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*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## Hebrews 10.

(2013)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises  
But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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## Hebrews 10.

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**INTRODUCTION:** this letter is written to Hebrews who had been enlightened, endured sufferings, been publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, stood alongside others who were persecuted, had compassion on those in prison and joyfully accepted others plundering their property (probably the Romans) knowing they had an eternal possession (Heb. 10:31-36).

It appears they had a faith in Christ, but were still bound by the Levitical priesthood and the Jewish religious system and because of this the author brilliantly uses Moses Tabernacle, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place and Old Testament Scriptures to prove Jesus is the only High Priest anyone needs and that it is by faith in Christ and God's grace not religious works that God's people are counted righteous.

The blessing of this letter is not limited to the Hebrews since everyone who is seeking God or who is a brother or sister of Christ will be overwhelmingly awed as they read this well-crafted and awe-inspiring letter as it beautifully progresses through the chapters proving Jesus is the Christ.

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### Topics.

- The law was a shadow of good things to come.
- It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
- God will write his laws on their hearts and minds.
- I come in the scroll of the book.
- Christ has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.
- We have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus.
- We have a great priest over the house of God.
- Let us hold fast the confession of our hope.
- God has no pleasure in those who shrink back.

### The Previous Chapter.

In the previous chapter the author said, the Most Holy Place cannot be entered while the Holy Place is still standing, that gifts and sacrifices cannot perfect the conscience of the worshipper and that God's perfect temple is being made without human hands. He talked of Christ entering into the Most Holy Place with his own blood and offering himself up through the eternal spirit and said, "It is appointed for man to die once and after comes judgment."

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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### The Law was a Shadow of Good Things to Come.

Hebrews 10:1-2 ----- <sup>1</sup>For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. <sup>2</sup>Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sin?

In these verses the law is presented as a shadow of the good things to come. The word shadow in this context carries the idea of an outline of anything, such as an artist outlines a sketch of the object which he intends to draw which though it will have a resemblance to the real object it remains of copy of it. The ceremonial law was a shadow of better things to come in the same way that the object of every shadow is always of far greater glory than the shadow itself. The idea is that under the ancient sacrifices there was a dim outline and shadow of the eternal blessings the sacrificial death of Christ would bring to God's people.

### **The Law having a Shadow of Good Things.**

The law here does not refer to the law of the Ten Commandments since they are not a shadow of future blessings, but rather refer to a system of precepts and the things they command which are not figurative or obscure, but good, honest and plain and easy to be understood neither are they fleeting and passing away as a shadow, but lasting and eternal. The law in these verses refer to the ceremonial law it was this law that was a shadow a figure and a representation of something true and real.

Though it was like a shadow, fleeting, passing and short-lived it gave a glimmering light of Christ himself, who is the body, the sum and substance of it, and of the good things to come by him (i.e., reconciliation, justification, righteousness, the pardon of sin and eternal life to be granted by the Gospel of grace which the author has stated in the previous chapter could not come until the Holy Place (the place of religious service and works) of the old temple had been made obsolete.

The author knows that the Hebrews who he is writing to though not enemies of Christ were still enormously fond of the Levitical priesthood and therefore he continues in this chapter to prove that the Levitical Law and priesthood is obsolete, he does this in the following two ways: -

1. By showing that their high priest and sacrifices were only shadows of the true High Priest and the true sacrifice to come.
2. By exalting the priesthood of Christ and showing them the glory and honour believers have in Christ.

### **To make Perfect.**

Perfect in this context does not mean, without sin, but to make one perfect according to the ceremonial law of the old Covenant. There has only ever been one man who walked on earth without sin before God and his name was the Lord Jesus Christ. If it was possible for anyone under the Old or New covenant to attain to this glorious state of sinlessness then Christ died for no reason. Rather perfect in this context refers to setting the conscious free from the guilt and condemnation of the law and thereby bringing peace to a trouble mind, especially peace with God.

It is not about abolishing sin that will only be achieved when our corruptible body puts on incorruption and immortality when the Lord himself descends from heaven and the dead in Christ are raised and we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:14-18) (1 Cor. 15:53-55). Nevertheless we are by faith and by God's grace made perfect in Christ since God grants to all who belong to the family of the Lord righteousness as a free and pure gift to all who are faithfully devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is because the New Covenant unlike the Old which was a Covenant of law is a Covenant of grace. Old Testament Israel agreed with one voice at Mount Sinai to follow God under a Covenant of law in contrast New Testament Christians who agree to follow God under a Covenant of grace.

### **The Sacrifices could Never Perfect those who Draw Near.**

The sacrifices offered on Israel's national Day of Atonement were regarded by the Hebrews as the most sacred and holy of all sacrifices. The author clearly aware of this highlights the fact that if these sacrifices had any power at all to make those who offered them perfect according to the ceremonial laws and bring perpetual

peace to their guilty conscience they would not have needed to have been repeatedly offered every year, therefore as sacred as they might have been they obviously had some deficiency in them because if they had the power to free those who offered them from the stains of guilt and bring peace to a troubled conscience they would have only needed to offer them once.

### **Consciousness of Sin.**

In contrast to the Old Covenant of law which brought condemnation to the conscience everytime the faithful of those under the law failed to attain to its demands Christ by his shed blood at Calvary makes the conscience perfect. This is because his death abolished the Old Covenant of the law and brought in the New Covenant of grace which has abolished the constant struggle of attaining righteousness by the strict adherence to the demands of the law and its ceremonial rites and religious customs and traditions.

Legal animal sacrifices being offered year by year, could never purify the conscience because they were sacrificed under the law in contrast to Christ's sacrifice being under grace this is why every brother and sister in Christ has (or should have) a purified conscience (not because they will never sin again, if they could do this Christ would not have needed to lay down his life), but because they are counted righteous by God because of their faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ and by God's grace.

After one Day of Atonement was over, the sinner would fall again into one fault or another, and so there would be guilt and the need of another day of atonement this is the reason Israel had a Day of Atonement every year, whereas now, under the Gospel, the atonement is perfect, and not to be repeated since the sinner, once pardoned, is forever pardoned in regards to their state of eternal salvation because it is secured in Christ. Certainly those saved in Christ do repeat repentance, but this is from a sense of sorrow at offending God or hurting Christ and not from a need for repenting again and again to be saved to eternal life that is fixed set and guaranteed in Christ to all who are faithfully holding fast their faith in Christ.

### **It is Impossible for the Blood of Bulls and Goats to take away Sins.**

Hebrews 10:3-6 ----- <sup>3</sup>But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin every year. <sup>4</sup>For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. <sup>5</sup>Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me <sup>6</sup>in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure (cited from Psalm 40:6).

Though the sacrifices of bullocks and goats offered in the holy land from the first day of atonement throughout successive generations year after year to the writing of this letter made atonement for their sin, (meaning they were accepted by God and forgiven) did not exactly describe the good things to come they did give faint hints of them and in this sense they acted as types and shadows of the perfect Lamb of God to come.

Even though they were justified and cleansed by these legal sacrifices they had no power to make either the people that brought the sacrifice to the temple or the priest that offered the sacrifice perfect meaning they had no power to impact on the human heart in a manner that would transform it from following after sin to following after God and desiring to live in a manner that brings honour to His name.

### **God will write His Laws on their Hearts and Minds.**

Sacrificial beasts offered up under the law were not of the same nature with us and certainly not of the same value as a human life nor could they consent to put themselves in the sinner's place and therefore they were not of sufficient value to impact on the human heart. In total contrast Christ was of the same nature as us, was of vastly more value and from his own will did consent to put himself in the sinner's place. Our sacrificial Lamb, the beloved Son of God allowed himself to be lead like a Lamb to the slaughter to lay his life down on the altar of the cross to redeem us to God apart from the law, religious works and self-effort.

Is there other sacrifice under the heavens that can impact upon the human heart in such dramatic fashion or that moves heart of whoever perceives such love as they look upon the suffering body of the bloody and bleeding man sacrificed for everyone who comes to him nailed to the cross with his arms outstretched in love ready to receive them into his eternal Kingdom.

The author in verse ten says: -

- After the days of the first Covenant God will write His laws on their hearts and their minds (v10).

Through the sacrifice of Christ God has written by love His laws on the hearts and minds of all who accept the Lord as their Saviour. This is because those who perceive what it cost God and the enormous price the Lord Jesus Christ paid to redeem them from the bondage of the law and its condemnation are filled with the Spirit of God and from this love desire from the heart to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The yearly sacrifice did three things: -**

- Made atonement for the nation of Israel.
- Dramatically showed the seriousness of sin, and innocent life had to be sacrificed for the guilty.
- It reminded Israel as a nation of sin.

But despite all these it is impossible for legal sacrifices made under the law to take away the guilt of sin since the law is such that it instantly without mercy condemns the moment anyone falls short of it in contrast to grace which with abundant mercy pardons.

The author is showing his Hebrew audience who still place great value on the Jewish priesthood the following two truths: -

1. Though the Levitical priesthood was divinely established by the LORD there was a time fixed and foretold by God through David that it would come to an appointed end (Psalm 40:6-7).
2. The Mosaical dispensation and the time for these legal sacrifices to end has now come they are no longer accepted by God so to adhere to them now is not only resisting God's will, but also rejecting God himself.

**I come in the Scroll of the Book.**

Hebrews 10:7-10 ----- <sup>7</sup>Then I said, "Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book" (volume of the book in KJV). <sup>8</sup>When he said above, (v5-6) "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" <sup>9</sup>then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup>And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The words, "As it is written of me in the scroll of the book" (v7) is cited from Psalm forty verse seven. In this Psalm David in prayer and in faith echoing Christ wrote: -

- Blessed are those who put their trust in the LORD and make the Lord their trust (Psalm 40:3-4).

Then speaking of himself, but echoing Christ says: -

- Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me (Psalm 40:7).

And concludes his prayer with: -

- You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God! (Psalm 40:17).

Now thousands of years after David spoke these words the author of Hebrews in this letter is skilfully using them to prove to his Hebrew audience who at some level accepted Christ, but still placed great value on the Levitical law the following five truths: -

1. Jesus is the Christ that the Scriptures and the prophets proclaim.
2. Salvation to eternal life is not in the Levitical Law, its high priest and its priesthood, nor is it in strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, washings and sacrifices.
3. God through Christ has abolishes the first Covenant in order to establish the second Covenant (v10).
4. The purpose of all Scripture is to reveal Christ and bring those who hear it or read it into a devoted living faithful and spiritual relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and with his heavenly Father.
5. Hebrews, Jews and Gentiles are all sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (v10).

The words of David also clearly show that the security David had for his salvation to eternal life was not in doctrine, but in his daily and faithful relationship to God the Father and his faith in the coming promised seed of Abraham, Israel's Messiah the Christ. Jesus himself said to religious Jews who believed in God, read the Old Testament Scriptures daily and held fast to keeping every religious rite, ceremonial law and tradition: -

- You do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life (John 5:38-40)

When we all stand before the Lord's judgment seat Christ will not sit us down to do a written doctrinal exam, but he will examine our lives to see if our religious actions stemmed from a devoted and loving heart toward him and his Father or from self, ego, and pride and will measure us against the Royal Law, "Love your neighbour as yourself" (i.e., did we treat others with love, kindness, compassion, grace, mercy and forgiveness especially our brothers and sisters in Christ).

**NOTE:** this does not mean that studying the Scriptures is of no value, quite the contrary, since the more we understand the Bible the stronger our faith and our hope grows and the more we learn of the nature, character will and the heart of the one we love and of the will of God.

**To give a simple example:** a young man may meet a girl that he is attracted to, so he takes her out on a few dates and finds she has a pleasant personality and caring nature, now, he knows this girl, no-one can say anything against her that he would believe because he knows her nature and her character, but if he never takes her for another date, it won't be long before that relationship will dissipate and other things will take its place.

Likewise it is with the Scriptures they are our date with Christ and through them we gain eternal and heavenly insights into treasures of God that touch our hearts in a manner that nothing in this world can.

### **God has Taken No Pleasure in Sacrifices and Sin Offerings.**

The words, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (v8) does not mean God was never pleased when the people of Israel brought there offering to the priests.

The reason the prophet spoke the words: -

- You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings (Psalm 40:6-8) (Malachi 1:10).

Was because even though the people were fulfilling their legal obligation under the Levitical Law their hearts were far removed from God, they were in gross sin and would not heed the words of the prophets. They outwardly did what the law required, but their heart was not toward God. Clearly if the people of Israel had offered their sacrifices from a heart of faith and devotion to the LORD there is no doubt God would have taken pleasure in them since it was God who established the offerings and sacrifices and they provided for the priesthood so that they could focus on serving the LORD on behalf of the nation.

**NOTE:** almost all sacrifices became food for the priests and their families.

**A lesson for today:** there is no-doubt God takes great pleasure in brothers and sisters in Christ who gather together every Sunday to fellowship, learn from others and worship together, but if they are attending simply to fulfil what they believe is their religious duty and every other day live a life devoid of God it is certain we could say (as the prophet did of Israel) that God takes no pleasure in their worship.

**Christ has offered for all Time a Single Sacrifice for Sins.**

Hebrews 10:11-14 --- <sup>11</sup>And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup>But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup>waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. <sup>14</sup>For by a single offering he has perfected for all time (forever in KJV) those who are being sanctified.

Sins (selfishness, ego, pride, lustful thoughts, greed and jealousies etc.,) are so deeply ingrained in our fallen corrupted human nature that even if we sacrificed thousands of bulls and goats every day it would still be impossible for these sacrifices to remove sins. This is why Christ (the sacrificial Lamb without blemish) has offered himself as a sacrifice once and for all. This does not mean that sins are abolished, since despite the fact those in Christ are counted by God as righteous and saved to eternal life sin is still very much alive, but it does mean that there are no more sacrifices to be made.

Remember the author of this letter is writing to show to Hebrews who still place great value on the Levitical priesthood and the sacrifices that the Lord Jesus Christ has laid down his own life as a sacrifice for all time and that no-one needs to offer any other sacrifice to be redeemed to eternal life, in fact if they do it is a gross offense to God since any other sacrifice denies God finished work in Christ.

The author is not saying that sins are removed now, but that they will be when God's plan is complete, but until that time all who seek after God do not need to continually offer sacrifices to be counted righteous, but rather place their trust in the single once for all sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and God will count them righteous, not because they are sinless, but because of their faith in Christ's sacrifice on their behalf and in their place.

If anyone of us could attain to that glorious state of absolute sinlessness then Christ died for no purpose. It is by being in Christ that we are counted righteous and blameless before God and not because we are without sin, nevertheless the sacrifice of Christ impacts on the human heart in the following way that animal sacrifices never could.

The Apostle Paul stated: -

- The greatest gift is love (1 Cor. 13: 13).

And Jesus himself said: -

- Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends (John 15:13)

This love changes the heart of a person in a manner that animal sacrifices could never do. When a sinner looks at the cross and sees the love God has for them displayed in the sacrifice of His Son (the Lamb without blemish) who was brutally

and cruelly nailed to it and perceive that Jesus was freely laying down his life from his own will so that despite their sin they could be redeemed to God and saved to eternal life apart from works and religious duties the passions of their heart are transformed by that love from living for self to desiring to live to honour God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Until Christ's Enemies should be made a Footstool for his Feet.**

The words, "Waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet" (v13) would immediately take the mind of the Hebrews back to the words of David who wrote: -

- The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool (Psalm 110:1).

This entire Psalm is about God making an oath to Christ that he will rule from Jerusalem in the midst of his enemies, execute judgment among the nations, conquer kings throughout the world and his people will offer themselves to him freely, but until that time God tells Christ to sit at his right hand until God makes his enemies his footstool (Psalm 110:1-7).

The words, "Sit at my right hand" (Psalm 110:1) clearly refer to Christ's resurrection, the author by citing this Psalm which all Hebrews would have clearly known is using the words of David to prove that Jesus is the one David was speaking of and is the one who has been resurrected to the right hand side of God.

This is another glorious Psalm that shows the glory and wonder of Bible language and how Christ is interwoven through Scripture.

### **Christ has Perfected for All Time those Who Are Being Sanctified.**

The words, "By a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified" (v14) does not mean that those who are in Christ are literally sinless, but that they are perfected by faith through the single offering of Christ for all time, in contrast to the faithful of the Old Testament having to continually offer sacrifices for sin. The author is saying those in Christ are redeemed and forgiven fully in the single sacrifice of Jesus there are no more sacrifices to be made.

The phrase "Being made perfect" (v14) is not about being saved, but about those who are saved being conformed to the image of Christ. No-one in the family of Christ will be made perfect in the literal sense until that glorious day when Christ returns and we are gathered together in everlasting glory to be with the Lord.

Since flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God and it is impossible for corruption to inherit incorruption (1 Cor. 15:50) (KJV) this corruptible body must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality so when this corruptible puts on incorruption and this mortal puts on immortality then death will be swallowed up in victory (1 Cor. 15:53-54) (KJV). When this breathtaking and awe-inspiring eternal and majestic event takes place every brother and sister in Christ we will be made perfect in the true sense of the word.

### **For further information on being saved see the title: -**

- Being Saved, in Salvation (ON WEBSITE MENU).

### **God will write His Laws on the Hearts, and the Minds of Israel.**

Hebrews 10:15-17 --- <sup>15</sup>And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, <sup>16</sup>"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds," <sup>17</sup>then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."

Here God is saying that He will make a new covenant with Israel after the Old Covenant. In this New Covenant God says He will: -

- Write His laws on their hearts and on their minds.



- Choose not to remember their sins and their lawless deeds.

The author of Hebrews is quoting the following words of Jeremiah: -

- This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days declares the LORD: I will *put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts* and I will be their God, and they shall be my people and no longer shall each one teach his neighbour and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and *I will remember their sin no more* (Jer. 31:33) (Jer. 31:34).

**After those days:** refers to the days after the Old Covenant.

**I will write it on their hearts:** refers to the death and resurrection of Christ.

**I will be their God and they shall be my people:** has not yet been fulfilled.

The New Covenant is the covenant of Grace in contrast to the covenant of Law. The New Covenant began with the death and resurrection of Christ. The reason the Scriptures talk of the Covenants being made in blood is because the Old was made with the blood of animals in which an innocent life was taken for the guilty. The New Covenant was sealed with the blood of the Son of God it began with the death and resurrection of Christ and will ultimately climax in his return as the King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

### **I will write My Laws upon their Minds and Hearts.**

God accomplished the words, "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (v10) by the death and resurrection of Christ. The blood shed by animals on behalf of the guilty had no impact on the human heart, but who can stand without being deeply touched when they perceive the love of God displayed through His Son who offered his life to be slain as a Lamb to the slaughter to save us from our sins.

It is through this love that God writes his laws on the human heart. This love transforms the human heart in such a manner that the passion of those whose hearts are filled with this love is to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ the perfect sacrifice (the Lamb of God without blemish) is now seated at the right hand of God as a Priest-King, so that there is no need for any further offerings for sin to be made therefore all who come to God through the offering of Christ should enter into the Most Holy Place of God not with fear, but rather firm in their faith and God's love and grace majestically displayed through Christ's love for his heavenly Father and his love for all who would come to him by the laying down of his life for them.

**A new age to come:** though God has written his laws by love on the hearts of the faithful in Christ through his death and resurrection it is only the beginning of Zechariah prophetic words: -

- I will write my laws on their hearts and minds will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more (v16).

The ultimate fulfilment and climax will be when Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 11-16) to destroy all the armies of the nations that come against the city of Jerusalem. When this awesome and world changing event comes Zechariah tells us that God will pour out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem: -

- A spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn and the mourning of the priests and the mourning of each family will be great throughout the land (Zechariah 12:9-14) (Hebrews 8:8-12).

When this breathtaking event comes a new age on earth will begin with a totally new world order that has Christ as its King and all those gathered to him to rule and reign with him as the global government of the world.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

**For further information see titles: -**

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

**I will Remember their Sins and their Lawless Deeds No More.**

Hebrews 10:18-20 ---- <sup>18</sup>Where there is forgiveness of these (Israel's sins and lawless deeds) (v17), there is no longer any offering for sin. <sup>19</sup>Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup>by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,

Under the Old Testament covenant the common people were totally dependent on the Levitical priests to intercede for them. They had to go to the priests for their offerings to be made acceptable to God, to be cleansed and to have their sins forgiven and therefore the people of Israel were totally dependent on the priests for all matters that concerned the LORD their God. The words, "Where there is forgiveness of sin, there is no longer any offering for sin (v18) are contrasting the Old Covenant with the New Covenant; once we are forgiven in Christ as long as we remain in Christ we are forever forgiven unlike the faithful of the Old Testament who had to repeatedly offer up goats and bulls to make atonement for their sins.

The author is saying that God through Christ forgives sins and chooses not to remember them so there is no need for any sin offering because those in Christ are counted as righteous not by works or by religious deeds, but by faith and God's grace through the single sacrifice of Christ (the Lamb without blemish) at Calvary, therefore whoever is in Christ does not need to offer any more sacrifices for sin because God forgives the sins of those in Christ and chooses not to remember them.

**NOTE:** generally if the Levitical priesthood did what was right before the LORD the people of Israel did right, but if the priesthood went astray the people went astray.

**We have Confidence to Enter the Most Holy Place by the Blood of Jesus.**

Entering into the Most Holy Place of God today means that in prayer those in Christ can come directly before God the Father.

This is in total contrast to the Old Testament Covenant under which only the high priest could enter into the Most Holy Place of God's tabernacle and temple. The author is using the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle which the Hebrews had held sacred for over four-thousand years to prove to them that they can have full confidence to enter into the Most Holy presence of God by the blood of Jesus and convince them that they do not need to offer any more sacrifices.

### **Through the Curtain, that is, through Christ's Flesh.**

In the previous chapter the author wrote: -

- The way into the holy places (the Most Holy Place) is not yet opened as long as the first section (the Holy Place) is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper (Heb. 9:8-9).

The way into the Most Holy Place cannot be opened in this context means that no-one other than the high priest could enter it. There was a majestic royal curtain dividing the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. All priests could enter the Holy Place (symbolising religious service and works), but only the high priest could enter behind the veil into the Most Holy Place (the place of God's presence). The phrase, "Through the curtain, that is, through his flesh" (v20) refers to this curtain between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.

**The wonder, beauty and glory of the Bible:** this dividing curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom (Matt. 27:51) when Jesus gave up his life and breathed his last breath on the cross symbolising that Christ's death opened the way into the Most Holy Place for the common people and a new and living way (Heb. 10:20).

**A new and living way:** the Holy Place was the place the Priest performed their religious duties, that is why the author of Hebrews says it was a symbol of their present age, (meaning a symbol of the age of law and performing religious works, duties and service), but he goes on say that this Holy Place had to be torn down before the Most Holy Place could be opened.

This means no-one can come to God and be saved to eternal life by religious works, duties and service all must come through the blood of Christ to enter the Most Holy Place of God.

This is what the words, "Christ has opened a new and living way for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh" (v20) means. We no longer come to God through animal sacrifices and religious works, duties and service, but through the death and resurrection of Christ (i.e., through his flesh in contrast to the flesh of sacrificed animals).

### **We have a Great Priest over the House of God.**

Hebrews 10:21-22 ---- <sup>21</sup>and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup>let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Every individual believer in Christ is pictured here as forming a global house worldwide made up of people from all cultures and nations with Christ as the priest over the entire house.

**A true heart:** in this context is in contrast to a heart that is trusting in religious works and a heart that is full of hypocrisy and indifference.

**Full assurance of faith:** as opposed to fear, doubt and a feeling of condemnation

**Hearts sprinkled clean:** by the blood of Jesus Christ.

**From an evil conscience:** in the context of this chapter having an evil conscience refers to trusting in ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions rather than trust in Christ and God's grace to be counted righteous and saved to

eternal life. Trusting in these things is a gross evil before God because it nullifies what Christ achieved for us on the cross and makes his death count for nothing. This is why the author refers to those who trust in anything other than Christ as having an evil conscience.

**Bodies washed with pure water:** refers to water baptism.

For further notes on the conscience see the title: -

- Consciousness of Sin following (v2) (above).

**Let us Hold Fast the Confession of our Hope.**

Hebrews 10:23 ----- <sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

When salvation to eternal life is spoken of as the hope of the faithful in Christ, it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future. The hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and he cannot lie.

The apostle Paul wrote: -

- In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began (Titus 1:2).

**Confession:** primarily means admission, acknowledgment, declaration, affirmation, acknowledgment and declaration, but also embraces a profession, occupation, vocation, career and work which means the words, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope" (v23) not only means holding fast to our acknowledgment and the declaration of our faith but also hold fast to the lifestyle the Gospel calls us to.

**HOPE:** accomplishes for the heart the same thing which the anchor does for a ship. It makes it fast and secure. An anchor preserves a ship when the waves beat and the wind blows and as long as the anchor holds the ship is safe and the mariner apprehends no danger so it is with heart of the Christian. In the tempests and trials of life their mind is calm as long as their hope of eternal life and everlasting glory in Christ is firm.

**Stir up One another to Love and Good Works.**

Hebrews 10:24-25 --- <sup>24</sup>And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, <sup>25</sup>not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near (as ye see the day approaching in KJV).

These are stunning words, but I wonder how many of us are really aware of the depth of what the author is saying, (I wasn't until now). I expect almost all Christians are aware that when they are together they should be encouraging each other in the faith, but what the author has written here goes far beyond this. He says, "Let us consider" (v24) this is a mental action of the mind. It means ponder, meditate and think about, it implies that even while brothers and sisters in Christ are apart they should be considering and thinking about how they can encourage one another in love and in works to go beyond and move even further forward in their faith.

In the world today there is a common expression amongst those who judge an artist who they consider already has the "wow" in their field of skill or talent. These judges commend the artist for their commitment to their talent and then encourage them by saying that they have the ability to take the "wow" to a higher level. This is what the author of Hebrews is saying, (i.e., no-matter how wonderful a brother or sisters faith and works of love maybe there is always another level of "wow" that God can take them to.

**NOTICE:** all the counsel and advice the author gives to the Hebrews who still value the Jewish priesthood and to those who are in Christ is always clothed with love and God's grace.

## **The Day Drawing Near.**

Various scholars have thought the day drawing near could refer to: -

- The day of Christ's return.
- The day of death.
- The day the Romans brought to ruin the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the temple and its services ceased in 70 AD.

The word day in the context of this verse appears to apply to some event that was expected to occur very soon and that was most likely anticipated and well understood by the Hebrews that the author did not feel the need to explain it. If it was not something that they expected to happen soon it is certain that the author would have gone into a more full explanation of it and stated at what the indications of its arriving were. So far as the language is concerned, the reference could be applied to the Lord's return or to the destruction of the temple and its services, but since the words, "As you see the day drawing near" imply that: -

- Something remarkable would happen that would dramatically change the way they served God.
- It was soon to happen.
- Those he was writing to clearly understood what he meant.

Since the destruction of the temple had been predicted by Jesus (Matt. 24:1:2) it is most likely that, "The day that is soon approaching" refers to the destruction of the temple and its services. (See also the notes following (v37-39) under the title, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay").

## **Do not Neglect to Meet Together, but Encourage One Another.**

The most likely reason the author in these verses is encouraging the Hebrews to regularly meet together to strengthen and encourage each other "As they see the day drawing near" (v25) is because the destruction of the temple would break up the priesthood of the nation of Israel and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem would not only cause great suffering and sorrow, but cause many to flee into the surrounding nations for refuge and in times of persecution there is a temptation to stay away from those being persecuted.

Thus the reason he says: -

- Do not neglecting to meet together, but encourage one another all the more as they see the day approaching" (v25).

Since this would be a time of great confusion regarding their faith and also be a time in which many might be tempted to apostatize it maybe another reason why the author of Hebrews is so focused in this letter on the truth that no-one needs human priests and ceremonial religious works to be counted right with God and why he is so focused on proving to them that Jesus is the only High Priest anyone needs to go through to enter the Most Holy Place of God and why he encourages them to constantly fellowship together encouraging one another in the faith.

## **NOTE:**

This does not mean that the words "Do not neglecting to meet together, but encourage one another all the more as they see the day approaching" (v25) do not apply to Christians today, since by extension the principal clearly applies to every brother and sister in Christ as they patiently wait for his return.

The Bible teaches that natural disasters and troubles will increase as that day draws nearer and for this reason the words "Do not neglecting to meet together, but encourage one another all the more as they see the day approaching" (v25) only pause for a fleeting moment on the Hebrews and the ruin of their beautiful city

Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple and its services, then as many other prophetic messages of the Bible do the prophets words take up wings and transcend through time until they come to rest at their final destination which will be during that period of time when we approach the near return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- For more concerning meeting together, see the notes following (v24-25).

### **Sinning Deliberately after Receiving the Knowledge of the Truth.**

Hebrews 10:26-27 --- <sup>26</sup>For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, <sup>27</sup>but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.

The words, "If we go on sinning deliberately" (v26) in this context is not referring to sins of the flesh, but to denying the knowledge of the truth which in this letter refers to the Gospel of grace.

The author is telling his Hebrew audience that if they after hearing the Gospel of grace continue to go on sinning by trusting in the Levitical law and its priesthood (religious works and self-effort) to be saved to eternal life then when they appear before the judgment seat of God and instead of receiving a crown of glory they will be judged with the same judgment that their enemies will be judged with and sentence with them to eternal death and not eternal life. This is because they have spurned God's own Son by denying his sacrifice and trusting in their own religious works.

### **Whoever Sets Aside the Law of Moses Dies without Mercy.**

Hebrews 10:28-30 --- <sup>28</sup>Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>29</sup>How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? <sup>30</sup>For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people."

The words: -

- Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses (v28).

Means that on the evidence of two or three witnesses they were put to death (mostly by stoning).

The words: -

- How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God (v29).

Do not mean that there are different levels of torture in hell whereby some sinners will be painfully tortured a little bit each day for all eternity, while the more grosser sinners will be tortured greatly as some have mistakenly been taught and sadly many believe. This teaching of hell is not only a gross misunderstanding of Scripture, but also an enormous insult to the character of God.

By the words, "A worse punishment" the author is contrasting mortal death with eternal death. Breaking the Law of Moses brought about mortal death (i.e. stoning), whereas denying Christ will without any hesitation or mercy on God's part bring about eternal death since those who have been enlightened to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ are denying the only sacrifice for sin that can save to eternal life.

### **For further information regarding hell, see the title: -**

- Hell or the Grave (Final destination of Humans).
- In, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The author is contrasting the mortal punishment of death that those who rebelled against the Law of Moses suffered to those who under grace wilfully and deliberately spurn the Son of God, (meaning they wilfully and deliberately reject, scorn and despise Christ by trusting in religious works and self-effort to be counted righteous before God and worthy of eternal life). This group of people will be judged without mercy to eternal death.

The words: -

- Outraged the Spirit of grace (v29).

Refer to those who have been enlightened to the Gospel of Christ and continue to trust in their own religious works and self-effort to be counted righteous.

The following words of Paul show the enormous importance of trusting in God's grace in Christ. Paul in his letters wrote: -

- I do not nullify the *GRACE* of God, for if justification were through the law (or any form of religious self-effort), then Christ died for no purpose (Gal. 2:21).

This means, when a brother or sister in Christ begin to justify themselves through the law and self-effort they nullify the grace of God and by their actions declare that Christ's death was of no value.

Equally as horrific as this Paul states: -

- When we forsake *GRACE* we separate ourselves from Christ because it was only by *GRACE* that God made us alive in Christ (Gal. 5:4) (Eph. 2:5).

Paul to highlight even more the majestic glory of grace wrote with absolute boldness that: -

- It is only by *GRACE* that any brother or sister has been saved (Eph. 2:8).

Paul in these verses is shining a brilliant floodlight on the truth that every brother and sister in Christ is saved, solely by faith and by grace and it is not their own doing, but the gift of God. This means that without grace no-one can be united to Christ and whoever is without Christ is separated from God and without God no-one can be saved to eternal life.

This means in regards to eternal salvation, Christ, God, Grace and Faith,  
are all on an equal par with each other since no-one can be  
saved to eternal life without any one of them.

This is the reason the author spends so many chapters brilliantly and skilfully explaining to the Hebrews that they must stop their sin of trusting in religious works, the Levitical Law and their priesthood to be counted righteous before God and start trusting in the grace of God that is in Christ and in his righteousness to be saved to eternal life. By extension this means that Christians must stop trusting in attending a church building every week, strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions to be saved. Though the practise of some of these maybe good in themselves they become grossly sinful when believers trust in them for their salvation since not one of them has any power to save to eternal life.

### **It is a Fearful thing to Fall into the Hands of the Living God.**

Hebrews 10:31-36 --- <sup>31</sup>It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. <sup>32</sup>But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, <sup>33</sup>sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. <sup>34</sup>For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. <sup>35</sup>Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. <sup>36</sup>For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

### **This letter is written to Hebrews who: -**

- Had been enlightened and endured sufferings.
- Endured being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction.
- Stood alongside others who were persecuted.
- Had compassion on those in prison.
- Joyfully accepted others plundering their property (probably the Romans) knowing they had an eternal possession.

It appears the Hebrews that the author is addressing have faith in Christ, but are still bound by the Levitical priesthood and because of this the author is encouraging them not to throw away their confidence, meaning their faith by going back under the law and performing religious works to be counted righteous.

**Your confidence, which has a great reward:** (v35) refer to eternal life this is what God has promised to those who belong to the family of Christ. While the words, "When you have done the will of God" (v36) refer to enduring in the faith in contrast to trusting in the Levitical law and religious works to be counted righteous.

### **Yet a Little while, and the Coming One will come and will Not Delay.**

Hebrews 10:37-39 ---- <sup>37</sup>For, "Yet a little while and the coming one will come and will not delay; <sup>38</sup>but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him." <sup>39</sup>But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

The words, "The coming one will come and will not delay" (v37), refer to the one who is coming to bring about the ruin of the city of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple and its services.

(See the notes following (v24-25) under the title, "The Day Drawing Near").

The author being fully aware that the temple, its services and its priesthood will be brought to nothing is warning his Hebrew readers that these events are drawing near and at the same time encouraging them by telling them that those who God considers righteous and delights in are those who live by faith in contrast to those who trust in the temple and its services (religious works) to be counted righteous.

### **God has no Pleasure in those who Shrink Back.**

The author here writes, "My righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him" (v38) as though God is speaking which clearly shines a floodlight on the truth that those who trust in ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions to earn their righteousness and be counted worthy before God and of eternal life instead of pleasing God are bringing His wrath upon themselves. This is because trusting in religious works and self-effort totally denies what Christ achieved for us on the cross and makes his death count for nothing.

The ones who God delights in are those who have no trust in their religious deeds (no matter how good) to make them righteous, but instead trust solely in Christ's righteousness and God's grace. The only way any believer can please God is to continue to trust in Christ for their righteousness and not religious duties, works and service because God has no pleasure in those who trust in their own self-efforts to earn righteousness that leads to eternal life.

It could be argued that sin is not the greatest danger for Christians, since most Christians are very aware of sin, whereas, trusting in ceremonial rites, holy days and religious works, service, duty, customs and traditions to earn righteousness rather than fully trust by faith in Christ and God's grace is far more subtle and deceptive than actual sin.



It is not that ceremonial rites, holy days and religious works, service, duty, customs and traditions are necessarily bad in themselves, in fact some are good habits and good behaviour, what make them evil is trusting in them to earn righteousness and trusting in them to be counted worthy before God and worthy of eternal life since this trust in self-effort totally denies God's grace in Christ and makes Christ's death count for nothing.

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### **A Brief Overview of the Previous Chapters.**

The author throughout this letter has brilliantly shown to his Hebrew readers that the tabernacle, its ordinances and sacrifices of the Covenant of Sinai, were only shadows and patterns of better things to come and has highlighted the truth that the sacrifices the high priests continually offered could not make the worshippers perfect with respect to purifying of their consciences (see pervious chapter). He has shown that Christ by the sovereign will and grace of God and from his own will offered himself in the sinner's place as the final sacrifice for sin that all other sacrifices were shadows of.

The author has gloriously highlighted the truth that Jesus has made atonement for all who come to him by faith and shone a floodlight on the glory that God counts those who are in Christ as righteous not because of their religious duties, service or works, but because of Christ's righteousness. He has beautifully shown that everyone who trusts in Christ is saved by faith and God's grace and that in Christ God crowns and cloths as a free gift everyone who belongs to the family of Christ with his righteousness.

**The heart and the conscience;** when the heart receives such love and grace it is filled with new desires and new passions to worship God and the one who has laid down his life in the sinners place. Added to this the conscience is perfected in that it is delivered from the constant struggle of attaining to righteousness by strict adherence to ceremonial rites and holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions since all are counted righteous and saved by faith and by grace and not their own self-effort.

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End.