to be working to get as many more people in the kingdom as we can, when the Lord returns. Some of us work in small places and may just have a few, but the angels in heaven rejoice when you bring one sinner to Jesus. There are a few more Scriptures here that I will give you on this subject.

Titus 2:11-14 "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;" "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;" "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Hebrews 6:10 "For God [is] not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

“Work and ... love”: 1 Thess. 1:3-4.

“Toward his name”: Throughout this epistle “name” has the Hebraic sense of the authority, character, and attributes of the Son of God (1:4) or of God the Father (2:12; 13:15; and John 14:13-14).

“Saints”: All true Christians are saints, or “holy ones” (13:24; Acts 9:13; Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2).

Everything we are doing in the name of the Lord here on the earth is being recorded right now in heaven. Your rewards will be in heaven. Jesus said, In as much as ye have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me. These Scriptures in Jesus' own words say it much better than I can.

Matthew 25:35-40 "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:" "Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." "Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed [thee]? or thirsty, and gave [thee] drink?" "When saw we thee a stranger, and took [thee] in? or naked, and clothed [thee]?" "Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done [it] unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done [it] unto me."

I will end this lesson by saying, if we are to be like our Savior (Jesus Christ), then we must forget about ourselves and the so-called pleasures of this world, and spend every extra moment telling someone about Jesus. Won't it be wonderful to see the people you brought to Christ in heaven? Lay up your treasures in heaven; not on this earth.

Hebrews Chapter 6 Questions

1. In Hebrew 6:1, we are told to leave the principles of doctrine and go on to what?
2. Name some of the things that are covered in basic Christianity.
3. When we go beyond basic Christianity, what is left?
4. What are we Christians, who have already received basic Christianity, and have studied the Word, obligated to do?
5. What are three very important words found in Hebrews 6:3?
6. What happens when a seasoned person, operating in full knowledge, chooses again a sinful way of life?
7. What does enlightened mean here?
8. This person spoken of in question 7, not only sins, but it is the desire of their _____ to sin.

9. John chapter 15 verse 6 says, what happens to those who do not abide in Jesus.

10. Who shall be clothed in white raiment in heaven?

11. Who is really in control of the earth?

12. Philippians 2:10 says, who must bow to the name of Jesus?

13. Who does God send rain on?

14. Where in Deuteronomy do we read that God would not let it rain because of His wrath? 15. In Hebrews chapter 6 verse 8, we read that worthless things shall be _____.

16. Who brought the curse of thorns and briars to the earth?

17. Are you a fruit bearer?

18. What fruit should be showing in a Christian's life?

19. How does Titus chapter 2 say we should live?

20. What are we Christians to be zealous of?

21. When will you reap the rewards for what you have done on earth?

22. What does the 25th chapter of Matthew teach about doing for others?

23. If we are to be like Jesus, what must we do?

24. Where should our treasures be?

Hebrews Chapter 6 Continued

Hebrews 6:11 "And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:"

“You”: The author is speaking again to unbelievers but appears to intentionally distance this particular group from the would-be apostates of (verses 4-6), who are in danger of being impossible to restore.

“Diligence”: This term can carry the idea of eagerness or haste. It is a plea for unbelieving Jews to come to Christ immediately. If these uncommitted Jews followed the example of the active faith of the saints (verses 9-10, 12); they would obtain the salvation which gives “full assurance of hope until the end” (10:22; Col. 2:2). Salvation should not be postponed.

In the last lesson, we were talking about the responsibility of the mature Christian. We are to work the work of a Christian right up until the hour the Lord returns. We sing a song here at the church I attend that says, “we'll work till Jesus comes”.

So many Christians are falling away today. Many think it is too hard. We are told in advance that in this life we will have tribulation.

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

In the next Scripture in Jesus' own words we find out just what we must do.

Matthew 24:13 "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Those who are weak in the faith will give up, and fall away.

1 Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Hebrews 6:12 "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

“Slothful”: The same Greek word is translated “dull”.

“Followers”: This concept is repeated (in 13:7), and is inherent in the many illustrations of faith given (in chapter 11).

“Inherit the promises”: The inheritance and the promises of salvation are a theme of this epistle (verses 13, 15, 17; 1:14; 4:1, 3; 9:15; 10:36; 11:7-9, 11, 13, 17, 33, 39).

Slothful means lazy. Captain John Smith, in the colonies, was not the first one to say “no work no eat”.

It is in this Scripture;

2 Thessalonians 3:10 "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

There are numerous Scriptures on this subject of not being slothful. I will give two here. Proverbs 12:24 "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute."

Proverbs 13:4 " The soul of the sluggard desireth, and [hath] nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat."

The faith that we have must be the type which wears well with time.

Romans 2:7 "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life:"

Those who endure to the end receive the promise of eternal life.

Matthew 24:13 "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." These Scriptures leave no doubt what we must do.

Verses 13-18: God’s covenant with Abraham, which involves salvation (Gal. 3:15-25), is secure, being based upon “two immutable things”, that is, elements that cannot change. First, God’s promise is based on His own unchanging Word. He cannot lie, nor will He allow His Word to fail (Matt. 5:18; John 10:35; 17:17).

Further, His Word was confirmed “by an oath”. And since He can swear by none greater, He swears by Himself. He rests His Word on His holy character.

We see here, that he is not just speaking of just plants which are thorns, but people as well. As we said before, it is terribly important that we be doing the work God has called us to do. We want Him to say when we stand before Him, Well done thy good and faithful servant. The fruit that should be showing in our life is spoken of in these next two verses.

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith," "Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

“Verses 6-13”: Abraham. To encourage the Hebrews to rely upon faith as opposed to holding on to the Levitical system of worship, the writer cited the example of Abraham, who, as the great model of faith (Romans 4), should be imitated (verse 12).

“Swore by Himself”: As recorded (in Gen. 22:15-19), God promised unilaterally to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant.

Hebrews 6:13 "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,"

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, taught that we should not swear by anything. We cannot even swear by our own head, because we cannot make one hair white or black. God, on the other hand, controls everything. He can swear by anything He wants to, because He controls everything.

He swore by Himself, because there is no greater. He is the Truth. The Truth cannot lie.

Titus 1:2 "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"

Hebrews 6:14 "Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."

(Quoted from Gen. 22:17), this summarizes the essence of God's promise. The fact that God had said it, assured its fulfillment. It is significant that the quote in Genesis is in the context of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, who was the immediate fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. Ultimate fulfillment would also take place through Isaac and his descendants.

We know that the promises made to Abraham were for him and his seed forever. These promises are for the Christians, because we are the seed of Abraham.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Now that we know these promises are for the believers in Christ, let us see what they are.

Genesis 48:4 "And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee [for] an everlasting possession."

Genesis 12:2-3 "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:" "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

When we read of the Christians in heaven dressed in white robes, washed in the blood of the Lamb; we find there are so many that they are without number. I quote:

Revelation 7:9 "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;"

Revelation 7:13-15 "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."

God's promise to Abraham is fulfilled in the believers in Christ.

Hebrews 6:15 "And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."

“Patiently endured”: Abraham was an example of the patience mentioned (in verse 12). He received the promise in the beginning of its fulfillment by the birth of Isaac, but he did not live to see all the promises fulfilled (11:13).

Romans 4:18 "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be."

This was so impossible in the flesh, because Abraham would be a hundred years old and Sarah would be ninety. Isaac was a son of promise, not of the flesh.

Genesis 21:5 "And Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."

Verses 16-18: God's Word does not need any confirmation from someone else. It is reliable because God Himself is faithful. People confirm their promises by appealing to someone greater (especially to God), as witness. Since no one is greater than God, He can only provide an oath from Himself. By doing so He is willingly (verse 17), accommodating Himself to human beings who desire the confirmation because of the characteristic unreliability of human promises.

Hebrews 6:16 "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation [is] to them an end of all strife."

Even ungodly men like Herod honored their oath. When a man took an oath, it was the penalty of death if he lied, so everyone believed when someone took an oath.

Matthew 23:20-22 "Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon." "And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein." "And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon."

An oath is a very serious thing.

Hebrews 6:17 "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed [it] by an oath:"

Who are the heirs according to the promise? We will see in this next Scripture.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Immutability means unchangeable. This means then, that the promises God made will not change. They are forever.

Psalms 33:11 "The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."

Isaiah 14:24 "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, [so] shall it stand:"

We see from these Scriptures that once God has thought it, He will never change it.

Hebrews 6:18 "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:"

“Two immutable things”: These are God’s promise and His oath. The Greek term behind “unchangeable” was used of a legal will, which was unchangeable by anyone but the maker of the will.

“Fled ... refuge”: In the LXX, the Greek word is used for the cities of refuge God provided for those who sought protection for avengers for an accidental killing (Num. 35:9-34; Deut. 19:1-13; Jos. 20:1-9; Acts 14:5-6).

“Hope”: Hope is one of the themes of Hebrews. It is also the product of Old Testament studies (Rom. 15:4). Hope for the fulfillment of God’s salvation promises is the “anchor of the soul” (verse 19), keeping the believer secure during the times of trouble and turmoil.

God's spoken and written Word are unchangeable. Truth cannot lie, as we said before. God is Truth.

Numbers 23:19 "God [is] not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do [it]? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

We read how important to God His Word is; in Jesus' own words.

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Verses 19-20: Starting (at the end of verse 18), the author uses three pictures to demonstrate the security of being in Christ. First, it is described as a safe retreat for the believer, as were the six cities of refuge in the Old Testament to those allowed their protection (Num. 35:6-32). Second, our hope is “sure and steadfast” as is a well-placed, unbending anchor. Our anchor is not located in the deepest sea but in the highest heaven.

The third figure is that of a “forerunner”. Though the figure changes, the location does not. Our forerunner is likewise positioned in the sanctuary of heaven. As our forerunner, Jesus is far different from the Old Testament priests. In the sanctuary, they could intercede for the people, but they could not lead the people in themselves.

As our forerunner, Jesus has opened the way before us, that eventually (and certainly), we might enter in with Him.

Our hope is embodied in Christ Himself who has entered into God’s presence in the heavenly Holy of Holies on our behalf. By this line of reasoning the writer returned to the topic which he left (in 5:10), the Melchizedekian priesthood.

Hebrews 6:19 "Which [hope] we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;"

The Christian's hope is of the resurrection. We see in this next Scripture that the Christian is not like the rest of the world who is without hope.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:" "Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Jesus opened the way to the Father for us when He was crucified for us. He brought down the veil of partition for us.

Mark 15:38 "And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom."

Hebrews 6:20 "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, [even] Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Jesus is even now seated in heavenly places. In fact, He is seated at the right hand of the Father. He is preparing a place for us, and when the Father says it is time, we will join Him at the right

hand of the Father. Jesus is our High Priest. He carried His own precious blood to the Father to pay for our sin. Jesus represents us before the Father even now. The promise to the believers in John is beautiful.

John 14:1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." "In my Father's house are many mansions: if [it were] not [so], I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also."

All believers are the bride of Christ. He is coming back for us, if we have remained faithful to Him.

2 Corinthians 11:2 "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ."

Hebrews Chapter 6 Continued Questions

1. How long are we to work for the Lord?
2. In the world ye shall have _____.
3. In Matthew 24:13, we find that who shall be saved?
4. What are we told to be in 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 things?
5. What does slothful mean?
6. In 2 Thessalonians 3:10, what commandment was given about those who would not work?
7. Who did God swear by?
8. Why did He swear by Him?
9. Why can we not swear by our own head?
10. Where is the Scripture found that says God cannot lie?
11. Who were God's promises made to?
12. How do the Christians fit into these promises?
13. What are the promises?
14. Who are the great multitude in heaven that are without number?
15. How are they dressed?
16. Why did it seem impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have Isaac?
17. What is final, and leaves no room for strife?
18. If you swear by the altar, what else do you swear by?
19. Who are the heirs according to the promise?
20. What does immutability mean?
21. What is the hope, for the Christian?
22. How was the veil in the temple torn?
23. Who was made our High Priest forever?
24. When will Jesus come back for His bride?
25. What wonderful promise is made to the Christian in John 14?

Hebrews Chapter 7

Verses 7:1-28: Using the two Old Testament references to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4), chapter 7 explains the superiority of Christ's priesthood to that of this unique High- Priest, who was a type of Christ in certain respects. Chapter 7 is the focal point of the epistle to the Hebrews because of its detailed comparison of the priesthood of Christ and the Levitical High-Priesthood.

Verses 1-3: "Melchizedek" appears only briefly in the Old Testament, yet our author minutely scrutinizes him (see Gen. 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4). "Being by interpretation": The writer sees in Melchizedek a type or figure of Christ and draws parallels between the two.

"Without father, without mother": What is true of Melchizedek typically only because of silence is intrinsically true of Christ. Melchizedek is without parents only in that they are unknown. He is "without descent" in that his genealogy has not been preserved.

Genealogy was essential to a priest, for under the Levitical system one could not serve if he could not prove his pedigree (Ezra 2:62; Neh. 7:64). Melchizedek had no papers. Further, he is without beginning and ending due to the Old Testament never mentioning his birth and death.

The author explicitly states his point when he declares that Melchizedek is "made like", or resembles, the Son of God. But has the author taken to much liberty with his typology? No, for God Himself first made the similar connection (in Psalm 110:4), "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Some understand these verses in Hebrews to suggest that Melchizedek was a theophany, and appearance of Christ Himself, rather than a historical king at Salem. Neither Hebrews nor Genesis, however, supports that view. Even in Hebrews, such phrases as "made like unto the son of God" (verse 3), and "after the order of Melchizedek" (verse 17), indicate a clear distinction between Melchizedek and Christ.

The Genesis account provides sufficient historical data to disallow the idea that this is a temporary manifestation. This Melchizedek was a king of a literal city in Canaan. The setting (of Genesis 14), is unlike any of the settings involving a theophany. In those settings, the theophany is recognized as the Lord or is declared within the text to be the Lord (Gen. 16:7-13; 18:1-33; 22:1-14; Exodus 3:2-4).

The scripture states, "now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of his spoils." A requirement for being a priest is they had to be of human ancestry. This is one of the strongest arguments against Melchizedek being a pre-incarnate Christ.

Another strong reason for his not being Christ is that in the Old Testament theophanies', He gave his message and disappeared. He did not stay permanently to function in the office of a priest or king. Whoever this man was, he presided as the King of Salem, a historical city at that time.

1

When scripture compares Christ to the Melchizedek priest it states that he was "made like the Son of God" not "he is the Son of God" (Heb. 7:3b). What are stressed are some similarities about paralleled in ministry, but not in the nature of his being. Thus, in this way he was a type of Christ in his mediatorial office but he was not Christ himself.

Additionally, note this was probably not a Christophany. Reason being, when the Angel of the Lord appears there is an awe and worship. There is none in this setting of tithing and communion which we would certainly think should be if he was in fact the angel of the Lord.

Further, to argue from etymology that since the name means "king of righteousness," Melchizedek is not historical lacks substance. Both historical and archeological evidence demonstrate that the Jebusite kings of that

area used compound names including “zedek” for their titles. For example, Adoni-zedek was the Zebusite king for the same city several centuries later (Joshua 10:1).

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

We have discussed this Melchizedek at length in a previous lesson. King of Salem, means King of Peace. Notice here also, that this High Priest comes from God and not through bloodline into the Levitical tribe.

The main element in all of this is that the only one He appeared to was the father of the believers, Abraham. He also, had some heavenly authority, because He blessed Abraham. Notice in the Scriptures that I will give next, what these blessings were. He is called “the” High Priest of God. Notice also, that He gave Abraham the communion elements of bread and wine.

Genesis 14:18-20 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he [was] the priest of the most high God. "And he blessed him, and said, 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 he gave him tithes of all."

Notice, in this last Scripture, that Abraham recognized Him as divinely appointed High Priest sent from God, when he paid tithes to Him.

Hebrews 7:2-3 "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;" "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."

The Levitical priesthood was hereditary, but Melchizedek’s was not. His parentage and origin are unknown because they were irrelevant to his priesthood. Contrary to some interpretations, Melchizedek did have a father and a mother.

The ancient Syriac Peshitta gives a more accurate translation of what was intended by the Greek phrase: “whose father and mother are not written in genealogies.” No record existed of

2

Melchizedek’s birth or death. This is quite a contrast to the details of Aaron’s death (Num. 20:22-29).

“Like”: Literally “made to be like”; this word is used nowhere else in the New Testament. The implication is that the resemblance to Christ rests upon the way Melchizedek’s history is reported in the Old Testament, not upon Melchizedek himself.

Melchizedek was not the pre-incarnate Christ, as some maintain, but was similar to Christ in that his priesthood was universal (verse 1), royal (verse 1-2; Zech. 6:13), righteous (verse 2; Psalm 72:2; Jer. 23:5; 1 Cor. 1:30), peaceful (verse 2; Psalm 72:7; Isa. 9:6; Rom. 5:1), and unending (verse 3; verses 24-25).

Verses 4-10: Even Abraham, the great patriarch of the Jewish people; considered Melchizedek enough superior that he tithed to him willingly and humbly of his spoils. So, Levi and the entire Levitical priesthood which proceeded from Abraham are inferior to Melchizedek and his priesthood.

Even though Abraham was the recipient of the covenant (and later, his descendant Moses, of the Law), he is the receiver, rather than the bestower, of the blessing. Thus, Melchizedek is his better, and is certainly superior to Abraham's offspring.

Verses 4-28: This section presents the superiority of the Melchizedekan priesthood to the Levitical. The major arguments for superiority are related to the receiving of tithes (verses 2-10), the giving of blessing (verses 1, 6, 7), the replacement of the Levitical priesthood (verses 3, 8, 16-17; 20-28).

Hebrews 7:4 "Now consider how great this man [was], unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."

In antiquity, it was common for people to give a tithe to a god or his representative. Abraham, the father of the Hebrew faith, gave a tithe to Melchizedek. That proves that Melchizedek was superior to Abraham. The lesser person tithes to the greater (verse 7).

This alone recognized Him as High Priest of God.

Hebrews 7:5 "And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:"

By the authority invested in them after the establishment of the Mosaic Law, the Levitical priests collected tithes from their fellow Israelites. The submission of the Israelites was not to honor the priest but to honor the law of God.

3

The difference in the sons of Levi and Melchizedek is that they are priest, because of their blood line and they are priest just for a short time. This Melchizedek is a Priest forever, and has no bloodline, He is divinely appointed of God for this service. The Scripture above is clearly making a difference in the type of priesthood.

Verses 6-7: Melchizedek not only received a tithe from Abraham, he also blessed him. This proves again Melchizedek's superiority.

Hebrews 7:6 "But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises."

We clearly see the distinction made here that the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Melchizedek are totally different. The Scripture above, again, says, He blessed Abraham.

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

This is just saying here, that as great a man as Abraham was, he was less than Melchizedek. Abraham is thought of as one of the best men who ever lived.

Hebrews 7:8 "And here men that die receive tithes; but there he [receiveth them], of whom it is witnessed that he liveth."

This refers to the Levitical law whose system was still active at the time ("and here"), and to the earlier historical incident recorded (in Gen. 14; "but there").

The Levitical priesthood changed as each priest died until it passed away altogether, whereas Melchizedek's priesthood is perpetual since the record about this priesthood does not record his death (verse 3).

Hebrews 7:9-10 "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham." "For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him."

In an argument based upon seminal headship, the writer observes that it is possible to speak of Levi paying tithes to Melchizedek. It is the same kind of argument Paul employed to demonstrate that when Adam sinned we all sinned.

This statement here, is saying that not only did Abraham pay tithes to Melchizedek, but the high priest of the Levitical tribe paid tithes to Him in reality, because he is descended from Abraham.

Verses 11-12: The author raises the question as to why the Old Testament should make reference to "another" priesthood. If the Levitical priesthood were producing "perfection", meaning

4

completion or fulfillment of its role, why is another needed? The old system pronounced its own doom by speaking of another.

Further, the author teaches that the passing of the Levitical priesthood necessitates the removal of the Mosaic Law, for they are inextricably united. The law did not produce the Levitical priesthood; rather the priesthood required the law. Both Moses and Aaron were chosen by God before the law was given.

The law was given at Sinai to provide the procedures and ordinances for the functioning of the priesthood God had already established. So, our author accurately acknowledges that the passing of the Levitical priesthood demands the passing of the Mosaic legal system.

Note Paul's teachings concerning the passing of the law in relation to the believer (Rom 7:1-6; 10:4; 2 Cor. 3:7-11; Gal. 3:9-25). God has not, however annihilated the law. He has removed it from the life of the believer because it can neither save nor sanctify. The unsaved man, however, still lies under its convicting and condemning work (1 Tim. 1:8-11).

Verses 7:11-28: In this section the argument is extended a step further. Since the Melchizedekan priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood (verses 1-10), Christ's priesthood is also superior to the Levitical priesthood, since Christ's priesthood is Melchizedekan rather than Levitical.

Hebrews 7:11 "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 Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron?"

"Perfection": Throughout Hebrews, the term refers to complete reconciliation with God and unhindered access to God, Salvation. The Levitical system and its priesthood could not save anyone from their sins.

Galatians 3:11 "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, [it is] evident: for, The just shall live by faith."

The law did not save, it just showed us how badly we needed a Savior. The law, then and now, shows that no man can live up to the law and all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Galatians 3:24 "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [to bring us] unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

I want to break from the detailed explanation for a moment here and say; The Tabernacle in the wilderness was patterned after the real Tabernacle in heaven. The holy place and the most holy place that Moses had built in the wilderness was just a model of the real Holy of Holies in heaven. Moses was warned to make it in detail as the one in heaven.

5

The Tabernacle in the wilderness had a high priest. This leaves no doubt, that the Holy place in Heaven has a great High Priest also. We are told over and over that The High Priest forever is the One we call Jesus Christ.

Verses 12-14: Since Christ is the Christian's High-Priest and He was of the tribe of Judah, not Levi (Matt. 2:1, 6; Rev. 5:5), His priesthood is clearly beyond the law which was the authority for the Levitical priesthood (verse 11). This is proof that the Mosaic Law had been abrogated.

The Levitical system was replaced by a new Priest, offering a new sacrifice, under a New Covenant. He abrogated the law by fulfilling it (Matt. 5:17), and providing the perfection which the law could never accomplish (Matt. 5:20).

Hebrews 7:12 "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."

Romans 8:3 "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:"

Romans 5:20 "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:"

Abraham was saved by grace through faith just as we Christians are.

I will end this lesson on this note. God knew that man could not live up to the law, so He gave us a way of escape. That Way is Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Hebrews Chapter 7 Questions

1. What 2 things was Melchizedek called in Hebrew 7:1?
2. Where was Abraham coming from when he met Him?
3. What is the meaning of Salem?
4. What was different about His priesthood?
5. What are the 2 things we call communion elements?
6. What blessing did Melchizedek speak on Abraham?
7. Name 3 titles given Melchizedek in Hebrews 7:2.
8. What is mentioned in Hebrews 7:4 that also shows His greatness?
9. Whose sons are the earthly priesthood?

6

10. Who was these earthly priests' ancestor?
11. Who blesses mankind?
12. The less is blessed of the _____.

13. How did Levi pay tithes to Melchizedek?
14. The Levitical priesthood was not _____.
15. Where do we find in the Scriptures that the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ?
16. The tabernacle in the wilderness was patterned from what?
17. Who is our High Priest forever?
18. For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the _____.
19. Where sin abounded, _____ did much more abound.

Hebrews Chapter 7 Continued

Verses 13, 15 "Another": In both cases, the term is "another of a different kind" (heteros), emphasizing the contrast with the Levitical priesthood.

Hebrews 7:13 "For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar."

In the previous lesson, we were studying about Melchizedek who was High Priest forever. We were discussing the similarities between Him and Jesus Christ. This Scripture above explains, again, that this Melchizedek is not of the Levitical tribe.

Hebrews 7:14 "For [it is] evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."

Neither Jesus nor Melchizedek sprang from the Levitical tribe. The only way Jesus sprang from the tribe of Judah was in the flesh. His Spirit which is eternal sprang from no one. The priesthood of Jesus and Melchizedek was of God.

Verses 15-28: Though the author has repeatedly mentioned the unending nature of the Melchizedekian priesthood, this now becomes the central point. Because of its unending nature, it provides a "better hope" and an "unchangeable priesthood", resulting in an unending salvation and intercession through a perfect, one-time sacrifice.

Hebrews 7:15 "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest," "Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life."

"Law of a carnal commandment": The law dealt only with the temporal existence of Israel. The forgiveness which could be obtained even on the Day of Atonement was temporary. Those who ministered as priests under the law were mortals receiving their office by heredity. The Levitical system was dominated by matters of physical existence and transitory ceremonialism.

"Power of an endless life": Because He is the eternal Second Person of the God-head, Christ's priesthood cannot end. He obtained His priesthood, not by virtue of the law, but by virtue of His deity.

Revelation 1:18 "I [am] he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Hebrews 7:17 "For he testifieth, Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Quoted from (Psalm 110:4).

Hebrews 7:18 "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof."

“Disannulling”: The law was weak in that it could not save or bring about inward change in a person (Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:9).

We see in this, that the law came first. When the weakness of man to keep the law was evident, God sent another plan to save mankind.

Hebrews 7:19 "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope [did]; by the which we draw nigh unto God."

“The law made nothing perfect”: The law saved no one (Rom. 3:19-20); rather it cursed everyone (Gal. 3:10-13).

“Draw nigh unto God: This is the key phrase in this passage. Drawing near to God is the essence of Christianity as compared with the Levitical system, which kept people outside His presence. As believer priests, we are all to draw near to God, that is a characteristic of priesthood (Exodus 19:22; Matt. 27:51).

Galatians 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

This Scripture in Galatians explains that with faith in Jesus Christ plus nothing, we are saved. The law condemned man and the grace of Jesus Christ brought hope to all who will believe.

Hebrews 7:20-21 "And inasmuch as not without an oath [he was made priest]:" "(For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou [art] a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek:)"

“Oath”: God’s promises are unchangeable, sealed with an oath (6:17). The Melchizedekan priesthood of Christ is confirmed with God’s oath (in Psalm 110:4). God’s mind on this matter will not change (verse 21).

This oath, that Jesus was a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, was an oath that God took on Himself. This leaves no room for dispute.

Hebrews 7:22 "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."

“Surety”: This is the only use of the Greek term in the New Testament could also be translated “guarantee”. Jesus Himself guarantees the success of His New Covenant of salvation.

Testament means a contract or a covenant. Surety means pledge. We see then from this that the new contract between God and man is much better than the law.

Hebrews 7:23 "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:"

“Many priests”: It is claimed that there were 84 High-Priests who served from Aaron until the destruction of the temple by the Romans (in A.D. 70). The lesser priests’ numbers were much larger.

Hebrews 7:24 "But this [man], because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."

If we were to look in the book of Chronicles in the Old Testament, we would find many, many names of priests and high priest beginning with Aaron. Some of these were sincere ministers of the temple, but some of them were bad. Two of Aaron's sons brought strange fire into the temple and God killed them.

God spoke to the people through the high priest. The high priest also represented the people before God. The only Eternal High Priest was Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 7:25 "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."

“Uttermost”: Virtually the same concept as was expressed in “perfection” (verse 11), and “make perfect” (verse 19). The Greek term is used only here and (in Luke 13:11) “the woman’s body could not be straightened completely”.

“Intercession”: The word means “to intercede on behalf of another.” It was used to refer to bringing a petition to a king on behalf of someone. Since rabbis assigned intercessory powers to angels, perhaps the people were treating angels as intercessors. The writer makes it clear that only Christ is the intercessor (1 Tim. 2:5).

The intercessory work of Christ for the Christian is similar to preventive medicine. In one sense, intercession identifies Christ’s present work of mediation in heaven. The biblical use of the term more specifically describes Christ’s intervention on behalf of believers’ weaknesses and temptations.

Christ is continually and actively interceding on our behalf. The assurance of the believer should rest in part on this present ministry of Christ’s intercession.

There is a beautiful prayer of Jesus to the Father and in it, it tells so much about how He intercedes on our behalf. It begins (in John 17:9-26). I quote:

John 17:9-11 "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we [are]."

John 17:12-15 "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

John 17:16-19 "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

John 17:20-21 "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;" "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

John 17:22-23 "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:" "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

John 17:24 "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

John 17:25-26 "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare [it]: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Verses 26-28: Christ's divine and holy character is yet another proof of the superiority of His priesthood.

Hebrews 7:26 "For such a high priest became us, [who is] holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;"

In His relationship to God, Christ is "holy" (piety without any pollution; Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:24; Luke 4:24; Acts 2:27; 13:35).

In His relationship to man, He is "innocent" (without evil or malice; John 8:46).

In relationship to Himself, He is "undefiled" (free from contamination; 1 Peter 1:19), and "separated from sinners" (He had no sin nature which would be the source of any act of sin; "without sin" in 4:15).

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him [to be] sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

We have no righteousness of our own. We are made righteous when we accept Jesus as our Savior and are washed in His blood and made righteous in Him.

Hebrews 7:27 "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."

"Daily": Whenever the Levitical High-Priest sinned, he was required to offer sacrifices for himself (Lev. 4:3). Whenever the people sinned, he also had to offer a sacrifice for them (Lev. 4:13). These occasions could be daily.

Then annually, on the Day of Atonement, he had to again offer sacrifices for himself and for the people (Lev. 16:6, 11, 15). Christ had no sin and needed no sacrifice for Himself. And only one sacrifice (by Him), was needed, one time only, for all men, for all time.

"He did once": A key emphasis in Hebrews. The sacrificial work of Christ never needed to be repeated, unlike the Old Testament priestly sacrifices. (9:12, 26, 28; 10:2, 10; 1 Peter 3:18).

The blood of an animal could not do away with sin, it just covered it up. There is absolutely no way that anyone could even remember all the ordinances of the law, much less keep them. The blood of animals did not clear a person's conscience of sin.

Hebrews 9:12-14 "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]." "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:" "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?"

Hebrews 7:28 "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."

“Word of the oath”: God confirmed Christ as High-Priest (verses 20-21; 6:16-18).

We see from this that imperfect men were the high priest of the people while the law was in effect. Our Eternal High Priest (Jesus Christ), is the perfect one. His dedication and love for His followers is everlasting.

Romans 8:34 "Who [is] he that condemneth? [It is] Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

He sits at the right hand of the Father and pleads our case before Him.

1 John 2:1 "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

Hebrews Chapter 7 Continued Questions

1. Melchizedec and Jesus were not from the _____ tribe.
2. Our Lord Jesus sprang out of _____.
3. Jesus was made a High Priest forever not after carnal commandment, but after the power of an _____.
4. When the weakness of man to keep the ____ was evident, God sent another plan to redeem mankind.
5. Man is not justified by the law, but by what?
6. What difference was there in the priesthood of Jesus and the earthly priesthood?
7. Jesus was made a _____ of a better pledge.
8. What does testament mean?
9. What does surety mean?
10. What book in the Old Testament list many of the earthly priests?
11. Which high priest had two sons who brought strange fire into the temple?
12. What was the job of the high priest?
13. He ever liveth to make _____ for them.
14. John chapter 17:9-26 is what?
15. Who does Jesus pray for?
16. Who was the only one Jesus lost of His?
17. Who hates the Christians?
18. Why do they hate them?
19. Jesus prays not that they will be taken out of the world, but what?
20. How is the Christian sanctified?
21. Describe Jesus from Hebrews 7:26.
22. How often did the earthly priests sacrifice?
23. The blood of an animal could not do away with sin, what was all it could do?
24. Who is the perfect One?
25. Who is He that condemneth?
26. Who is Jesus called in 1 John 2:1?

