

# **Hebrews: The Book Of Better Things**

## **Part 1 (Chapters 1-7)**

*From the Writings of Bill Britton*

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## Syllabus

### The Book of Hebrews

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Chapter 1
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#### Requirements for the Course:

- 1) Read materials in Manual and Bible
- 2) Final Exam

## Chapter 1

The book of Hebrews is "the book of better things". The central theme of the entire book is to show how much better the new covenant of Christ is than the old covenant of Moses. With scriptural proof and strong logic, the writer of Hebrews proves beyond the shadow of a doubt, even to where the most orthodox scribe or pharisee cannot refute it, how much better the Gospel of Grace is than the Jewish Law.

Continually, throughout the book, we are faced with the truth that the old order is dead and ready for burial. God has replaced it with a new and living way that takes us, by the blood of Christ, through the veil, into the very presence of God where the law could never take us. This book was written because of the problem of Jewish Christians trying to mix the two orders, law and grace, and some even leaving the new order to go back to Moses' law because of problems that arose in the early church.

Many scholars believe that the apostle Paul was the author of Hebrews, due to internal evidence, the style of writing, the revelation of grace, and the pattern of his logic. Paul, who was once the most orthodox of Jews, blameless in the matters of the law, has had a vision of Christ and a revelation of the Gospel of the grace of God. He now is the strongest opponent of the Law of Moses with its rituals, ceremonies, and animal sacrifices. He will **not** succeed in destroying the old order completely, nor will he be able to convince **all** the Jews to leave that dead system (it still has millions of followers today). But he is sounding a clarion call to those Christians who have tasted the reality of Christ, and want to follow Jesus into full Sonship. The message is that they will have to turn loose of the past, and rid themselves of every remaining garment of the Jew's religion. We have a better way. The shadows are gone, we have arrived at the substance.

### How About Today?

Christians in our day are not very concerned about the controversy of Paul's day between law and grace. So is this book relevant for us today? Yes! For today we are faced with an old order that is passing away, and a new order is coming in, bringing a revelation of sonship, a higher order. The revelation of this high calling was given to the apostles in the early church, and they faithfully wrote it down. But it becomes obvious that the early church, the earnest or firstfruits of God's order for His Body, did not fully reach that maturity and perfection in their generation. They certainly did not attain during the dark ages, even up to our present time.

But the work of God is ever progressive, and gaining momentum continually. And today we see the need for a new understanding of the book of Hebrews. It is the New Testament book of Sonship, first of all the Sonship of Jesus Christ, and finally the revelation of the body of Christ, the corporate, many-membered son that inherits the Melchisedec priesthood order by virtue of being in Him. While the blind still lead the blind, and the masses still stagger along in a dying system of churchianity and religion, we see a great company of sons breaking forth into the glorious light of God's new day.

So the need, now as then, is that God's people might realize that they cannot hold on to the old system of religion, however well it served them in the past. Too many today, like the Jewish Christians back then, are trying to hang on to the best of two worlds. It won't work. The Jewish Christians in the early church were constantly being hammered by the preachers of the circumcision. They were told that Jesus was their Messiah, and that the Holy Ghost was for them too, but that they were still obligated to fulfill the law of Moses. Holy Ghost filled preachers were using the only scriptures the church had, to prove to them that they had to be circumcised, observe the Sabbath, keep going to the temple, and keep the law, to be saved. It sounded logical. If you have Jesus and the law, how could you lose? The argument was that you had to touch all the bases. Paul's answer was that the old covenant and its laws was no longer one of the bases. God had done away with it. He has now instituted a better thing. And now in our day the Holy Ghost is being poured out upon all flesh, in many denominations and systems of religion. And men are still telling God's people to take the new thing, but stay in the old sectarian order. This new thing is simply an improvement on the good old way, they say.

### **God Speaks in a Son**

The book begins with a glorious declaration as to how God speaks or reveals Himself to us. Once He spoke through prophets, or those who spoke for Him and in His name. But now He speaks or reveals Himself in Sonship. Moffatt's and Phillips' translations and the Amplified New Testament are especially beautiful and revealing in this portion of scripture: "Many were the forms and fashions in which God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these days at the end He has spoken to us by a son--a Son whom He has appointed heir of the universe" (Moffatt). "God, who gave to our forefathers many different glimpses of the truth in the words of the prophets, has now, at the end of the present age, given us the truth in the Son" (Phillips). "In many separate revelations--each of which set forth a portion of the truth--and in different ways God spoke of old to our forefathers in and by the prophets. But in the last of these days He has spoken to us in the person of a Son, whom He appointed Heir and lawful Owner of all things" (Amplified).

Now dear friends, if you think that Jesus is keeping all the glory of this Sonship and heir-ship to Himself, then you just haven't read Romans 8:17 where it tells us that we are "Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ". Verse 29 of that chapter states plainly and emphatically that Jesus Christ is God's Son, but that He is the "firstborn among many brethren." Then turn to Revelation 21:7 and read that: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son". The unveiling of God in the person of a Son did begin in our Lord Jesus Christ, for He was the beginning of the creation of God (Revelation 3:14). But it did not stop there. God ordained that Jesus would be the first, and that because of Him and through Him, there would be a great harvest of the precious fruit of the earth. The Sonship of Jesus is complete, "it is finished", but God is still waiting patiently "for the precious fruit of the earth" (James 5:7). This harvest of Sons will be joint-heirs with Jesus, "Heir and lawful Owner of all things".

### **The Evening Sacrifice**

First of all we are talking here about Jesus Christ, the begotten Son of God. The Bible refers to this entire dispensation of grace as "the last days". The apostles wrote of their own days being the last days, and yet we know that today (almost 2,000 years later) we are in the last days. We read in Mark 15:25 that Jesus was lifted up on the cross as our sacrifice at the third hour of the day, the time of morning sacrifice. He remained on that cross unto the ninth hour, the time of the evening sacrifice (Mark 15:33-34).

In other words, the work that He came to do (provide a way of salvation from sin for mankind), was being done until the time of the evening sacrifice, when He cried: "it is finished". Now we see another son, a many-membered corporate son known as "the Church His Body" come into view. Jesus said that because of what He did for us, that we would do His works, as well as "greater works". So we see a son coming forth in the morning time of these last days, the dispensation of grace, and doing a work in the souls of men. And now, in the time of the evening sacrifice (the closing hours of these last days), we see the begotten Son of God crying: "it is finished", taken down from the Cross, and pouring Himself (by the Spirit into a waiting body of sons. What the whole world now shall see is the ministry of "greater works" that Jesus promised. It is the time of the evening sacrifice. It is the time for the younger son, the many-membered son, the Church His Body, to be manifested. It was the first born Son who created this world and brought life to it. Now it is the younger, many-membered son, who shall (in cooperation with Christ) restore the creation to divine order. They shall be joint-heirs together. This is why He is bringing many sons to glory (Hebrews 2:10), and why we must be conformed to the image of God's Son (Romans 8:29). This is what all creation is groaning and travailing for with earnest expectation (Romans 8:19-22).

So at the time of the morning sacrifice, God spoke in a Son, Jesus Christ. He expressed Himself fully in Jesus. The Son was the express image of the Father, the brightness of His glory. And now, at the time of the evening sacrifice, God shall again speak and manifest Himself through a son. This time it is a corporate son, of which Jesus Himself is the Head.

### **Father**

Old Testament people knew God as Creator, Lawgiver, and Punisher of sins. He was their strength in battle, and a Saviour from their enemies. But it was Jesus who came and unveiled God's true nature as a Father to His children. It was through a Sons that God could reveal Himself most perfectly. Colossians 1:15 says that Jesus was the "image of the invisible God". The Amplified Bible says: "He is the exact likeness of the unseen God--the visible representations of the invisible." And in Hebrews 1:3 we read that the Son is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of God's person. The Amplified is very expressive: "He is the sole expression of the glory of God--the Light-being, the out-ricing of the divine--and He is the perfect imprint and very image of God's nature". Moffatt's translation says that the Sons reflects God's bright glory and is stamped with God's own character. For anyone to deny that these scriptures are speaking of Jesus, the Sons of God, is only to expose their ignorance of basic truth. But to say that He is the only one who is included in this glory of Sonship, this unveiling of Deity in this realm of humanity, is to reveal a lack of understanding in the purpose of God in creation. Jesus has overcome, not for Himself alone, but for all of us. That we might share His

inheritance, sit with Him on His throne, rule and reign with Him, and become partakers of the divine nature of God (2 Peter 1:4).

The redemptive work of Christ is unique and exclusive. Only Jesus, the Lamb of God, can take away the sins of the world by the shedding of His own blood. But aside from that redemptive works, all the works that Jesus did are to be done by other sons also. "The works that I do shall ye do also..." (John 14:12). So please remember that, as we go through this book of Hebrews, what is said about Christ, the Son of God and the Melchisedec order, is actually speaking of things that pertain to the Body of Christ, the many-membered corporate Son. Also remember that all this glory comes through our Lord Jesus.

### **Better than Angels**

Here in this first chapter we are made to know how much better Sonship is than the angelic realm. "Being made so much better!" A better nature, a better name, a better authority, a better relationship with the Father. Verse seven tells us that angels are created beings, and are made winds (spirits), and His ministers (messengers) a flame of fire. But verse eight goes on to tell us that the Son has a throne which is forever and ever (to the ages of the ages... Ampl.). This term does not mean that there will come a time when He does not have a throne. It simply is a way of expressing in the best way we can with human language, an eternal situation.

A scepter is a symbol of kingly authority. And the symbol of His kingly authority is a scepter of righteousness, of justice and straightforwardness. And only from His does that kind of righteousness originate and flow. Even the apostle Paul knew that he could not measure up to God's standard of righteousness, and whatever he was, he was only by the grace of God. He admitted that he had a weakness that kept him humble and prevented him from becoming exalted by the great revelations God gave him. He called it a "messenger of Satan" that buffeted him. It was something he could not rid himself of, and he besought the Lord three times to deliver him from it. God's answer was simply that His grace was sufficient for the situation. I don't suggest that Paul had a secret sin. He just says that it was a weakness, and one that kept him humble. Physical sickness or bad eyes do not guarantee that result. But it was a messenger from Satan that humiliated him, made him to know how really nothing he was, and kept him from ever falling into the worse trap of spiritual pride and an exalted spirit. Jesus was the only man who could walk in perfect righteousness, with heavenly understanding and revelation of God's purpose, without the tendency to get proud about it. He simply knew who He was, where His authority was, and understood His relationship with the Father. Therefore, He could even accept worship and praise without a proud and exalted spirit. He had the scepter of the King of God's Kingdom.

### **The Oil of Gladness**

We have a better happiness in the Sonship realm. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, despised and rejected of men, yet He was the happiest and most joyful human being alive. He set the standard for true happiness. His joy did not come from drugs, liquids, or favorable circumstances about Him. It came from within Him, from a fountain of life whose

source is not affected by adverse circumstances, or a flood of problems. "Anointed with the oil of gladness". How thrilling it is to see a modern day son of God who is conformed to this image. He does not wear a smile like a mask, but his joy is genuine in spite of problems, adversities, or tragedies. Anointed with gladness. Verses 10-11-12, give us a hint as to what is going to happen to the earth and heavens which He created. "They will perish". They will all become old as a garment, and shall be changed for the new. The Amplified Bible says: "They will perish, but You remain and continue permanently; they will all grow old and wear out like a garment. Like a mantle thrown about one's self, You will roll them up, and they will be changed, replaced by others. But You remain the same and Your years will never end nor come to failure".

When it says that the present earth and heavens will "grow old and wear out", it does not indicate that God will destroy it soon and suddenly with a great bomb blast. We can see that this earth is wearing out now, due to over population and modern technology. Due to sun spots caused by explosions on the sun, scientists now suspect that the sun may be wearing out. But what is due at **this** time is a restoration, a setting all things in order. This is the ministry of Sonship, the word of the Son. We are looking for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And this is more than just a new set of trees and mountains.

### **Heirs of Salvation**

The last two verses of this beautiful chapter on the better realm of Sonship deal again with the lower state of the angels. We humans would tremble in awe in the presence of a mighty angel. But it states plainly that they are only servants of God who render service for the sake of the saints. No promise is given to the angels of having all enemies put under their feet, nor of sitting on the right hand of God, nor of being heirs of salvation and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Yet these very promises are all given to us, after having first been given to the first begotten Son of God. No angel will ever know what it is to sit in the throne of God. This is the promise (Revelation 3:21) to him that overcometh, to the saints who are in Christ Jesus.

Sonship is a relationship to Deity that angels cannot know. It shows that the firstborn Sons was the creator of heaven and earth, God Himself became human substance brought into this world of sin. Angels were told to worship Him. Why? Because He was the very substance of Deity, He was their Creator. Why did they have to be told to worship Him? Because He was so much in the likeness of man. Angels would not worship man. They had to be told that this man was more than man, He was Deity veiled in humanity.

Yes, the realm of Sonship is far higher than the angels will ever attain to. This is the place Jesus walked and overcame every enemy. And this is the Holiest Place He opened to us by the shedding of His blood, by the giving up of His perfect life. This is His inheritance which He shares with us, His Body. And writing to the Jewish Christians, the apostle quotes many of their Old Testament scriptures to confirm these glorious truths. And the Old Testament is full of Sonship scriptures, but not understood by the scribes because no one had ever walked in this place and revealed these truths until Jesus came. They rejected the only source of understanding of the realm of Sonship. And now as we go into chapter two, we find that the better realm of

Sonship brings us into a better government by the Sons, and a better dominion over all the works of God's hands.



## Chapter 2

Chapter two starts off with this very meaningful word, "therefore". Meaning that because of all that is brought forth in chapter one, we should be careful of the gospel which has been committed to us. The Amplified Bible is very expressive of this verse: "Since all this is true, we ought to pay much closer attention than ever to the truths that we have heard, lest in any way we drift past them and slip away" (2:1). A number of other translations confirm this phrase "lest we drift". You don't have to do a thing in order to miss God's best. Just drift.

But because of the truths of chapter one, that is, the high calling of Sonship which has been manifested by Jesus and shared with us, we must give earnest heed to the Word of the Lord that is coming forth. If we refer in these studies to Paul as being the author of Hebrews, it is because there is much internal evidence of this, and never more clearly defined than in this second chapter. None but Paul's epistles speak of miracles or gifts of the Spirit, with one possible exception. Of all the apostolic writers, only Paul taught much on signs and wonders, and miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. And the message of Sonship, brought forth so clearly in Hebrews, was a special revelation given to Paul.

### **"How Shall We Escape?"**

In verse three, we find that it is possible for us to drift past these glorious truths, and neglect this great salvation. We also find there is no escape for those who do. We also find that this gospel is far greater than any word ever carried by an angel. "For is the word spoken by angels..." The word spoken by angels is on a far lower realm than that spoken by the Son. Many people today would fall in awe and reverence at the presence and voice of an angel of God, and yet they seem to be very careless in how they receive and what they say about a prophet, an apostle, or a pastor in our times who is declaring that "greater salvation". But they shall not escape. Thus saith the word.

This word was first spoken by the Lord, and confirmed to us. Many today are preaching a "gospel" which bears little or no resemblance to the message of the Kingdom preached by Jesus. But it has no part in that "great salvation" spoken of here. That "better thing" spoken of in Hebrews, and what we're preaching about, is that everlasting gospel of the Kingdom. And notice here that every man does not have to hear this message from the lips of Jesus alone. "Confirmed unto us by them that heard Him". Have you heard from heaven, preacher? Then you have a right to confirm this word to others also. And verse 4 says that God will bear witness with signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Spirit. Paul states emphatically in 1 Corinthians 2 that when he went in to a new place to establish the truth of God, that he didn't go with excellency of speech or man's wisdom, but "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power". Your faith is to stand in the power of God, not in the cunning arguments, logic and doctrines of men. There are many (and sometimes conflicting) doctrines which have been proved over and over again by those who have been able to put their words together in just the right way. Yet, the end result has been that they have led people into a deadness of spirit, and many times a belligerent bickering over nonessentials.

## A Ministry of Life

This "so great salvation" brings a message of life. There is a life that can be ministered regardless of the fact that you may not be educated, eloquent, or even a preacher. You may have all the mysteries of Daniel and Revelation figured out to the n<sup>th</sup> degree, yet minister death in your teaching. You may be able to hold the people spellbound with talent and eloquence, yet leave them lifeless. You may be able to shout and scream and stir the people until you have them running the aisles until they are physically exhausted, yet send them home empty in their spirit, starving for the living word. But, glory to God, there **IS** a ministry of life! Your revelation in the Book may not be as deep as some others, but if you have this life message, you will bring life everywhere you go. As you minister, people will find themselves ascending out of the lower realm of defeated existence, right into a place of glory and victory. You can be talking on a simple truth of salvation or healing, yet folks will find themselves getting revelation on things they never heard you speak about. What is it? It is a ministry of life! It is the Holy Ghost confirming your ministry and message.

This is your heritage, if you will only claim it. There are so many places calling for this message, and with the ministries of writing, printing, tapes, radio, mail, and the local church, my time is very limited. When I do get out of state, I can usually only be gone three weeks or less at a time, with 8 or 10 churches to visit, which means that I can only be at each church for two or three nights. So I cried to the Lord: "What can I possibly tell folks about these end-time truths in three nights? When you've taken 30 years to pour these truths of Sonship and the Overcomer into me, how much of the revelation could I give out in two or three sermons?" His Answer was: "Son, you don't have to tell them all you know. You just minister the spirit of revelation, and after you are gone, my Spirit shall begin to bring forth things in the Word to them that they never saw before." You see, friends, you can minister life to people and bring them up into a realm of spiritual revelation. And we can share one with another, and by so doing we will all be lifted higher. For each of us has something that the other does not have. Preacher, no matter how humble you are, you must quit apologizing for your lack of ability, and recognize that even in a convention full of great preachers, you have something that the rest of the folks need. And you men of God with great understanding and ability, don't become high minded and get to feeling self-sufficient. You must realize that the least of God's servants have something that you need, something that can cause you to grow. We need one another. Burn that truth on your heart, and never forget it. I get letters occasionally from folks who have gotten so "deep" that they don't need the church, refuse to gather together with the saints of God (especially if there is a preacher there, or any form of eldership or government or divine order). They inform me haughtily that they read only the Bible, and certainly don't need my literature or messages (so they won't be reading this). They are "deep" all right. Deep in trouble. I've got news for you, friends, you do need the word that God is speaking to me. And I need that which God is revealing in your heart. We don't need the mixture of the flesh, nor the dead traditions of Babylon and it's systems. I am writing to sons today. The rest of the church systems will not hear what I'm saying anyhow. But even the "come-outers" can get in serious trouble if they think they can make it through this wilderness by themselves. Joshua and Caleb believed God and were ready to go into the promised land 40 years before they actually crossed Jordan. But they had to wait until God got the rest of the body ready to cross over. Some were not submissive or obedient. But God

sustained these two faithful warriors while others were dying in the wilderness all around them, until they possessed that inheritance which their heart had claimed, and their mouth had declared. But when they went in, they went in with the Body, many of whom were immature and inexperienced, compared with Joshua and Caleb.

### **Dominion in the World to Come**

Now in verse five we find that the preaching of this "great salvation" brings us into a new age in the which we shall rule and reign with Christ. The Phillips translation bring this out quite clearly: "For though in past ages God did grant authority to angels, yet He did not put the future world of men under their control, and it is this world that we are now talking about."

Later in this chapter we will deal with this "world to come" in verse five, showing that the "end of the world" spoken of by Jesus is not the destruction of the trees and mountains and the natural existence of this and other planets. But it is the closing of this age in which Satan has been the ruler of darkness, having the power of death, and the bringing in of a new age in the which all the works of darkness shall be destroyed, and death shall be put under our feet.

In verses 6-7-8 the writer quotes from Psalms 8, telling of God's glorious promise to man, that he should be ruler of all God's creation. In fact, God words the promise in the positive tense, as though it were already in force, as it is, in the mind of God and from the view of eternity. But living in the realm of time, the writer says that we do not yet see this promise of complete dominion taking place in our lives. Let me illustrate. Living in this limited time realm, we measure the stars by how long it takes their light to reach us. For instance, light travels at the speed of 186,300 miles per second, which is over 5,875 billion miles in a year. A light year is how far light will travel in a year, or more than 5,000 billion miles. So if God were to suddenly, right now create a new and brilliant star in the sky 58,000 billion miles away from earth, it would be 10 years before it's light would reach the earth and we could see it. It would be there all the time, from the moment that God put it into existence. But we wouldn't be able to see it because we live in a realm of time.

Do you see what I'm getting at? The promises of God have already been brought into existence. The work of God has all been completed, and He is resting from His labors. "It is finished". But we do not yet see it. We are on a time schedule. The "light" has not yet reached us in the sense of seeing all our enemies put under our feet. Jesus came to destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. And He did it. But people are still dying. Don't try to spiritualize it away. He's talking about real death and real life. We know, because the Word says so, that the work is finished. But we do not yet see it in this realm of time. It is there, it is done. And if you could sit where Jesus sits today you could see it. In that eternal realm, He rules, and His Kingdom is already set up. And we who are citizens of that eternal realm have that Kingdom set up within us.

But this is not enough. He will not stop until this eternal Kingdom has taken over the realm of time. On this earth. It is coming. Nothing can stop it, no more than you can stop the light of that star from reaching earth in due course. And the writer of Hebrews is encouraged. What is it we see? We see Jesus! Although we do not yet see the glory and honor of this complete dominion

over all creation yet manifested in us, we do see Jesus "crowned with glory and honor". We can see those eternal promises of God fulfilled in Him, because He lives in us, and is our link with the unseen world of eternity. And because we can see that fulfillment of complete dominion working in Him, and because He has taken that physical earth body into that eternal realm and glorified it, and because He is going to return to receive us unto Himself and change our earth bodies into the likeness of His body of glory... we have hope. A glorious hope. The hope of the Church. You see, the hope of the Church is not a geographical rapture that will transport our bodies to some other location in the sky or to another planet. But our hope is for a very real physical rapture that will change this earth body and catch us up into that glorified realm He is in, so that we may rule and reign and have complete dominion **here on this earth!** You say: "I don't want to miss going to heaven". My dear friend (when you are caught up and changed into the likeness of that body of glory), you are going to find out you have been in heaven all the time, but just not able to recognize it because the carnal veil of flesh separated you from the fulness of His presence. "In Him we live and move and have our being". This is a deep mystery, and beyond my explaining. Yes, there is a very real heaven. Jesus and the saints that have passed on are there. Yes, there is a very real hell. Yes, this is a very real earth. And there are about to be some changes made. A lot of changes. A change of government, for instance. This next world or age, is not going to be under the rule of angels... the "rulers of the darkness of this world." The sons of light are going to rule, and things are going to be different. Very different. Praise God for it!

### **"Many Sons unto Glory"**

Now in verse 10 we see the purpose of God in bringing forth a body of Sons. He is bringing them to glory. And the Amplified Bible puts it so beautifully: "For it was an act worthy of God and fitting to the divine nature that He, for whose sake and by whom all things have their existence, in bringing many sons into glory, should make the Pioneer of their salvation perfect (that is, should bring to maturity the human experience necessary for a perfect equipment for His office as High Priest) through suffering."

### **"A Merciful High Priest"**

Notice in the closing verses of this beautiful chapter, how that Jesus identifies with sinful humanity in a way that He never did with angels. He never left the realm of omnipresent Deity to take on the nature of angels. He descended much lower than that. "For a little while" He was made lower than angels. The term in verse 9: "made a little lower than the angels", is a time phrase, and means that He was "made, for a little while, lower than angels". When He took upon Him the seed of Abraham and was in all things made like unto His brethren, he descended far, far beneath the dignity of the great archangel. But only for a little while. All this was necessary that He might become (through association with our needs) a merciful and faithful High Priest, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Taking upon Him the seed of Abraham, means that He laid hold of their needs for the purpose of helping them. Galatians 3, 16 and 29 show clearly that we who are the called of God are the seed of Abraham. We are His brethren. Hebrews 2:16 in the Amplified reads: "For, as we all know,

He (Christ) did not take hold of angels (the fallen angels)--to give them a helping and delivering hand; but He did take hold of the fallen descendants of Abraham--to reach them a helping and delivering hand." The Clementson translation says: "For verily, not of angels doth He take hold, but He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham." In the Interlinear Greek-English New Testament it is worded: "For not indeed of angels takes He hold, but of the seed of Abraham He takes hold." The old song: "When He Reached Down His Hand For Me", certainly has an application here, and is quite appropriate. Other accurate translations bear out this thought. He came down to lay hold of us. He apprehended us. He chose us and ordained us. We did not choose Him, nor did we apprehend Him in the beginning. But we press forward that we might apprehend that for which we have been apprehended (Philippians 3:10-14). For what purpose did He apprehend us? We will discover more and more of the answers as we go on in this glorious book of Hebrews.

And now, still in chapter two, we come to the great truth of the better government of the sons of God in the next age. Since we are living in the last days, and are witnessing the closing of one age and the coming in of another, this truth is of vital interest to us. Let me quote here from Hebrews 2:5: "For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." (King James) Let us now look at this verse in the Phillips translation: "For though in past ages God did grant authority to angels, yet He did not put the future world of men under their control, and it is this world that we are now talking about." Williams translation says: "For it was not to angels that He gave authority over the world to be, of which we are speaking."

And so, in bringing out the truth of divine government in the Kingdom age (millennium), God is saying that the angels who have been rulers of the darkness of this present world, will be stripped of their power and have no authority in the next age. They will be bound. And we begin to see how the sons of God (the overcomer of Revelation 2 and 3) will rule the nations with a rod of iron. A new government for this world, in a new age.

### **How Many Worlds?**

There is a truth revealed here in the Word so glorious, yet so shocking and so anti-traditional, that we are going to use 25 scriptures to confirm it, examining them from 10 translations. This Word is too important; we cannot afford any mistakes.

First of all, let us turn to 2 Peter 3:7 and we shall see that where the Bible speaks of "worlds", it is not always speaking of the mountains, trees, rivers, etc. which constitute this earth. Notice that the context (vs. 3-6) is dealing with the coming of the Lord: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, 'where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation'. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the eater: Whereby **the world that then was**, being overflowed with water perished; But the heavens and the earth, **which are now**, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

Now let us read this from the New English Bible: "In taking this view they lose sight of the fact that there were heavens and earth long ago, created by God's word out of water and with water; and by water that **first world was destroyed**, the water of the deluge. And **the present heavens and earth**, again by God's word, have been kept in store for burning; they are being reserved until the day of judgment when the godless will be destroyed."

So we see that there is more than one world involved in the judgments of God. Does this mean that we are not living on the same earth that saw the flood in Noah's day? Or that Noah's Ark was transported to another planet or world somewhere? Of course not! Then what "world" was destroyed by the flood? And what "present world" is waiting to be burned up by the wrath of God in our day? It is the "world" of ungodly men. The scripture says plainly that "the godless will be destroyed". So we see that the world that was destroyed in Noah's day, and the world that is waiting the judgments of God, is not this natural earth consisting of flowers, bees, rocks, hills, lions, lambs, etc. For Isaiah says that in the Kingdom age the lion will eat straw like the ox (Isaiah 11:7). "And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (11:8-9). In describing the Kingdom age (millennium) Isaiah says in chapter 65: "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: For the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." (verses 17, 20, 21, 25).

Now friends, can we take these scriptures which have so much spiritual truth, and believe that they also will be fulfilled literally? Of course. Here is a picture of the Millennium, the Kingdom age. During the 1,000 years (on this earth), we find that there will be sinners, people dying, building houses and living in them, working at jobs, as well as real animals who will no longer destroy one another. There will be children born during this time, and they will not have to be afraid of the snakes. The lamb will not be afraid of the wolf. And in the midst of all this will be a people conformed to the image of the Son of God, a people who have overcome and are in the process of putting all enemies under their feet. Death is the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26), and when all this has been accomplished, the Kingdom will be delivered back to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24). Then there will be no more death, no more sinners. Every tongue confessing Him to be Lord.

### **In the Age to Come**

Back in Hebrews chapter one we read: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, who he hath appointed heir of all things by whom also he made the worlds." Now reading this in the WUEST Expanded translation: "In many parts and in different ways God in former times having spoken to the fathers by means of the prophets, in the last of these days spoke to us in

One who by nature is (His) Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He constituted the ages."

From the King James translation we get the impression that God made more than one world of inhabited people, such as the one we live on. Actually, some people do believe that there are other intelligent beings living on other planets out there in space. This is not so. And when we read this scripture from other accurate translations, they will tell us, as does Wuest, that this word for "world" here means "ages". Let me confirm this from other scriptures.

Turn now to Mark 10:29-30... "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's; but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and **in the world to come** eternal life."

Here Jesus is saying that there is a world to come, in which we shall receive eternal life. Let us read that in a few other translations: ROTHERHAM... "Who shall not receive a hundredfold now, in this season--houses and brethren and sisters, and mothers and children, and lands--with persecutions--and **in the age that is coming**, life age--abiding." WUEST... "He will receive on hundred times as much as now at this time, houses, and brothers, and sister, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and **in the age to come**, life eternal." REVISED STANDARD VERSION... "Who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and **in the age to come** eternal life." NEW ENGLISH BIBLE... "I tell you this: there is no one who has given up home, brothers or sister, mother, father, or children or land, for my sake and for the Gospel, who will not receive **in this age** a hundred times as much--houses, brothers and sister, mothers and children and land and persecutions besides; and **in the age to come** eternal life."

Now we see that in every case, the term used in King James "world to come" means "age to come". So the next world is not a different planet for us to live on, but this same planet in a new age, under different government. I would not weary you with much repetition, but we find that other translations, as well as a Greek Lexicon, bear out this truth. Young's Concordance tells us that the Greek word used here in "aion" which means an age or dispensation. This same scripture is repeated in Luke 18:29-30, with the same results.

### **"The End of the World"**

Let us turn to the parable by Jesus of the wheat and the tares, in Matthew 13:39-40. Here Jesus is explaining the parable to his disciples, and he says: "The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is **the end of the world**; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in **the end of this world**." Evangelists have taken this scripture and painted some very frightening pictures of the holocaust which, they say, will destroy this earth. "The end of the world". Sounds horrible indeed, and it **will** be for the devil and his angels, and for those who are bound by him. But when we examine what this word really means, we get a glorious picture of the beginning of a new age.

Let us read this statement in the AMPLIFIED Bible: "Just as the darnel (wild wheat) is gathered and burned with fire, so it will be at the **close of the age.**" And in ROTHERHAM translation: "And the enemy that sowed them is the adversary, and the harvest is the conclusion of the age." WUEST EXPANDED translation says: "And the harvest is the consummation of the age, and the harvesters are angels. Even as therefore the ----- wheat is gathered and is burned in the fire, thus shall it be at **the consummation of the age.** The Son of Man shall send His angels on a mission, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all those who create stumbling blocks for others, and those who make a practice of lawlessness." REVISED STANDARD VERSION: "The harvest is **the close of the age,** and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at **the close of the age.** The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evil-doers, and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Look at WILLIAMS translation: "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is **the close of the age,** the reapers are angels. Just as the wild wheat plants are gathered and burned up, so it will be at the close of the age." Before we leave this passage of scripture, let me quote from the Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, which gives a literal translation from the Greek: "And the enemy who sowed them is the devil; and the harvest (the) **completion of the age is,** and the harvest men angels are. As therefore is gathered the darnel, and in fire is consumed, thus it shall be in the **completion of this age.**" No further explanation is needed. You can stop looking for the sudden destruction of this earth, and start looking for what is really about to happen, the closing, conclusion, consummation, or completion of this age of death, and the coming in of a new age in which the Sons of God will rule with justice and equity. God will win the victory right here on the battlefield, and will demonstrate that victory for all to see.

### **The Sons of this Age**

Turning to Luke 16:8 we see that this age is producing it's own sons, just as God is bringing forth sons for the next age. "And the Lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely; for the **children of this world** are in their generation wiser than the children of light." Reading that same verse from the AMPLIFIED Bible. "And his master praised the dishonest (unjust) manager for acting shrewdly and prudently; for the **sons of this age** are shrewder and more prudent and wiser in relation to their own generation--that is, to their own age and kind--than are the **sons of light.**" And in the ROTHERHAM translation we read: "And the lord praised the unrighteous steward, in that with forethought he acted; Because **the sons of this age** have more forethought than **the sons of light** respecting their own generation." The Interlinear Greek New Testament, as well as other translations, also give the same. So we see that this present age of darkness has it's sons, and that God's sons are called the sons of light. No wonder that the ungodly men seem to be in places of rulership and authority in this world now. This is their age. Our age has not yet come, but it is now time for the changeover, thank God! Wake up, saints of God, and walk in the wisdom of God.

### **"Our Place of Administration"**



Turning to Philippians 3:20-21 we find where our real citizenship is located. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ". The word in King James here translated "conversation" means commonwealth, or citizenship. Let us read it in ROTHERHAM translation: "For our citizenship in the heavens hath its rise; wherefore a Saviour also do we ardently await, the Lord Jesus Christ." And WUEST is very accurate in his translation: "For the commonwealth of which we are citizens has its fixed location in heaven out from which we, with our attention drawn from all else, are eagerly waiting to welcome the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to receive Him to ourselves, who shall transform this body of ours which has been humiliated (by the presence of indwelling sin and by death and decay), so that it will be conformed to His body of His glory, this is accordance with the operation of Him who is able to bring into subjection to himself all things." WILLIAMS translation says: "But we are citizens of the republic in heaven, from which we are eagerly waiting for our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." And finally, this verse is given beautiful expression in the Clementson translation: "For **our place of administration** is in the heavens, from whence also we are waiting with longing expectation for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

So now the scripture takes on more meaning where Jesus prayed "Thy kingdom come... on earth as it is in heaven." With the coming to earth of His kingdom, we come into our citizenship without going by way of the grave, as we are brought into the place of our administration. We become a kingdom of priests, ruling and reigning here on this earth (Revelation 5:10). This is the purpose of God in His Overcomer for the next age. Through the Christ, the seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:16, 29), all the nations of the earth will be blessed. Glory to God!

### **In the Ages to Come**

The next age to be introduced, the one we are about ready to enter, is the Kingdom age, or Millennium. But it is not the last age. In fact, there are many ages stretching out ahead of us, and the things God has planned for us are beyond our comprehension. Twice in scripture (Psalms 105:8 and 1 Chronicles 16:15), we are told that God made a covenant with Abraham for 1,000 generations. Not 1,000 years, but 1,000 **generations**. Now a Bible generation is 40 years, and in the 4,000 years since Abraham we have only had 100 generations, which leaves 900 generations to fulfill the promise of God to Abraham. It doesn't take long to figure out how many years that is going to take.

Reading in Ephesians 2:4-7... "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us... hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that **in the ages to come** he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." In the ROTHERHAM translation it states: "that he might point out in the oncoming ages the surpassing riches of his favor in graciousness upon us in Christ Jesus". And the WUEST expanded translation says that God has "raised us with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, in order that He might exhibit for His own glory **in the ages that will pile themselves one upon another in continuous succession**, the surpassing wealth of His grace in kindness to us in Christ Jesus". The NEW ENGLISH BIBLE says: "and in union with Christ Jesus he raised us up and enthroned us with him in the heavenly realms, so that he might display in the ages to come how immense are the resources of his grace, and how great

his kindness to us in Christ Jesus." Notice, please, that there is more than one age ahead of us, and that God has planned them so that He can show His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. You don't deserve it, nor do I. This is the wealth of His grace manifested. How good is our God! How immense are the resources of His grace!

### **Christ Above All**

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only **in this world**, but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:20-21). Again we find that the "world to come" is actually that next age which is about on us. We read in the AMPLIFIED Bible: "Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named--above every title that can be conferred--not only in this age and in this world, but also in the age and the world which are to come." ROTHERHAM... "Over-above all principality, authority, and power, and lordship, and every name that is named not only in this age, but also in the coming one." The WUEST translation, which is very accurate especially in the verb tenses and time element, states it thus: "Seated him at His right hand in the heavenly places, over and above every government and authority and power and lordship and every name that is constantly being named, not only **in this age**, but also in the one **about to come**." The beauty of expression in Moffatt's translation in this passage is unsurpassed: "So that you can understand the hope to which he calls us, the wealth of his glorious heritage in the saints, and the surpassing greatness of his power over us believers, a power which operates with the strength of the might which he exerted in raising Christ from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavenly sphere, above all the angelic Rulers, Authorities, Powers, and Lords, above every Name that is to be named not only in this age but in the age to come."

Not only does Jesus have a dominion in the age to come, but He rules NOW. Not only is his name the greatest that shall ever be mentioned in the next world, but His name is the most glorious name ever spoken in this world, right now, and the only name given among men whereby we must be saved! And it shall never diminish. There is an everlasting Kingdom... glory to our God!

### **The Powers of the World to Come**

The next age will be one that will see the fulness of God in operation through His sons, a demonstration of the mighty power of God. It is not nirvana, or limbo, or sitting on a fleecy white cloud strumming a harp, polishing our crowns, or admiring our beautiful white robes. And for the Sons, it is not just sitting under our own fig tree, or walking on physical streets of gold. There is a job to be done, to "do the will of Him that sent me, and finish His work".

We read in Hebrews 6:4-5: "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, and have tasted the good word of God, and **the powers of the world to come**." ROTHERHAM... "Those who have been once for all illuminated, who have tasted also of the heavenly gift and have been made partners in a Holy Spirit, and have tasted God's utterance to be sweet, Mighty works also of a coming

age." WUEST Expanded translation says: "and tasted the good word of God, also the powers (miracles) of the age that is about to come." Miracles in the next age? That's what it says. Why friends, this world has only seen the firstfruits of what God will do through a perfected Body of Christ. Cripples healed, the dead raised, nations turned to God, and greater works than these shall you see, because He went back to the Father. In the Interlinear Greek New Testament it says: "And tasted the good word of God, and the works of power of the age to come". Works of power. Glory to God, what a day! We have already **tasted** the good word of God, and the powers of the coming age. You see, what we have just had a taste of in miracles, healings, etc., is the normal work for the coming age. This is how every enemy shall be put under the feet of the Body of Christ. But it will not be in the part realm, there will be no failures. Jesus came and demonstrated the power and authority of the age to come, when the sons of light come into their Kingdom. This road has already been surveyed, staked out, built and paved. It's a highway to glory! Praise Jesus!

### **The Prince of Darkness**

And now Jesus tells us who it is that rules in this realm and age of darkness, and what is going to happen to him. Turn to John 12:30-31... "Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the **prince** of this world be cast out." WUEST: "now is a judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be thrown out, clean out." REVISED STANDARD VERSION: "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out." So here we see that Satan has been given a rulership. It is in this world of sin and darkness, in this present age. Let us look at John 14:30... "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." The AMPLIFIED Bible is very expressive here: "I will not talk with you much more, for the prince, **evil genius, ruler**, of the world is coming, And he has no claim on Me--he has nothing in common with Me, there is nothing in Me that belongs to him, he has no power over Me". Glory to God! No wonder Jesus won such a mighty victory over Satan in their encounter. The devil couldn't find a hand-hold, no place in the life or person of Jesus to take hold of. "Nothing in common". Praise God. Dust was the serpent's meat, but there was nothing of the carnal nature in Jesus, He was not of the earth earthy. "Nothing in Me that belongs to him, he has no power over Me".

Again in John 16:11 we see that Jesus calls Satan the "prince" of this world. In other translations, as well as the original Greek, this word is "ruler". In Hebrews 2:14 we read: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Let us read it from the NEW ENGLISH BIBLE... "The children of a family share the same flesh and blood; and so he too shared ours, so that through death he might break the power of him who had death at his command, that is, the devil."

So it says that the devil had the power of death, or death at his command. His dominion was in the realm of death, darkness, evil. But Jesus has a dominion in the realm of life, light, righteousness. "A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom" (Hebrews 1:8). And when we turn to Acts 3:14-15 we see Peter telling the Jews that Jesus was the Prince of Life, but

though they had killed Him, yet death could not hold Him. For life is greater than death. And in Revelation 1:5 we see that it says Jesus is the Prince of the kings of the earth. And the Greek says He is the "ruler" of the kings of the earth. Let me quote from WUEST translation: "And from Jesus Christ, the trustworthy, dependable witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and set us free from our sins by means of His blood, and who constituted us a kingdom."

### **The God of this Age**

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the **rulers of the darkness of this** world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephesians 6:12). I want to look at some other translations... AMPLIFIED: "For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood--contending only with physical opponents--but against despotisms, against the powers, against the master spirits who are the world **rulers of this present darkness**, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural sphere)." MOFFATT: "For we have to struggle, not with blood and flesh, but with the **angelic Rulers**, the angelic Authorities, the potentates of the dark present, the spirit-forces of evil in the heavenly sphere." NEW ENGLISH BIBLE: "For our fight is not against human foes, but against cosmic powers, against the authorities and potentates of this dark world, against the superhuman forces of evil in the heavens" PHILLIPS: "For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is **against organizations** and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil." There are others, but this should be enough to give us the picture. From the mouth of many witnesses we see our enemy. Much could be preached from this passage alone, but our message today is concerning Hebrews 2:5 and the world to come, so we must hurry on. This passage in Ephesians simply points out that the devil, fallen angels, and hordes of demon powers, are the rulers of this present age of darkness, and that while we are living in this realm and this age, we struggle against his rulership. That's why he hates us so much. Of course, he hates all the human race, but especially he hates with a bitter passion those who are coming forth in the image of the Son of God who defeated him and put him to an open shame. Glory to God!

In 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 we read: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the **god of this world** hath blinded the mind of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Here Satan is called the "god of this world". ROTHERHAM translation calls him "the god of this age". NEW ENGLISH BIBLE calls him "the god of this passing age". People who walk in darkness, who refuse to worship our Lord Jesus Christ, do not realize that their god is Satan, the god of this age. But whether they know it or not, they worship him and obey his desires in their lives. To see this more clearly, let us turn to Ephesians 2:1-2: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to **the prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

There is a tremendous truth brought out from this scripture by some of the other translations... AMPLIFIED: "you were **following the course and fashion of this world**--were **under the sway**

of the tendency of this present age--following the prince of the power of the air. You were **obedient to him** and were **under his control**, the demon spirit that still constantly works in the sons of disobedience--**the careless, the rebellious and the unbelieving, who go against the purposes of God.**" Wow! What a statement! What a warning to the saints of God today to stay free from the fashions and tendency of this present age. Now let us read this verse in WUEST Expanded translation: "And you being dead with reference to your trespasses and sins, He made alive; in the sphere of which trespasses and sins at one time you ordered your behavior as **dominated by the spirit of the age in this world system**, as dominated by the leader of the authority of the lower atmosphere, the source also of the spirit that is now operating in the sons of the disobedient among whom also we all ordered our behavior in the sphere of the **cravings of our evil nature**, continually practicing the desires of our evil nature and of our thoughts." PHILLIPS translation: "To you who were spiritually dead all the time that **you drifted along on the stream of this world's ideas of living**, and obeyed its unseen ruler (who is operating in those who do not respond to the truth of God), to you Christ has given life! We all lived like that in the past, and followed the impulses and imaginations of our evil nature."

So the world is drifting along, being dominated by the powers of darkness, the rulers of this present age. That is why the world is in such chaos, with sin, war, crime, death, poverty, pain, and sorrow on every hand. All this will change. And the time for the change is at hand. Glory to God, we are at the hour for the new age to begin! And in this next age, the satanic powers of darkness will have no authority or dominion. Satan will be bound. And when the "strong man" is bound, Jesus said you can spoil his house. So in the next age there is to be a "housecleaning", when every enemy shall be put under the feet of the Body of Christ, every work of Satan destroyed from off the face of the earth, and the human race will see life as God intended it for them. All this work will not be done in the twinkling of an eye, but it will come under the administration of the Sons of God who shall rule and reign on this earth. "For he must reign, till He hath put all enemies under his feet." (1 Corinthians 15:25). The NEW ENGLISH BIBLE says: "For he is destined to reign until God has put all enemies under his feet." Who is it speaking of here that is going to reign? It is Christ in the fulness of His glorious Body!

### **The Overcomer Ruling**

Going back now to our text in Hebrews 2 we find that right after the writer says that the angels will have no dominion or authority over that next age or world, he tells us who **will** be reigning. In verses 6-7-8 he tells us that God has already promised in the scriptures that man is destined to rule over all the works of God's hands. He reminds us that we have been made lower than the angels, for a little while, and that we don't yet see man exercising this dominion in the earth. "Now we see not yet all things under his feet". What do we see? We see Jesus! Crowned with glory and honor. He, too, was made lower than angels, for a little while, and suffered the humiliation of death in order to bring many sons out of the lower realm of fallen humanity into a place of redemption where they can be His "brethren" and rule with Him from his throne. What a plan! What a Jesus!

Who is this "man" that is going to have dominion and authority over the world in the next age? Is it the alcoholic blasphemer who beats his wife for going to church? Is it the atheistic

communistic rebel who riots and kills and burns? Is it the unbelieving preacher who fights the idea of anyone coming to full Sonship, and says that it can't be done? Or is the fearful of heart who believe his lies? Of course not! It is none of these! Those who will be in His Body and rule with Him are those whom He is not Ashamed to call "brethren" (verse 11), those He suffered for to bring to glory (verse 10), who are conformed to His image (Romans 8:29). These are the ruling company. This is God's government. Fret not about the fact that you have no experience in governing or managing the affairs of nations. For, dear ones, it will not be you. It will be Him in you. He is choosing the weak, the base, the unwise, the things that are naught... that no flesh should glory in His presence (1 Corinthians 1:29).

What shall be the manner of ruling the government of the next age? This is a subject for another message, and we shall begin to see glimpses of this as we continue on in our study of Hebrews, especially as we look at the Melchisedec priesthood. But for now, let us sum up what we have found by examination of the scriptures:

First of all we found that instead of God making many "worlds" or earths and destroying one of them with the flood, He created many ages. And instead of coming in these "last days" to the "end of the world" and the destruction of the earth's substance, these last days have brought us to the end of this present age. We also found that Satan is the prince, the ruler, the god of this present age of darkness, and had the power of death. But we see that Jesus has the power of Life, is the Prince of Life, and the ruler of the Kings of the earth. Now we find an Overcomer, a body of Sons of God, the great anointed Body of Christ coming forth in power to put an end to this age and cast Satan down, put him under their feet. They then begin their reign, and continue to reign until every enemy has been destroyed, including death. When that is accomplished (they thus reign for 1,000 years, Revelation 20:4, 1 Corinthians 15:25-26), they then turn the Kingdom back to the Father. And what is beyond that? Glory to God, I'm anxious to find out! I can hardly wait! But getting there is going to be tremendous... for those who are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28-29).

Press on saints of God, we are on the winning side! This light affliction which is but for a moment (2 Corinthians 4:17) is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. "Our citizenship in the heavens hath its rise" (Rotherham). We are on the way up, our enemy is on the way down. Woe to those who live in and are dominated by this lower atmosphere of carnal life. But rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell therein. For there is a cleansing going on, and victory is inevitable. Let us praise our God, and rejoice in the light of His countenance!

### **The New Creation Man**

Before leaving chapter two, let us take a look at the New Creation Man revealed here. In chapter one we see Christ identified with Deity, as the express image of God's person, and the brightness of His glory. In fact, in verse 8 the Son is called "God" when it says: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever".

Now, in chapter two, we see Christ identified with humanity. This word first began to be spoken by the Lord Jesus, and was confirmed by the Holy Ghost. He then begins to speak of the next

age, the "world to come", and telling us that it shall be governed by the "son of man". This "son of man", he says, is not yet ruling and reigning, but we see that the crown of glory and honor is already being worn by Jesus. Now we see that this "son of man" is a many membered body, known as the "brethren" of Jesus. This is the Lord's doings, and cannot be disannulled.

### **They Who are Sanctified**

In spite of the fact that this many membered "son of man" is not ruling, and that he is lower than angels and subject to death, yet Jesus is not ashamed to call them His brethren. Because He has sanctified them. How does He do this? By bringing them into Himself. By bringing them into His own realm or to the place He has prepared, or into His house as we shall see in chapter three.

Revelation 3:14 tells us that Jesus is the "beginning of the creation of God". Which creation? Adam's creation? Of course not! Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 where it says plainly that if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Moffatt's translation says: "There is a new creation whenever a man comes to be in Christ." And the New English Bible is very enlightening: "When anyone is united to Christ, there is a New Heavens and a new Earth." A new creation. How? By coming into Christ. For He is the beginning of this new creation. Before He came, there was the realm of Deity, the angelic world, and the world of Adam's fallen race. Adam was a living soul, of the earth earthy. But Christ came to establish something new, and to those that received Him, to them gave He the privilege to enter into this new creation world.

### **The New Creation Man**

None of Adam's race will enter this new world. Adam must die, as was spoken to him in the beginning. Adam's nature and life cannot inherit this kingdom. Not that God is vindictive and unforgiving. It's just that the Adamic nature could not stand to be in that glorious light unto which no man can approach. So God is creating a new man. "I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Isaiah 43:7). "This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord" (Psalms 102:18).

This creation or world of which I speak was never in existence until Jesus came. He was the beginning of this new creation Man. He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega. So through Jesus Christ, something new came into existence. He is the Door, so no one can enter this realm except through Him. He is the Head, so once in this realm you cannot move or operate in His divine principles except He directs you. He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end. So no one ever had this without Him, and you will never get past Him; no matter how far you go in God, you will find that Jesus is there, too.

"Made like unto His brethren"! What a statement! Everything that He is, we are to be also, for everything that we are, He became. Everything? What about sin? Though he had no sin of his own, yet he took our sins upon himself, and was "made sin for us". He who was the prince of Life even tasted of death, that we might partake of His realm of Life. So let us look at Him, to see what He is, that we might know what we are.

## **Death Destroyed**

Verse 14 says that He came to destroy him that had the power of death. So this is our victory. We shall put death under **OUR** feet. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54). So you see, some scriptures have not yet been fulfilled. This new creation man shall be the one to fulfill them. Death destroyed. It is the enemy of mankind (1 Corinthians 15:26), and it must be put under His feet (Hebrews 10:13). So that which Jesus came to do must be done by His new creation Man, the one who comes forth in His image (Romans 8:29).

How is this death destroyed? Is it by everyone finally dying or being raptured off the earth? Of course not! By this corruptible putting on incorruption, and this mortal putting on immortality! By a demonstration in the sight of all earth, as well in the eyes of principalities and powers in heavenly places, of a new creation man living on earth without being subject to death, sickness, accident or sin. How could you stop accidents? Psalms 91:11-12... "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." For Hebrews 1:14 tells us that angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.

Death has always been our escape from this world of darkness into that glory world. But it shall not always be so. The age of darkness shall come to an end, death shall be destroyed, and the knowledge of His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Jacob saw this house of God as a ladder, a means of transport from earth to heaven and heaven to earth. Jesus said it was this "son of man" which should be the means of heaven and earth being joined as one (John 1:51). So this is our work, the job left for the feet company of Christ, to "tread upon the lion, the adder, and the dragon". To put death under our feet and demonstrate a life where death cannot operate. Praise God!

## **A Faithful Priesthood**

As Jesus was a faithful and merciful high priest in things pertaining to God (verse 17), so His Body must be the same. A merciful priesthood. How this world needs mercy, and how little of it there is! So He is raising up a new creation Man who is merciful. Many are concerned about the qualifications necessary to be a part of this new creation Man. Some seem to think that you must have great revelation, or gifts, or abilities. Not so. But you must have mercy. The unmerciful man shall not be a part of this priesthood. Nor the unfaithful. He was a merciful and faithful high priest. Faithfulness, even in small things, and especially in things pertaining to God, is required in any who desire to be in the High Calling.

In verse 12 the emphasis is put upon Jesus declaring the name (which means the nature) of the Father to His brethren, and of His singing praises to the Father in the midst of the Church. Those who follow Him will do likewise. Jesus speaks prophetically in Psalms 22:22 and says: "I will declare they name unto my brethren..." But in that same chapter, verse 31, we see that He is referring to a many membered company called "a seed... accounted to the Lord for a generation", and of them He says: "They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness..."



Declaring His righteousness is not screaming at the top of your voice that He is righteous, but it is manifesting that perfect sinless life in a human vessel. It shall be done, and not just by one man, but by a many membered "son of man", a seed, a generation.

### **A People of Praise**

This new creation Man will also follow Jesus in a life of praise. Not on a lower realm of educated mental assent to His greatness, and a fearful giving of what you think He requires. But the high praises of God shall ring forth from lives that have been given over completely to God, from hearts that are overflowing with praises to our gracious and loving Father, and from spirits that have been caught up into His presence, and are dwelling in that third heaven (the holy of holies).

Psalms 149:5-6 exhorts us to "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand." In Ephesians 5:18-19, we read: "Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

If God's people only knew what victory there is in praising the Lord! It drives away the spirits of darkness, despair, discouragement, defeat, and doubt. It heals the body and lifts the spirit. It fills the mind with thoughts of God and holiness, and closes every door to the devil's suggestions of fear, uncleanness, and sin. Satan cannot get into your mind to cause you to think evil thoughts or tempt you to sin while you are engaged in the high praises of God. When I was first converted as a teen-age boy, more than 40 years ago, I was concerned about whether I would be able to overcome all the temptations that I was facing. I had come from a broken home, out of a life of sin, and my old gang did not want to give me up so easily. But we used to sing a hymn called "Take the Name of Jesus with You". I remember the second verse went like this: "Take the name of Jesus ever, as a shield from every snare; if temptations round you gather, breathe that holy name in prayer." Boy, I thought, this is for me. If it works, I'll have no troubles with temptations. Well, I won't say that I lived a perfect life all the time, but when temptations came and I remembered in time to get out my secret weapon, I remember it was terribly hard to enter into sin while saying: "Jesus". I didn't know about praising the Lord, as we weren't taught along this line. All I knew about praising the Lord was when the saints would get up in the "testimony meeting" or "praise service" and say something like "I'm glad I'm saved, sanctified, and filled with the sweet Holy Ghost; pray for me that I'll remain faithful to the end". I've been in this battle now for many years, and I've learned a great deal about praising the Lord, and it's effective use in dealing with the devil. It's a pitiful shame to see that some of the pentecostals have not progressed in God one-iota in the past 40 years. No wonder there are so many defeated lives, and so many dead pentecostal churches.

This new creation Man will know how to praise the Lord. "Blessed (happy) is the people who know the joyful sound" (Psalms 89:25). Jesus knew how to praise the Father while his enemies compassed him about. He did not have to win a popularity contest in order to feel like praising. His praises came out of a fountain within Him that never went dry. He spoke prophetically in

Psalms 109 where we read the words of Jesus in verses 1-5... "Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise; For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause. For my love they are my adversaries; but I give myself unto prayer. And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love." The following verses identify the speaker here as Jesus.

As with Jesus the pattern, so also the new creation Man. How I have found myself in these verses. The Amplified Bible says: "They have spoken to me and against me with a lying tongue. And they have rewarded and laid upon me evil for good, and hatred for my love." These principles are never more clearly seen than in our association with a local church. Here in Springfield we have had some outstanding examples. I will not deal with personalities or cite specific cases, but only deal with the methods Satan uses in trying to destroy a man of God or a local church. You can extend love, help, and hospitality to many people, only to have some of them turn on you later with such force and venomous hatred that would almost shake your faith in humanity. I know that we can expect this from the world of sinners, but I am speaking of Spirit-filled (?) people who claim to be pressing into Sonship. And everyone of them feels completely justified in their actions toward you. They can burn the telephone up with malicious gossip and evil stories about you, yet go to church and sing the praises of God. The Apostle James says that this ought not to be so. They can go from house to house trying to discourage the people and tear up the church, yet where their efforts fail they come right back to church and get up behind the pulpit as though nothing happened. They can partake of your hospitality, eat at your table, yet in a time of crisis will forsake you, and believe and repeat ugly stories about you. Then when crisis is over, and the ugly stories have proven false, they come back and put their feet under your table again, with never an asking for forgiveness or a sign of repentance.

So what is the new creation Man to do? Just keep on praising God! For he walks in a realm of praise, not in a realm of complaints and self-pity. Jesus was not complaining or feeling sorry for Himself in Psalms 109. He was merely stating facts, telling it like it is, to let us know that we can expect this kind of treatment, but that in spite of all this, He is the God of our praise. Glory to God! With all the hatred, opposition and venom that has been poured out on our little church, you'd think that we would have folded up and sneaked out of town to look for a more peaceful place. But we just keep on praising God. Everything the enemy said, God disannulled. They said the church would collapse and be closed in six months. They said the church would fail financially, but since then we have sent thousands of dollars to the mission field, plus helped local and visiting ministers, helped young folks through Bible school, and are stronger today financially than ever. They said the anointing had left the church, yet the past few months the anointing has been greater than I have ever seen in this place over an extended period of time. The glory of God has just flooded in upon us, sovereignly and spontaneously.

What is the principle involved? God will disannull every word of Satan, if you will only believe for it and accept it as done. You don't have to believe the lies of the enemy, you can just keep on praising God! The more opposition you get, and the more lies that are told on you, the greater glory you can come to. Just stay out of the realm of self-pity and complaining. Don't receive words of death. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou

anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever". This is our inheritance! This is the privileged path of the new creation Man! Just keep right on praising our Jesus, the pattern Son who taught us this good way! You are part of a New Creation in Christ Jesus!

Let us now proceed to chapter three of this great book of Hebrews and learn of the House of God, over which Christ is the Son.

## Chapter 3

After showing us the Sons of God in chapter two, and bringing forth the truth of their ruling this world in the age to come, we now come to chapter three. Here we see the difference in the first six verses of the house that Christ is building and the house of Moses. We see the far greater glory of that "Latter House", which house are we. Moses' house is shown to be a house of servitude, a place of servants doing their duty, while the house of Christ is a house of Sonship, of sons inheriting and ruling with Him. Glory! In this first message on chapter three, we shall have an in-depth study of God's house.

### "My Father's House"

An amazing truth has come to light as a result of a study on the "House of the Lord". After digging into more than 30 scriptures, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we have found that many times when the Bible speaks of a "house", it does not mean a house in the sense of a building made of lumber or bricks in which we live. When is a house not a house? When it is a human body, or a place of habitation for the human spirit, or a realm of life.

Let us go to the scriptures to clarify what I am saying. Look at Noah in Genesis 7:1... "and the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy **house** into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Was God telling Noah here to tear down his physical dwelling house brick by brick, or board by board, and put it on the ark so that he would have the materials to build another house after the flood? Of course not! Noah might even have lived in a tent for all we know, the Bible doesn't say. But at any rate, the house Noah had built on this earth realm was a way of life. It was a house of righteousness, faith, grace and obedience. The people who shared this way of life with Noah were his wife, his sons and their wives. They constituted his household. They lived with Noah in a house of faith and righteousness, and they brought this house into the ark and were saved from the flood.

The world around Noah lived in a different kind of house. They lived in sin, rebellion, wickedness, debauchery, and idolatry. Their house was corrupt, and God determined to destroy it. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and his faith and obedience saved his house. For had Noah perished in the flood, his way of life, his habitation, would have perished with him. Turn to Hebrews 11:7... "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark **to the saving of his house**; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

### The House of Israel

Each of the patriarchs in the Old Testament "built a house". In Genesis 18:19 the Bible speaks of the household of Abraham, those who will follow him on this earth in the promises of God. In Genesis 46:27 it says: "all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten." Verse 26 says that these are those "which came out of his loins". That is, they were those whom he had brought forth with his own life, in his own image, and they were continuing his life in the earth. They were "the house of Jacob". They were the fruit of his 147

years of pilgrimage here. The elders spoke to Boaz in Ruth 4:11-12, and said: "The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did **build the house of Israel**; and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem; And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman." How did Rachel and Leah build the house of Israel? Laying bricks, or nailing boards? Of course not! They did it by giving Jacob 12 sons to carry on his life in the earth. They built the house of Israel! And the house of Boaz was to be built of the seed which the Lord would give him of Ruth.

Leviticus 10:6 speaks of "the whole house of Israel", meaning all 12 tribes. But within that one "house of Israel" were 12 houses. For each son built a house for himself. We read in Exodus 2:1: "And there went a man of the **house of Levi**, and took to wife a daughter of Levi." This is speaking of Amram and Jochebed, the parents of Moses. They were of the house of Levi. Exodus 6:14 speaks of the house of Reuben. In Genesis 50:8 we read of the house of Joseph. In 2 Samuel 2:4 it says: "And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah." The house of Judah is also spoken of in Hebrews 8:8 in the New Testament. The house of Benjamin is mentioned in 2 Samuel 3:19. Now we see King David building a house, or realm of life in the promises of God, for God made a covenant with him. David's house is mentioned in 2 Samuel 3:1 and in Luke 1:27.

These scriptures make it plain that when the Bible speaks of a "house", it is not always talking of a building where men go to eat their meals and get their sleep. Here we see that it is a habitation or realm of life for those who enter into the covenant of the Lord.

### **"Many Mansions"**

Now we come to a very interesting scripture concerning "the house of God". In John 14:1-2 we read: "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." "My Father's house"! Now the natural mind gets a picture of heaven's golden streets with all the beautiful mansions. Surely the Father's house will be the largest and most beautiful in all heaven! How long will it take us to get our minds cleansed and be able to understand truth? God is Spirit, and no structure ever built, in heaven or earth, could ever contain Him. Then what does this mean? What about our mansions? You won't take away our beautiful big mansion will you? No, for you never did have one. Not the one you imagined. For the human imagination, filled with materialism and greed, has dreamed of moving out of these dirty little houses with all their high rents or back-breaking payments, and getting a great big free mansion on Glory Avenue, a beautiful home in the sky. This is not what the Bible is saying at all. When we check the original language of scripture, confirmed by all other translations, we see that God's house consists of many rooms or dwelling places, or realms of abode. The Amplified Bible says: "In My Father's house there are many dwelling places." The New English Bible and Wuest's translation says the same. The Revised Standard Version, Phillips translation, Goodspeed, and the Jerusalem Bible all say "there are many rooms in my Father's house." Rotherham's Emphasized New Testament (very accurate) says: "In the house of my Father are many dwellings".

Just as there was a house for each of Jacob's sons within the house of Jacob, so there is a house or dwelling for each of God's sons in the House of God. Each of Jacob's sons were different, with different promises and different ministries. Judah had the promise of the scepter and produced the kings, starting with David. Levi was the house of priesthood, beginning with Aaron. But they were all the House of Israel.

The truth portrayed to us here is that there is a realm of life where God lives, where He makes His habitation. And in this same dimension of the Spirit, there is a place being prepared for us, that we might live in the same realm that God lives in. Jesus said: "That where I am, there ye may be also." We have lived in a realm where there is death, pain, sickness, sin, doubts, fears, loveliness, tears, tormenting spirits, pain, misunderstandings, and all other human difficulties. But Jesus has come to where we are, shared His life with us, and spread a table for us in the presence of our enemies. This has been wonderful, but it is not all He is doing for us. He is going to change our address. We are moving into a new house, the Father's house... the realm where God lives. A place where there is only eternal victory and glory. Just as the sons of Jacob were born of him, reproducing his life, and receiving each one a house within the house of their father, even so the sons of God have been born of their Father, reproducing His life in the earth, inheriting all things, and each one having a house, a ministry, a realm of dominion in the Father's house.

### **"I Will Dwell in the House of the Lord"**

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psalms 23:6). This is a psalm of David. Does this indicate that David is going to leave his palace on Mount Zion and go to live in the temple on Mount Moriah? Turn to Psalms 27:4... "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." This too is a psalm of David. In one psalm he says that the thing he is seeking is to be able to dwell in the house of the Lord, and in the other he says: "I **will** dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Someone might say: "But he is speaking about the temple on Mount Moriah." In fact, no temple was built during the lifetime of David. Not until after David's death did Solomon build the temple, the "house of God". Then what was David speaking of here by the Spirit? He was crying out in the Spirit to be able to live in that same place where God lives, in that place Jesus spoke of in John 14:2.

Again we read in Psalms 84:10: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness". To be a means of opening the door for others to come into the High Calling, into God's House, is far better than the greatest thing offered by this sinful world. "The tents of wickedness". A tent is symbolic of a temporary dwelling place. This sinful age, with all its glitter and attraction to the natural man, is only temporary. "The pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25). A tent always speaks of a passing order. Turn with me now to 1 Chronicles 17 for a tremendous revelation of God's dwelling place here on this earth...

### **From Tent to Tent**

King David talks to Nathan the prophet about his desire to build a house for the Ark of the Covenant. This golden ark and mercy seat represents the presence of God Himself, and is symbolic of the New Testament Christ in the midst of His people. Up to this point, in 1 Chronicles 17, the Ark had never had a permanent resting place, but had dwelt under tents and tabernacles from the time of its construction. Now David feels that it has reached the place where it will be moved no more, and he wants to build a beautiful temple fitting to the glory of the Ark.

"Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee." (verse 2). Here Nathan speaks out of his own heart, and tells the king the thing that is convenient and pleasant for David to hear. It is a good project, it is for the glory of God; it is an unselfish motive on David's part, and it seems so right to the prophet and to the king. But it is not the will of God. How many times have good prophets, prophets of God, spoken things outside of the true word of the Lord because they seemed so good, so right to his own mind. Nathan is not an evil prophet trying to mislead David. He is God's prophet, the voice of the Lord to the king. He is not afraid to tell David the truth, for it is this same Nathan that puts his finger in David's face and says: "Thou art that man", concerning his sin of adultery and murder. It is only that in this case Nathan did not wait for the word of the Lord. This is the reason why all prophecies have to be judged and put under the two-fold search-light of the Spirit and the scripture. But God is faithful. And that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan. He is to tell David what he does not want to hear. He cannot build God a house. "Go and tell David my servant; Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in; For I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but **have gone from tent to tent**, and from once tabernacle to another."

What did God mean that He had dwelt in tents, going from one tent to another? A tent is a temporary dwelling place. See what the Bible says about Abraham in Hebrews 11:9... "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Abraham was rich, the richest and most powerful man in the country. Why live in a tent, when he could have built the finest house, the strongest walled city of any in the land? He had seen a city. Nothing he could build would ever compare with it. He was a type of those spiritual pilgrims who refuse to build their own kingdom on this earth realm, having seen the glorious promise of God for a realm of life, a dominion, far above anything man could accomplish here. "For here have we no continuing city" (Hebrews 13:14). By building a city, Abraham would have been saying: "I have reached my expectations. This is what I am searching for. I do not expect to move again." But dwelling in tents signify that his present life is only temporary, that he is ready to pull up stakes and make another move, that he is expecting far more than what he now has.

When God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, Abraham was God's witness in this world. And God lived with him. Abraham's life was one of constant wandering, traveling through the land of Canaan which had been promised to him. But this was a temporary situation, a tent. And God lived with him in this tent. But He never let Abraham build a city on this realm. He let him see the city of glory. Jesus said: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad". (John 8:56). Sometimes we find ourselves wandering through a world of sin,

surrounded by enemies of all kinds, yet always victorious in Christ. We know the power and glory of His constant presence, and this is indeed a wonderful place to walk. But it is not God's ultimate for us, there is a greater glory ahead. Aren't you glad that Abraham never built God's permanent dwelling place on this realm?

### **Tents of Israel**

"Wheresoever **I have walked with all Israel**, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?" (1 Chronicles 17:6). God is saying that wherever Israel went, God walked with them, lived with them. But he dwelled in tents. That is, every stage of Israel's journey was only temporary, was a passing order. A tent. But God was with them in every tent. God was with Jacob and his twelve sons, shepherding their sheep, raising their families. A family was being built. But building the family of God's people is not the eternal order for us, and must someday come to an end. So God did not build His house on this realm. Then Israel went to Egypt, eventually came into slavery and tribulation. In their trials and bondage, God was with them, dwelled in this tent with His people. But it was only a tent, and God would not build His house in Egypt's bondage. Praise God for that! Aren't you glad that we do not have to eternally exist as God's people dwelling in Egyptian or Babylonian bondage? Glory to God, there is a day when all bondages are removed! Then through the ministry of Moses, God took them into the wilderness for 40 years. They were free of bondage, but in a wilderness place. Haven't you appreciated the glorious presence of God in this place we are passing through? But praise be to God that it is a passing order, and that God's House was not built in this wilderness! He dwelled with them in a tent. That wilderness tent was a passing order. A new tent was erected when they crossed Jordan and came into the promised land. It was a better tent than they had in the wilderness, or in Egypt's bondage, but it was still a tent. For though God was with them while they lived in Canaan under the judges, yet He did not tell the judges to build Him a house. Gideon, Barak, Jephthah, Deborah, Samuel and the other judges were the voice and leadership of the Lord to Israel. Living under the judges was being led by the Spirit. Being led by the Spirit is a marvelous realm of life, but there is something higher, something eternally permanent where God will "build His House".

### **David Pitched a Tent**

"But the Ark of God had David brought up from Kirjathjearim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem." (2 Chronicles 1:4). David knew by the Spirit that the Ark (God's glory and presence) belonged in the city of God, Jerusalem, and not in the tabernacle down at Gibeon. He knew that God's permanent house should only be built when Israel was in divine order, under a King. He thought he was that King. But God tells David that he is not going to build the house of the Lord. God tells David that though He had made him a mighty man in the earth, and had been with him in all his battles, David was a bloody man, a man of war. And this house is not going to be built on that realm. It is wonderful to have God with us in all our battles and trials of life, so that we come through victoriously. But thank God this is a passing order, a tent. We shall not always be fighting the devil, overcoming temptations, casting out devils. For God has prepared for His people a rest. There is a realm in God where



there is no more war, no devil to fight, no temptations to overcome. And in this place will God build His permanent home, His house.

### **"Thy Son Shall Build My House"**

"And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son." (1 Chronicles 17:11-12).

Some may think that Solomon was the fulfillment of that promise, but only partially and temporary. Some of the things God said were never fulfilled in Solomon. That scripture was never fulfilled until Jesus came. We read in Luke 1:31-33... "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Here is the one that God said would build His house. Here was the one who was a Son to the Father, the one who established the realm of Sonship.

More than 300 years after Solomon had built the temple, the Lord spoke through the prophet in Isaiah 66:1-2 and said: "Thus saith the Lord the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me? And where is **the place of my Rest**? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." He thus signifies that His promise to David has not yet been fulfilled, and therefore that Solomon was not that son that He spoke of that was to build His house.

### **Jesus Builds a House**

God says two things in 1 Chronicles 17, verses 12 and 14 concerning a house. "He (the Son) shall build me an house", and "I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom forever." Jesus was the first man on the earth realm to ever build God a habitation where He could live and reveal Himself in His fulness. Jesus built Him a house of holiness, of obedience, of sinless perfection, of humility and compassion and true Godly love. This is a place where God can live. And for the first time He has a habitation on the earth. He could not live in a temple made by the hands of sinful men. Solomon's temple was only a shadow of the real and permanent House of God. "God was in Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:19).

The Father has a house in heaven, a realm of life, a habitation and means of expression. For heaven is perfect, sinless and eternal. And this is the only kind of habitation that God could have. But no one had ever built such a house on the earth realm, in the physical world. Until Jesus came. Jesus built the Father a house to live in, a life so sinless, so perfect, so full of wisdom and grace that even God could feel at home in it. Everyone has certain requirements for any house they might live in. If you said to me that you had built a house for me, and that it was free and all I had to do was to move in, I would certainly take a look at it. But if it was just an oversized dog

house, no doors, no windows, just one room with straw on the floor, and a hog trough out front to eat out of, I would tell you very quickly that I would not feel at home in such a place. I am not a dog, I like a kitchen in my house, a rug on the floor, a bed in the bedroom, and a few other things pertaining to human life. Then I would feel more at home in the house. God cannot feel at home in a house full of gossip, lust, fears, profanity, and all the other things connected with a life of sin. The house Jesus built had none of that kind of furniture in it. His life was a place where God could feel at home.

### **A Stranger and a Pilgrim**

The Bible tells us that Old Testament men of faith recognized that they were strangers and pilgrims on this earth, and that our citizenship is in heaven. We are not citizens of this dying world of sin, this mortal realm where death reigns. We have been given a new birth, and made citizens of a realm of life, righteousness, divine health, wisdom, love, joy, peace, etc. Though my spirit has been lifted into the heavenlies where I am a citizen, my body still dwells in the realm of mortality, and I don't feel at home here any more. I am an heir of immortality and eternal life, and I am groaning in my spirit for my body to be redeemed to this glorious place. I'm pressing toward the place where my body can provide God's habitation on this physical earth (as Jesus did) where He can fully express Himself again in His house. I want to be a house fit for the Father to dwell in. And thank God, beloved, the day is at hand when we are changing our address from Mortality to Immortality, from Corruption to Incorruption. We are ready to put on our house from heaven.

### **Our House from Heaven**

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." (2 Corinthians 5:1-4).

Now it is evident in this scripture we just read that the "tabernacle" spoken of is our physical bodies. But the "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" is not just another body already created and stored up, as it were, on a shelf in heaven, waiting for us to put this one in the grave so we can put the other one on. For you see, you're not really going to get rid of this present body... If you put it in the grave, it is coming out at the resurrection. If you remain till Jesus comes, this present body will be changed and made immortal, and you'll have to keep it from then on. What about that "house eternal in the heavens"? This is the realm of God that our present bodies **and** our spirits must come to. So we groan, desiring to be loosed from the realm of mortality and death, and released into the habitation of life, immortality, and eternal perfection in God. The truth is that the house from heaven will clothe us over, "that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

This earthly house where our present bodies or tabernacles dwell, is to be dissolved. This realm that we have known as our "earthly life" is actually a drying life, a passing order, a temporary tent. Jesus said in John 14:2: "I go to prepare a place for you". Had He not already provided God a house, a habitation on the earth during His 33 years in His physical body? But now He indicates that there is a higher order than this, and it can only come by His death, burial, and resurrection. So that the life He brings us into is a resurrection life. "That I may know Him in the power of His resurrection".

### **"What House Will Ye Build Me?"**

Stephen preaches his final sermon on this earth to the Jewish council. Now if you were going to preach your final message, and it was going to cause your death, you would surely want it to be of great importance and a weighty subject. Stephen preaches about the House of the Lord. He tells them in Acts 7:44-50 that the temple Solomon built is actually not the real House of God, and certainly not Herod's temple, now sitting up on Mount Moriah. This strikes at the very heart of their ecclesiastical system, and enrages them as nothing else can. To infer that our beautiful temple is not where God dwells, that we are not His people, His habitation... it is blasphemy and worthy of death!

But what Stephen is telling them is that Jesus the Christ is the habitation of the Father, and only in Jesus can they find God. And he quotes the prophet Isaiah to prove his point. They cannot argue with Isaiah, so they stopped their ears, cast out Stephen and stoned him to death. This is the way every earthly system reacts to the reality of God's truth. They cannot stand before the living Word of God, so they stop their ears, cast out the men of God and brand them as heretics.

### **"Destroy this House..."**

When the Jews asked Jesus for a sign (John 2:18-21), Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body." The word for temple used here is the Greek word: "naos", which means a dwelling place.

What Jesus is saying to them is: "You go ahead and destroy this house that I have built for God to live in on this earth, you kill my physical body, but in three days I will raise it up". And when He raises it up again here on this earth, it will be a many membered Body. Now I know that the physical body of Jesus was resurrected on the third day, but it was never established again as a temple on this earth for a habitation of God. He never went out in His resurrected body to preach the gospel or heal the sick and manifest the Father. After appearing a number of times to some 500 of His disciples over a period of 40 days, He ascended with that body into heaven where He will remain until the times of the restoration.

But we have now come to that third day. Jesus said: "Go ye, and tell that fox (Herod), Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." (Luke 13:32). He will again raise up the House of God, which is the Body of Christ. They destroyed one body, as a corn of wheat, but He is raising up a many-membered body, as a great harvest.

This many-membered body, the sons of God, the Overcomer, the Zion of God, is the place where God will live on this earth. He shall rule out of Zion. His throne shall be in His sons. Kings and priests unto God and our Father. Glory to God!

### **Ye are the House of God**

Back to Hebrews chapter 3 again to confirm this great truth. "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, **as a servant**, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ, **as a son** over his own house; WHOSE HOUSE ARE WE, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Notice here that the house of Moses was a house of a servant, a house of doing, a realm of servitude and obeying the laws of God. But Christ established a new house, a house of Sonship, a house of "becoming" His likeness and His habitation. You are that House.

Read with me in Ephesians 2:19-22... "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the **household of God**; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit". Need I say more: Is it not plain and simple, yet powerful and life-giving?

### **The Anointing Filled the House**

In John chapter 12:1-5, we read the story of Mary anointing the feet of Jesus with a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly. Verse 3 says: "The house was filled with the odour of the ointment". Let me tell you here that the House of the Lord (which house you are) will be **filled** with the odour of this glorious last day anointing of the fulness of the Spirit poured out upon the "feet" of the Body of Christ. This anointing is for the deliverance of groaning creation. For in verse 5 Judas tells us that the value of it is "300 pence". We know that 300 is the number of divine deliverance... Gideon's army, Noah's ark, Solomon's golden shields, etc.

Jesus spoke to the Jews in Luke 13:35 and said: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." That is, the realm that the Jews had lived in and known God in, was finished. God would never deal with them again through the blood of bulls and goats. God would never again accept their sacrifices in the temple. "The law and the prophets were until John (the Baptist)" said Jesus. Now a new house is established.

### **A House Divided**

When the scribes from Jerusalem accused Jesus of casting out devils by the power of the devil, He said (Mark 3:23-27)... "How can Satan cast out Satan? And **if a kingdom** be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And **if a house** be divided against itself, **that house cannot stand**. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except **he will first bind the strong man**; and then **he will spoil his house**."

Now Jesus here is talking about Satan's house. He is spoiling Satan's house by casting devils out of people. To bind a strong man, you must be stronger than he. And Jesus proved that he was much stronger than Satan. I declare unto you that Satan is to be bound by the sons of God, and his house is to be completely spoiled. Every devil cast out, every sickness healed, every sin eradicated, every bondage delivered, and every prison door opened and the captives set free. This is the purpose of this great anointing upon the sons of God in these last days.

A man can be a house or dwelling place for evil spirits. In Matthew 12:43-45 we read the words of Jesus: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return **into my house** from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state **of that man** is worse than the first".

When a devil is cast out of a person, his house needs to be destroyed, and a house of godliness and righteousness built in it's place. The man in the story remained in the same realm of sin after the evil spirit was gone, and it wasn't long until he was filled with more demons than he had ever had before. When you are delivered of a demon of lust, or alcohol, or tobacco... do not continue the unclean acts which gave expression to that spirit and formed him a habitation. Turn away from smoking, drinking, etc., lest you open the door to many other things even worse, and end up in terrible demon possession.

### **The House of the Harlot**

In the book of Proverbs is a story of a young man being enticed into the house of a harlot. Proverbs 2:18-19 says that her house inclineth unto death, and that none that go unto her can take hold of the paths of life. Now a harlot is a type of the false system of religion, ecclesiastical denominational order of man-made churchianity. Beware, sons of God, that you are not enticed into her evil ways of division and bondage. I am not the first prophet that ever cried out against the harlot system. In Jeremiah 5:7 we read: "How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are not gods; when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses." The house of the harlot is built upon sinking sand. Matthew 7:24 says: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." Yes, friend, the rain is coming, the storm will beat upon your house. Only that built upon the Rock will stand through the last day storm.

### **The Glory of the Latter House**

Now we come to the great climaxing truth of this message. Let us read Haggai 2:3... "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? And how do you see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" You see, Haggai was a post-captivity prophet. That is, he prophesied to the remnant that had returned from Babylon to rebuild the temple and restore the city of Jerusalem. But once out of Babylon and back in Canaan, they settled down to build their own houses, and failed to build the House of the Lord. In Haggai 1:2 the people said: "The

time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built". But in verse 4 the Lord spoke through Haggai and asked them if it was time for them to build their own houses and let the house of the Lord lie waste. Yes, men today are building their own houses, their own little kingdoms, their churches, fellowships, little denominations, and communes. But they are not building God's house.

The people said that the work was too great, they did not have the substance or strength to build. And even if they did, it would not compare with the glory of Solomon's temple, built in the zenith of Israel's wealth and power. That is what folks are saying today about building God an earthly habitation, a body to live in. We could never, they say, attain to the glory of the house or life of Jesus Christ, that first temple of God. We have too many enemies within us, too little of the nature of God (gold), and it is just impossible for anyone today to be like Jesus. Also it is really impossible to have a many-membered body of people who measure up to a glorious church without spot or wrinkle. That will just have to wait for heaven, they say. But God said (Haggai 2:3)... "Look at this mess around you here, look at the so-called church... the stones all broken down and separated by barriers of many kinds. How does this compare with the glory of that first temple, the firstborn Son of God in all His glory?" Yes, the Lord says, be strong, for I will do what I have promised, and you shall build me a house. And the glory of the latter (last) house will be greater than that first house. Read it (verses 6-9): "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver (redemption) is mine, and the gold (the nature of God) is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts". Five times in this short scripture the prophet uses the phrase: "Saith the Lord of hosts", for he certainly did not want Israel to think that these were his own words. They are the words of God. What are you saying Haggai? That out of this pile of rubble, this poor weak people are going to be built a greater and more glorious temple than that of Solomon? Why, that's ridiculous, in fact, it's almost blasphemy! Surely you don't know how glorious that temple was! Yes, I do, but I also know what God is saying. He is saying that in spite of how glorious that house was that Jesus built for God to live in, the last house that He will build out of the living stones of His people will be even more glorious, and the glory of God shall fill it here on this earth.

### **"Greater Works from a Greater House"**

Jesus Himself said: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; AND GREATER WORKS than these shall he do; **because I go unto my Father.**" (John 14:12). That first house that God lived in on this earth was only one body, could only be in one place at a time, was subject to many limitations of earthly life, could be subjected to death. But because He went to the Father, through death, burial, and resurrection, He prepared a place for us. He made it possible for another house to be built. He builds the house, and becomes a Son over His own house. This latter house comes into resurrection glory, receives immortality, and defeats every enemy in living bodies here on this earth. God will live in this many-membered house in His fulness, and pour His glory into that house. It is your opportunity to be a part of that great latter house, beloved... rejoice and praise God for it!

Everything brings forth after it's own kind. This is a principle that is true in the natural as well as in the spiritual. To get corn, you must plant the corn. You can only get cattle from other cattle. Fallen man can only produce other fallen men. And Jesus is bringing forth sons in His own image. But notice something... He never sent the Holy Spirit upon them, never gave them this birth in the Spirit, until after His resurrection. John 7:39 says that "The Holy Ghost was not yet given; **because** that Jesus was not yet glorified." For it was to be His resurrection life that they were to receive. Isaac never had any sons until after his trip with Abraham to Mount Moriah where "in a figure" (Hebrews 11:19) he was raised from the dead. And the sons of God could not be brought forth until after the resurrection. The Old Testament saints looked forward to it, and though they received a good report through faith (Hebrews 11:39), they could not receive the promise until after the resurrection. God's House is to be built on the foundation of a resurrected Christ, after the power of an endless life... a true Melchisedec priesthood!

So this is why the latter house will be greater than the former. The first house, in the body of Jesus Christ, though it was perfect and glorious and a fit place for the Father to dwell in... it was in a body that had not yet come through the resurrection. He did not bring forth sons on that plane, in that image. It was **after** the resurrection that He poured out His Spirit, and began bringing sons to glory. And it is children of the resurrection that will make up this glorious last house of God! What a high calling we have received, beloved! Be faithful! You are the house of the Lord! Walk in holiness, in sincerity. Provide the Father the furniture in His house that will make Him feel at home... love, joy, peace, longsuffering, faith, etc. Let God by His Spirit build in you a way of life, a realm of living, that is above the corruption and confusion of this present age. We are citizens of another way of life, another world. But our city is coming down! And the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. Our house shall rule and reign on this earth, and every other house, every other realm of life other than God's life will be shaken and destroyed. All creation shall shout for joy at the manifestation of the Sons of God, the end-time House of the Lord! Glory to God, hallelujah!

### **The Hearing Ear**

In the first six verses of this chapter we found that Moses was faithful in his house as a servant, but that the house of Christ was the house of Sonship. We dealt with the fact that we, the body of Christ, are the house, the habitation of God through the Spirit.

Now in the rest of this chapter, God gives a solemn warning lest we let unbelief keep us from going on with God into the fulness of His promises. Beginning in verse 7, God uses the Israelites in the wilderness as the example of how we can miss God through unbelief.

The first point he brings out in verse 7 is to hear the voice of God. Beloved, this is the first requisite. If we cannot hear God's voice, if we cannot recognize the sound of the trumpet, if we cannot know the true message when it comes forth, then we will be in no position to believe and to enter in to the promises of God. We must be able to hear and to hear with the ear of the Spirit. Jesus continually said to the people: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear..." In Proverbs 20:12 it says: "The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them". Here we see that those who have a hearing ear have it because God gave it to them. Oh, beloved, bear this in

mind. If you have heard the voice of the Lord, if you have recognized the message of the hour, let this not bring forth in you a boastful heart. Let not your own spirit become exalted, as though you had accomplished something in yourself. If you have a hearing ear, it is because God has given it. Let this bring to your heart a humility. Let this bring to your heart a recognition of the marvelous grace of God who has chosen you, a vessel of clay, to whom He would make known His marvelous, eternal truths.

Jesus said in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me." The first requisite to supping with the Lord and having that beautiful fellowship in the Spirit is to hear His voice. How can you expect to have the secrets of God made known to you if you cannot recognize His voice? Jesus said in John 10: "My sheep know my voice, and another they will not follow". Many people today cry: "wolf" at anything they hear preached that does not sound like what they had been hearing all their lives. They are afraid to listen to new truths for fear that they will be deceived and be swallowed up by false doctrines. How, in heaven's name, can people expect to go on into the unsearchable riches of Christ and to understand the unfolding and progressive purposes of God if they refuse to hear?

We read in Hebrews 12:25: "See that you refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." There is a voice of one this day speaking from heaven. Though He is using human vessels through which to sound the trumpet, yet it is the voice of Him who ruleth in the heavens. Those who have ears to hear will hear what He has to say to us today, and thus have faith to believe to enter in to God's rest.

"Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the wilderness." Here in Hebrews 3:8 we find the second requisite to entering in to our promises, and that is, "harden not your hearts". Oh, beloved, there is such a temptation as we are marching through this wilderness journey, to get a hardness of heart through all the manifold tribulations that come upon us. Recognize that everything that comes is coming from the hand of God. Be ready to praise God for it, and do not become embittered in your heart towards the Lord our God. Those who become bitter think they are bitter at their enemies, when in reality, they are becoming embittered at God who has allowed the tribulations to come upon them.

The hardness of heart must be removed. God said through the prophet Ezekiel, "I will take out the stony heart and put in a heart of flesh." God is not looking for great deeds or great exploits, but God is looking for that one who has a contrite spirit and a softness of heart, a tender heart, a kindness and longsuffering. People are becoming defiled and missing the purposes of God because of bitterness in their hearts, and they know it not. Beloved, I know what I am talking about. You would have to live in the midst of religious hypocrisy where very pious, religious people were making every effort to destroy your work for God, to understand the temptation that can come upon the heart to become bitter. If you could see the inward workings of religious hierarchies where political maneuverings are carried shamelessly and men of God become ensnared in a system that causes them to become animalistic in nature, devouring one another and destroying their brother for their own political advantage.



Yes, even in Israel's journey through the wilderness, there were men who tried to overthrow the authority of Moses and to take over the leadership for themselves, though they were not called to this by God. Entire houses were swallowed up by the earth in the judgments that came as a result. And today entire churches and ministries are being swallowed up by the spirit of this world. God says: "I was grieved with that generation..." How grieved He must be in this, our generation, who have the greatest light since the Son of God ascended up on high, and yet who are, in so many cases, striving only to build a man-made kingdom. Yes, today as then, it is a day of provocation, but He warns us, "harden not your hearts". Then, as now, the people saw the mighty works of God. Miracle-working powers were performed among them; yet, they hardened their hearts against God.

Therefore, God says in verse 10 that He was grieved with that generation. He says the error was in their heart, not in their head, but in their heart. It was not their understanding that was deficient; it was not that their doctrines were wrong; it was their desires, their inward life. They would not allow the Holy Spirit to conform them to the image of Christ. God says, "they have not known my ways". Oh, God give us people who learn the ways of the Lord! The Bible says that the children of Israel saw His acts, but to Moses He made known His ways. There is a Moses company in this hour who are learning the ways of the Lord. Beloved, when you know how God operates, when you know how He thinks, when you know what the principles are He works by, then you have no trouble knowing whether this thing or that thing is from God or not. Learn to know the ways of God. Get acquainted with our Lord. He wants you to become intimately acquainted with Him.

"know Him". Paul cried out in Philippians 3:10, "Oh, that I may know him". This is the cry of our hearts today. To **know** the Lord and to become acquainted with His ways. Many have seen the miracles; many have seen the great works of God; but to those that are learning His **ways** and are becoming acquainted with Him and the principles by which He operates, those are the ones He is calling into Sonship. Although the promise had been given to all and Canaan's land had been prepared for them, yet, because of their unbelief and hardness of heart, God swore in His wrath that that generation would not enter into His rest.

Now we come to verse 12 and it says, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God." There are many people who would sanctimoniously inform you that they were born again and Spirit-filled and did not indulge in the gross sins of smoking, drinking, sex-lust, narcotics, stealing, and profanity. But, if the truth were known, they have evil hearts full of unbelief because they resist the truth when it comes to them. Beloved, it takes a heart of unbelief to resist the truth of God. If your heart is right with God, when you hear the truth, it will witness to your heart, and you will gladly embrace it and grow thereby. If you resist the truth of God, it is because you have an evil heart of unbelief. This, my friend, will cause you to miss the promises of God. Verse 13 tells us that sin is deceitful. If sin were only those things that were listed in the constitution and bylaws of the church system, then we could easily know what to avoid. But sin is deceitful.

I must relate here a personal experience I had with this chapter. One time, years ago, we were living in a little house at the edge of a village in Carney, Oklahoma. Our only bathroom was an

outdoor privy, or an outhouse, as some call them. We had no hot water in the house. In fact, until we were able to have a well dug, we had no water at all and had to carry water from a neighbor's house. It was during this time that our youngest girl, Rachel, was born and seeing my wife have to take care of herself and her newborn baby under these conditions, began to do something to me. I had been successful in the insurance business and was zone manager for a very fine company, but the Lord had pressed on my spirit to quit my job and give full-time to the ministry of writing and radio preaching. Our expenses were heavy and had been sufficiently met by my earnings at my job. But when I was without a job, the expenses went on while the money coming in was cut off. Things got in very bad shape. Financially, it seemed that the door to heaven was closed. Night after night I would stand in the field behind our house and look up at the stars and say, "Father, I know you own every one of those stars. I know you own the cattle on a thousand hills. You have in your hands the hearts of millionaires who would not even miss the amount that it would take to bring us through this financial crisis. Father, I do not doubt your ability to meet our needs. The question in my heart is, why are you not meeting those needs? Why are you letting us go like this?" Night after night I cried to God. Our bills were getting behind. We hardly had money to feed our children. We lost our car and it looked as though we would lose our little home. Unknown to me, a bitterness against God was beginning to creep into my heart. I did not recognize this until one night I went to a service in Oklahoma City. The preacher was preaching on the first part of Hebrews 3. I had with me an Amplified New Testament, and began to read this chapter in the Amplified, reading ahead of where he was preaching. I came to verse 8, and in the Amplified it says: "Do not harden your hearts, as happened in the rebellion of Israel and in their provocation and embitterment of Me in the day of testing in the wilderness." I stopped and read that phrase again, "embitterment of Me". Then I realized that the children of Israel in the wilderness were bitter at God. I said, "God, why were they bitter at you?" And the Lord spoke to me as I sat there in the service that night and said: "They became embittered at Me because they knew I could do better than give them bread and water. I gave them manna from heaven and water from the rock, but they lusted after flesh. They knew that if I desired, I could give them quail, and they were bitter at Me because I was not doing as much for them as they knew I was capable of doing." I thought to myself, "what a wicked and rebellious people. They did not deserve to go into the promised land, becoming embittered like that at God." Then the voice of the Lord spoke to me and said: "Son, that's the condition you are in. You are becoming bitter at Me." I cried out in horror, "Oh no, Lord, not me, I'm your son. I wouldn't be bitter at you no matter what". He said: "You are becoming bitter because you know in your heart and have faith to believe that I am able to meet all your financial needs; and yet, you are wondering why I am not doing it, and bitterness is coming into your heart."

As the light of His Word shined upon my heart, I recognized that it was true, and right there in my seat, while the preacher in the pulpit was continuing his message, I had an altar call and cried out to God for repentance and for forgiveness. I said: "God if you will cleanse me from this awful thing, I will never complain or become bitter at my circumstance you bring me into, regardless of what it is". God graciously forgave and cleansed my heart; and I went from that service victorious. I committed the future, financially and otherwise, into His hands. And do you know what friends? My victory opened the windows of heaven; and before the week was out, the financial bondage was broken, and I began to receive substantial gifts from unexpected sources all over the country. (These came in spite of the fact that we had made no mention to anyone of

our needs. God will not allow us to tell of any need that we might have). As soon as I had won the victory in my spirit, God began to speak to those who had the ministry of giving and who could hear His voice. Yes, beloved, sin is deceitful; and sometimes we get ensnared without even knowing that we are guilty until the Word of the Lord exposes us.

So, as we finish up the third chapter of Hebrews, we see God emphasizing the awfulness of unbelief and warning us that this will keep us out of the land of rest. The chapter ends by saying: "They could not enter in because of unbelief." Now, as we get ready to go into chapter 4 and take a look at the rest of God, let us cleanse our hearts from unbelief, and ask God's Spirit to search us and illuminate our hearts by His Word, that we might see ourselves as He sees us.

Another principle is stated in verse 13: "Exhort one another daily". Beloved, whether you believe it or not, you need me, and I need you. We need to exhort one another. Sometimes folks write to me and tell me of some trend they see in my writings. Perhaps they feel that I am putting too much emphasis on one phase of the message. Or perhaps they feel that I am getting hardness of heart because of my message against the Babylonian system. But there are those, and I thank God for them, who are concerned enough to write me and to exhort and rebuke me in the Spirit. They cannot know how seriously I take these exhortations. I do not cast them aside as just another complaint; for, beloved, I want to be right. I want to enter into God's rest, and one thing we need in order to make the grade is to exhort one another daily. So if I hit you where it hurts, if I stir you up, thank God for it; I am doing it for your benefit, and I am doing it because I love you.

Verse 14 points out the absolute necessity of steadfastness. It is not enough to have revelation of coming Sonship. It is not enough to feel the anointing and to enter into an experience with God. It says we must continue, and to hold fast the beginning of our confidence, steadfast unto the end. Oh, beloved, there is much tribulation in the world today. There are many pressures coming against those who are pressing into Sonship. But I exhort you, hold fast your confidence, steadfast unto the end. The one who wears the crown is not he who starts the race in a flurry of enthusiasm, nor he who is out in front at the end of a half mile, but it is the one who crosses the finish line.

So bear in mind that all things are coming to an end; and that God intends in His purposes for us to remain steadfast to the end of this race. He has the power to bring us through. Blessed be His Name! We are all running in a race, but the crown is given to him that finishes. So run that you may obtain! In many places in the Bible it says: "And it came to pass". And let me say to you friends, no matter how hard your trials are, they have come to pass and in God's time they shall pass. Hold steadfast to the end, and remain faithful to Him Who has called you.

## Chapter 4

As we enter into the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Hebrews, we are immediately struck by the burden of the Holy Spirit expressed here through the writer of Hebrews to bring us into God's rest. The last 2 verses of chapter 3 give a solemn indictment against those who, because of their unbelief, could not enter into the promised land. Those Israelites in the days of Joshua, both those who entered into the promised land and those who failed to do so because of their unbelief, are only types and shadows of that greater company, the eternal Church of Jesus Christ, who are destined to enter into God's promised land, the fulness of the Spirit. So, also, there are those today who, like the unbelieving Jews, will fail to receive the fulness of God because of their unbelief. Nothing that God ever spoke has failed to come to pass. His Word has always been true. Therefore, it is a terrible sin and an insult to God's character to doubt His promises for His church. This is the one sin that is guaranteed to keep people from entering into the precious promises given by the Spirit. Our failures, our shortcomings, our inability, are not mentioned as reasons why we shall miss the fulness of the Kingdom. The one thing God is warning us strongly about in this portion of scripture is **unbelief**. Hearing the gospel, and even acting upon it in a measure is not enough.

### "Land of Milk and Honey"

The Jews heard the good news of the Promised Land. They even sent spies in to spy out the land. They brought back the fruit of the land. They told of the land that flows with milk and honey. And after judgments of God came upon them in Numbers 14, they decided they would go ahead and go into the Promised Land, in spite of Moses' admonition that God had changed His mind, was going to judge them for their wickedness and take in their children in a future generation. In Numbers 14:40 we read, "And they rose up early in the morning and get them into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised: for we have sinned. And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the Lord? But it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the Lord is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies." But the people were stubborn. Just as they would not listen to the promises of God, now they would not listen to God's rebuke through His servant, Moses. So they tried to go on up to the top of the hill and press on into the Promised Land on their own accord and with their own strength. But, the Bible says that the Amalekites and the Canaanites came down and smote them and threw them out of the land. So it is today. We see those who refuse to take the Promised Land God's way. They refuse to hear the voice of the Spirit to make an end to the Adam nature, and enter into the fulness of God as the Lord has promised. But then as it were, they suddenly sense that they are about to miss out on something great, and so, they attempt to go into the holy things of God with the natural mind and with the natural strength. But the Amalekites, a type of the flesh, and the Canaanites, a type of satanic powers, will defeat them, and **do** defeat them even as in the days of Moses. The Word that was preached unto them did not profit them because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it. And so today, the hearts of carnal men full of unbelief do not profit from either the word of promise or the word of rebuke, because they do not mix faith with that which they hear. Trying to fulfill the promises of God by natural strength or by the cunning of man's mind is not the answer. There must come an

end of man's strength and an entering into God's rest. This is the Sabbath, the rest that God is speaking to us about here in Hebrews 4.

### **God's Sabbath**

The words of the song writer express so beautifully that condition which will exist in the earth when men have entered into God's rest, when Jesus Christ is truly Lord and when the Adam nature has been put to the Cross.

"He will heal your broken-hearted,  
He will cause your blind to see;  
He will make your lame to walk again,  
He will set your captives free.  
Every prison will be opened,  
Every yoke He'll take away;  
And the Lord shall reign in Zion,  
For it is God's Sabbath Day.

Rivers shall flow in the wilderness,  
Floods from heaven descend;  
All the earth shall be filled with His holiness,  
Forever, world without end.

Every valley shall be exalted,  
Every mountain made low.  
The crooked shall be straight again,  
Ere the Spirit of the Lord shall flow.  
Like rivers in the high place,  
Like floods on the burning sand;  
Upon the poor and needy,  
God's blessing shall descend."

This chapter in Hebrews makes it plain that the Sabbath day is not just a Mosaic law concerning one day in the week, nor is it the natural land of Canaan that the Jews look forward to entering, nor is it just the thousand year Day of the Lord or Kingdom Age which we are about to enter. The Sabbath of God is a relationship to God, a place in God where He is absolute Lord and where the fulness of God is manifested in His people. God will not stop working until He brings this about. In the creation of this world, God worked for six days bringing into being this creation, and He did not stop working until He had His creation as He desired it, including the creation of His man who should rule this world. But that Adamic creation is only a small picture of the greater glory that He is bringing about in these past 6,000 years or six days of man's history. These six days of labor by the Lord will end with the creation or bringing forth of a new creation man who will rule and reign with Jesus Christ for 1,000 years. What happens after that Kingdom Age is finished and that thousand years is over, is another part of the mysteries of God's eternal glory and purposes which we shall deal with later. But in this chapter of Hebrews,

there is a divine exhortation for God's people to awaken to the absolute necessity of laying down their own lives and their own labors and the strength of the natural man and letting God be Lord of His creation. This is the doorway into God's Sabbath.

### **Labor by the Spirit**

Entering into God's rest does not mean a lazy attitude of non-work, nor a cessation of activity. There is much to be accomplished in the Kingdom Age. In fact, much more will be done by those who have entered into God's rest than has ever been done before in the history of the Church. But that which is accomplished shall be done by the power of the Spirit. It shall be a ceasing from our own works, a laying down of our own lives. Verse 9 tells us, "There remaineth therefore, a rest to the people of God." This verse makes it plain that the sabbath day was not the seventh day that God gave to the people of Israel by the Mosaic law as the day of rest. Neither is it the land of Canaan that the Jews entered into under the ministry of Joshua. For verse 8 makes it plain that if God's Sabbath was that land of rest that Joshua brought them into when he took them over Canaan, then David would not have prophetically spoken of another day. At the time of the writing of the book of Hebrews, the children of Israel were living in the land of Canaan. Their laws were strict concerning the seventh day sabbath. Yet, verse 9 tells us that at this time there still remains a rest to the people of God. Verse 10 goes on to tell us that anyone who is still working at his own works, in his own power, operating by the natural mind, has not yet entered into God's rest or God's sabbath. Then we have a solemn warning in Verse 11, "Therefore", he says, meaning, because of what we have just been saying, "let us labor to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Those Jews that wandered 40 years in the wilderness have provided us with a vivid example of how we also can miss the Kingdom of God if we exhibit that same kind of unbelief. Labor to enter into His rest. How strange the wording of that statement! How can we labor to enter into rest? How can we work toward coming to the place where we stop working? Philippians 2 says: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." When you try to lay down your own labors, when you attempt to turn loose of the control of your own life and give it over into the hands of God, you will find it to be the hardest work that you have ever done. Yet, this is what the Spirit is calling for. This is how the Spirit is leading us and directing us. Labor to enter into rest.

### **The Living Word of God**

Now we come to a powerful scripture, one that is familiar to all Bible lovers. In verse 12 we read, "For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Amplified Bible expresses it thus: "The word that God speaks is alive and full of power--making it active, operative, energizing and effective." And we read in Wuest's Expanded Translation: "For actively alive is the Word of God and energetic and sharper than any twoedged sword." Rotherham's Translation says: "For living is the Word of God and energetic." The Moffat's Translation is very expressive: "For the Logos of God is a living thing, active and more cutting than any sword with double edge". Now we understand that the word, the Logos of God, is more than the written Scriptures. It is God's

expression in every way that God has spoken and expressed Himself to mankind. Christ Jesus Himself was the Logos, the Living Word of God. For God expressed Himself to mankind through Christ. The Christ of the end-time shall be living epistles, the expression of God to their generation. But let me make one thing very plain. Those who think and preach that the scriptures, the written Word, the Bible, is just dead letter and is not the Word of God, are in deep error. For God has expressed Himself to us through the pages of this glorious Book. Just as God's church in the world today does not fully express God's glory and will and purpose to the world, so we understand that the Bible, the written scriptures, even with all the different translations that are offered, cannot give us the full expression of truth that God has given through the original writings of the Law, the Prophets, and the Apostles. But I want to declare to you today that the Kingdom Age shall not end until there has been a full expression of the character and nature of God in His Body on the earth, the church of Jesus Christ, as well as a full expression of God's truth and an understanding of His purposes through the written scriptures, this book we call the Bible. Men are saying today that we no longer need the Bible, that it is only dead letter. They say: "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." It is true that like a sharp twoedged sword, the letter killeth. But it is not the Christ that the letter kills, it is the Adam nature. And that is what God is after. That is why He is revealing Himself, His truth, through the book, that He might slay that dragon that resides in humanity, that Adam nature. For the Spirit cannot bring forth the resurrection life of Christ in humanity until the letter has slain that Adam nature. So throw away the book, if you will, but you'll only find yourself walking in darkness, without light. Verse 12 declares unto us that the Word of God is alive and that it is full of energy. Beloved, here is a divine principle laid down in scripture that will give you an energetic life, that will destroy the afflictions of physical weaknesses that will try to come upon you. Apply the Word of God to your body. Divine energy, divine health, divine life will be yours as you walk and rest in the Word of God.

### **Soul and Spirit**

This Word of God will divide that which is soulish from that which is spirit. I have been in meetings where people were stirred purely on a soulish basis. Tears were shed, shouts broke forth, and yet, when they left, their spirits had not been touched. Songs had been sung with great talent and musical ability. Sermons had gone forth with much eloquence. Large offerings had been taken with a great deal of persuasion. The church building had been beautiful and sumptuous, and decorated to produce awe and a feeling of solemnity, but it was all calculated only to touch the soul life. It is at a time like this when the true Word of God coming forth under the unction of the Holy Ghost will reveal the soulishness of man and divide it from the Spirit of God. The first man Adam was made a living soul. That which is soulish pertains to the first Adam. The last Adam was a life-giving Spirit. That which is spirit pertains to Christ Jesus our Lord. There can be no eternal mixture of Adam and Christ. The Word of God divides asunder the soul and spirit. The Word of God separates the Christ life from the Adamic life. This is the purpose of God to bring us into His rest, and bring us under that sharp sword of the Word of God. The marrow of the bone is that place where the blood is produced, the natural blood that brings life to the natural body. The life of the flesh is in the blood. But flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and the Word of God goes down into the very source of life for this Adam nature, for Adam must be dealt with before the fulness of Christ can come forth. There is

nothing we can hide from God. Everything is open and naked unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. The thoughts and intents of our heart are as open and clear to God as if we spoke them out loud. So there is no reason for us to be anything but honest to the Lord and to ourselves. We cannot deceive Him, and why should we deceive ourselves? God is calling for an honesty in His people. Our shortcomings He is aware of. Our failures He knows about. Our weaknesses are not hid from Him. But He would have us to be honest--honest with Him, with ourselves, and honest with one another. Let us stop deceiving each other, beloved, for a deceptive spirit cannot enter into God's rest, cannot receive the fulness of God's Spirit that He has planned for us.

### **The Throne of Grace**

Now that God has spoken to us a warning about unbelief and given us again the promise of His Sabbath, revealing to us that there is no alternative, there is no other way but to yield to His Spirit and obey the Word of God. Now in verse 14 He begins to deal with the truth of our great high priest who brings all our weaknesses, failures, and shortcomings to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and help in the time of need. The book of Hebrews is a book of better things. We saw in earlier chapters that Jesus had a better nature than that of the angels. He had a better dominion than that of Adam. He had a better house than that of Moses.

And now the Holy Spirit is telling us that Jesus is a better High Priest than the Levitical priests, the sons of Aaron that ministered in the temple there in Jerusalem. More than 30 years after the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus, more than 30 years after the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Spirit-filled Christians, many of them priests who had become believers of the Lord Jesus, were still worshipping in the temple on Mount Moriah. They were still offering up the blood of bulls and goats on the feast days to atone for their sins. They were still looking to the golden altar of incense to offer up incense unto God. But into this temple worship they were trying to bring the truths of the resurrected Christ. Beloved, it will not work. That old order is finished. It is dead. God has laid it aside. You cannot sanctify the temple worship and the Mosaic law any further by bringing the truths of Jesus Christ into that old order. The Aaronic priesthood is no longer God's high priest over His people. We have a better High Priest passed into the heavens, the Lord Jesus Christ He is the administrator of a better covenant. He has offered up, not the blood of bulls and goats, but His own precious blood, efficacious and effective for the cleansing of sin. The blood of bulls and goats offered up by those Levitical priests was only a prophetic promise of the Saviour that was coming to pour out His own life as an eternal offering for the sins of His people. But, before He poured out His life, He lived among men, was touched with the feeling of their infirmities. He was tempted like as we are, yet without sin. No bullock, no goat, no lamb ever knew what it was to be tempted with sin as mankind is tempted. They never knew the desperate cry in the heart of humanity for fellowship with their God. Therefore, the lives and the blood of bulls and goats could not really atone for our sins, nor bring us into right relationship with God. They were only a type, a shadow, a promise, but now we have a High Priest who knows our infirmities, who was tempted as we are, who is touched with our needs as we bring them unto Him, for He lived among us. He knows the lives that we live. And this is the High Priest Whose life was poured out for us, who can truly bring us before God at the throne of grace that we might obtain mercy and find grace in the time of need.



## **Confessing Christ**

Therefore, the Amplified Bible says: "Let us hold fast our confession of faith in Him". We not only confess our sins to Him. We not only confess our failures, our weaknesses, our inability to do as we ought and to be what we should, but we also confess our faith in Christ. We confess His life within us. We confess that He is able to do in us what we are unable to do for ourselves. He is our High Priest, and is there to represent us and knows and understands our needs, and desires to meet those needs. This is our confession. We cannot confess defeat, for we are a victorious people. We cannot confess sorrow and discouragement, for we are anointed with the oil of gladness, as He was. We cannot confess doubt and unbelief, for we are full of faith in Him. We cannot confess our own works, for we have ceased from our own works and entered into God's Sabbath. Thus with these glorious statements about our great High Priest, God prepares our hearts for chapter 5, where He introduces us to the order of Melchisedec.

## Chapter 5

As chapter 4 was the chapter of rest, so chapter 5 deals with spiritual growth and development. Chapter 4 began with a warning about not missing God's true Sabbath, and ends with us being urged to come boldly to the throne of grace. Now, as we enter chapter 5, the matter of the high priest is dealt with. For Hebrews is a book of better things, and here we find that Christ has entered into a better priesthood.

When God ordains men to act in the priesthood on behalf of other men, He knows that those priests are also weak, sinful, and infirm, and need an offering for their own sins. And no one is able to put himself into a priesthood ministry. He must be called of God, as Aaron was. So then we see that it was God who ordained and called Christ to be a priest after a better, more powerful, and more lasting order. Here, for the first time in the New Testament, we are introduced to the Melchisedec priesthood. The next 3 chapters deal with this man and his ministry. Only twice is Melchisedec mentioned in the Old Testament (Genesis and Psalms), but in verse 5 and 6 we see that he is related to Sonship. Verse 5 quotes from the second Psalm where the Father said: "Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee." And immediately he quotes Psalms 110:4: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec".

### "Sons at Rest"

You will never enter the Melchisedec order until you have become a son. For this reason God is birthing a many-membered son company on the earth. It all comes through Him who was the "only begotten of the Father," the first one to enter the Melchisedec order. Notice that Christ did not have to strain for this ministry or this position, but He was called into it. He had entered into the rest spoken of in chapter 4. This is the secret of Sonship. God is on the throne. He has everything in control. There is absolutely no reason to be nervous. Trust Him. Rest in Him. Sons know this. They have learned to turn their lives over to the Father. There are those who have great ambitions to do something for God. They want their lives to count for great things in the Kingdom. But it seems that they find themselves spinning their wheels, put on the shelf, going nowhere. And they become fretful, worried, and restless. They try this thing awhile, and it doesn't work. Then they try something else. Same results. Tell them to sit still and wait on God, and they look right through you. "I've got to get the show on the road". "Time's wasting". "Where's God? Doesn't He know that life is passing me by, and I can't seem to get going?" What's their problem? They haven't matured in Sonship enough to learn to rest in Him. Let Him have the steering wheel, and the accelerator, **and** the brakes. You'll be surprised at how much He can get done with one who has turned everything over to God, and entered into His rest.

In the year of 1950 prophecy went over me that God had chosen me to write and publish His message. For years nothing happened, while I stewed and fretted and dreamed of great things. I sold life insurance, worked as a radio announcer and gospel disc jockey. I preached on radio, and in pulpits here and there, pastored, did construction work, and went back to selling insurance. Finally, after ten years, I had our first tract printed and mailed out to a few hundred addresses. Believe me, those ten years were hard to come by. Our whole family experienced a furnace of divine dealings. We learned patience, and trust in God, and confidence in the fulfillment of His

revealed purpose in our lives. I cannot tell you the times that I had to pull my car over to the side of the dusty country road in the flat plains of Kansas, and plead with God to give me the strength and determination to drive to one more farmhouse, make one more call, try to sell one more policy. In the summer's heat I could visualize the camp-meetings going on around the country, see myself in the pulpit preaching the end-time message of glorious victory. But here I sat by the side of the road, sweat running down my face, begging God for grace to make it to the next farmhouse. I had a precious family back home, depending on me for next week's groceries. Working on commission meant "no sales--no groceries." Does God know how to burn the impatience out of us? Oh, yes! I **know**.

### **In the Days of His Flesh**

Did Jesus have the same temptations we have? Yes. But without yielding to sin. He overcame in every case. I cannot say that for myself. It was the grace of God, and His life that carried me through. But Jesus went through great travail. He cried to God with prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears. Did He have a dusty Kansas road? Perhaps not, but while others slept, the Bible says He would arise a great while before daybreak and go out into the mountains to pray. In the days of His flesh. Do you think you are going through something that He never experienced? He had a reverence for the will of God. He was heard in His praying because of His piety.

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered". Sons must learn obedience. It is one of the most important ingredients in the life of a son. There must be a trust in the Father, and a complete submission to His perfect will. Still want to be a son? Read further. "By the things which he suffered". The word "suffered" here is the Greek word "pascho", meaning to allow, to endure or experience. It is not speaking of His suffering on the cross. He learned obedience long before He got to Calvary. It was a daily dealing of God throughout His entire life from Bethlehem to Calvary. He endured every circumstance God brought His way. He allowed the perfect will of God to take place in His life, regardless of the humiliation or discomfort. And as a Son, He learned obedience, as all sons must. Are you "suffering"? Are you allowing the will of God to take it's toll on your ways and desires? Are you enduring every circumstance of life, with the knowledge that He is the Lord of your life, and knowing that all things are of God? Satan's attacks cannot destroy a son of God. Job and the devil both found that out. Every attack of the enemy is there only to be overcome. It is the will of God that destroys us. Our old man is crucified, until there is nothing left of us except the Christ that is being birthed within. Enduring this destruction of the self-life, allowing His perfect will to be done in us, is what brings sonship obedience.

Verse 9... "And being made... He became..." There were some things He was not until He entered into them. Perfect? He was perfect when He hit that hay in the manger, wasn't He? In the sense of sin or impurity, yes He was perfect. But in the matter of maturity and fulfilling the purpose of God on this earth... no. He was made perfect, through the dealings of God in His life. He had to learn obedience. He had to endure many things. Then "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Others must also learn obedience, if they are to receive this eternal salvation. He is the example of a perfect son.

## "Hard to be Uttered"

Again in verses 10 and 11 he brings up the subject of Melchisedec. He would like to preach about this glorious subject, this better priesthood. He would like to tell them of the marvelous treasures that are theirs in Christ. But they cannot hear it. Dull of hearing, so he does not waste such truth on them. What a rebuke! Many times I have had to sit silent in meetings, sometimes in conventions, with great truth burning in my heart because there were no ears to hear. In chapters 6 and 7 he again brings up the subject of Melchisedec, and goes into more detail. But first he must talk to them about the difference between milk and meat, and the first principles.

The last 3 verses of this chapter deal with the shame of these Hebrew Christians who had known the Lord for many years, yet had not progressed in their spiritual life. It had seemed enough to them just to know Him as Saviour, like so many of our fundamentalist friends today. But there is a principle of God. When you don't progress in divine truth, you retrogress. Since they wouldn't continue on into deeper truth, soon they found that they needed to be taught again the first principles. Many were returning to temple worship, and Jewish rituals and offerings. Like so many pentecostal people today who refuse to go beyond Pentecost, and end up in old order, man-made systems of religion, and deadness of spirit. Blind eyes that cannot see what God is doing in our day, deaf ears that cannot hear the voice of the Spirit. "Because they received not the love of the truth, for this cause God shall send them strong delusion". (2 Thessalonians 2:11)

Strong meat belongs to the mature sons. So what is keeping you from becoming mature? Can you believe what God is saying today? Can you receive the deeper teaching on Melchisedec and the sons of God? Or are you trying to "stay on good safe ground with a salvation message in the milk of the word"? Well, it's not safe ground. Keep moving, forward, higher. Greater things are in store. We will deal more in detail about the strong meat when we get into chapter 6, regarding the "going on unto perfection".

But remember this... the babes are identified by the fact that they cannot eat strong meat, but must have milk. And even some of the milk messages, sad to say, have been watered down and weakened until the babes can hardly stay alive on it. But there are those, thank God, who have their senses exercised to discern. By reason of use. Don't be afraid of experience. You must learn to know the difference between good and evil. It doesn't say that we accept the evil, but we must know the difference. So we can receive the good and reject the evil. Babes must be carefully fed by others, for they have no discernment of their own. Grow up, saints of God! It is the hour for your maturity! The strong meat of His Word is here. He is revealing great truths about His sons and the Melchisedec priesthood in these last days. It is time for mature sons to break forth. We are coming to full age. Hallelujah! And give the glory to Jesus!

## Chapter 6

We were introduced to the Melchisedec order for the first time in the New Testament back in chapter 5. He then said that he could not speak of the many things that needed to be said concerning this ministry because of the dullness of hearing. He told of those who ought to be teachers, but who had become such as have need of the milk of the Word, and did not even know the first principles of righteousness. How strange it is that those who have studied the Word of God for years can reject the deeper things of God until they become dull of hearing and are not even aware of the basic truths they once knew so well.

Then in the last verse of chapter 5 he speaks of those who are of full age, mature, grown up in God. He says they can eat "strong meat". He is speaking of the deep truths of perfection, coming to maturity, defeating every enemy. They have been exercising their spiritual senses, so that they are able to know the difference between good and evil. The problem with so many of God's people is that they are so busy trying to satisfy the natural man, and exercising the five senses of the natural body, that they lose their ability to discern that which is of God and that which is not. So when God begins to move in the supernatural, they cry "false doctrine" and "false prophets" as though they were experts in the things of God. Thus they miss out on the great and glorious truths and operations of the Holy Spirit for their day.

### **"Therefore Leaving..."**

And now we go to chapter 6, where we are told to leave the first principles and go on to perfection. Notice that it does not say to destroy these first principles, or to throw them away. Just leave them and go on. Everything God has given us on this present plane of life has been as stepping stones to bring us to that permanent more excellent order of Melchisedec. In Hebrews 13:14 we are told that "here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come". Too many preachers build their walls about a certain doctrine, good or otherwise, and settle down to defend that "city". It may be on the salvation level, such as the doctrine of eternal security, or predestination, or personal holiness. It may be about baptisms, such as immersion or sprinkling, Jesus name or trinity, water or spirit. But they establish what they believe is a strong position, and fight to the death to defend it. Years later, when God has moved His people on to greater truth and experiences, you find these little cities still scattered about, somewhat in disrepair, the walls higher and stronger than ever, and the inhabitants trapped behind them starving to death.

In the restoration of the last days, we find certain men whose names are linked with the principles that were being revealed in their day, such as Martin Luther and the repentance from dead works, and John Wesley and faith towards God. Then in the pentecostal revival and the Holy Spirit baptism we find pioneers such as Charles Parham, Frank Bartleman, Henry Seymour, Stanley Frodsham and many others. When we come to the time of the so-called "Latter Rain" revival of 1948-49 and the early 50's, the doctrine of "laying on of hands" (with prophecy) springs up, and we see ministries emerging into the national limelight as George and Ernie Hawtin, Myrtle Beal, Winston Nunes, Omar Johnson and many others. Some of those who were greatly used in that revival have gone on to be with the Lord, others have gone into gross error or gone back to the doctrine of baptisms, while some have built their "Latter Rain" cities and built

strong exclusive and sectarian walls about them thinking that this is the ultimate of God until the "rapture".

### **Resurrection Life**

But as in every revival, there are those who hear the trumpet sound for the next move, and they pull up their tent stakes, get their eyes on the forward moving cloud of His presence and glory, and move on out into new truths. And this is where the life is, the resurrection life of the Son. And verse 2 tells us that this next revival or move (following "laying on of hands") involves resurrection, and then finally judgment. Jesus said the judgment was committed to the Son, but that many-membered son who is to judge this world as well as angels, just first die completely to the Adam life and carnal mind, and be filled with that resurrection life of the Christ. Then, and then only, is he able to properly and righteously be used of God in the eternal judgment of this present age.

"Judge not that ye be not judged", the scripture says. Yet it also tells us that there must be a people who shall judge this world. It is those who have died in Adam (completely), and been made alive in Christ (in the fulness of His life). When there is nothing left in **them** to be judged, then they can judge the world, and angels. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:2-3). So in the period of historical restoration, we have moved past the first four steps, and have now come to the time for the preaching and experiencing power of His resurrection, on our way to perfection. Which means the full maturity or completeness of God's purpose in His body on this earth. And in verse 3 we have that positive statement of faith. "And this will we do.." (in the will of God).

### **Once Enlightened**

We now come to a much misunderstood scripture, which some think make it impossible for anyone to be saved who has ever backslid. They hold it up as an example of the unpardonable sin, which it is not. It is not dealing with the problem of Christians who fall into sin. It is not saying that Spirit-filled believers who "backslide" are forever lost with no hope of forgiveness.

There is a principle of salvation dealt with there which is applicable even to our day. We must remember that this is a letter to the Hebrews. He had just told them in the previous chapter that they ought to be teachers (since the Holy Spirit had been first poured out upon them in Jerusalem 30 years before), but that they had fallen to the place they were forgetting the first principles of the gospel. Many of them which had believed on Jesus Christ for salvation, had turned away from the Law of Moses and circumcision for their righteousness, had been filled with the Holy Ghost and seen and tasted of the miracles prevalent in the early church, were now going back under the law. They were submitting to circumcision. In fact many Spirit-filled, tongue-talking Jewish preachers were following Paul everywhere convincing the churches that they had to be circumcised. Some of them were still observing laws, feast days, ordinances, and offering bulls and goats for deliverance from sin. Many Hebrew Christians were engaged in these very things, thinking that if they had both Jesus and Moses, they would be safer than ever. This was the reason for the writing of this letter to the Hebrews. The whole content of the book deals with

"better things". It shows the end of the law in Christ, the absolute death of all Jewish laws and ordinances and offerings, and the "once for all" offering made by Jesus.

Now we see that God is saying there is no salvation in going back to those laws. Once you have been enlightened, tasted the good word of God, been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if you fall away and reject this, there is no other way of repentance for you. You can't find peace in the old order of the law. Some were trying to do this, and continued to look to the temple rituals and ceremonies, until God sent the Roman army to destroy it and burn it to the ground about 6 years after this book of Hebrews was written. Jesus had prophesied that it would happen, and it did.

### **Better Things**

After this solemn warning, he now tells them that "we are persuaded better things of you." This was a people who had tasted the powers and miracles of the age to come. The miracle working power in the early church was a taste, a foretaste, of that which would be entered into in abundance by the last day church. The word "world" in verse 5 does not mean another planet or ball of clay to replace the earth we live on. It is a word which means "age". It is speaking of the age to come.

The coming age, at which time Satan is cast down and the government of this world is taken over by the sons of God (the kings and priests of Revelation 5), will see the greatest display of God's power in the history of mankind. The "greater works" shall be done, and the power of God manifested to the fullest extent. Glory to God! Already, through the glorious baptism in the Holy Ghost, we have a taste of that power. No one who falls away from that realm of the Spirit can find the fulness of God elsewhere.

### **Through Faith and Patience**

A wonderful truth is brought out in verse 10. We are told here that when we minister to the saints, we are actually showing a labor of love toward the name of the Lord. There are many ways in which we can minister to the saints. A word of encouragement, a prophecy, a prayer for healing, or financial help in the time of need. Simple things like shoveling the snow off the widow's walk, or helping a neighbor hunt a lost cow can be done in the name of the Lord. We tell them we are doing it in His name, because it is what He would do for them in the same case. That way, He gets the glory for it instead of us being praised for our "good and kind nature". A home that is open to a weary traveler, and a table that shows hospitality to his hunger, can be a ministry to the Lord. In chapter 13:2 we learn that sometimes we may entertain angels unawares. I know that of the many hundreds who have passed through our home here in Springfield, there have been many who were angels of blessing to us. There have been those who received our hospitality, and then tried to do us harm, but God never let it turn out to hurt us. I do not know if we have ever entertained a real angel in the sense of a heavenly being, but some of the saints who have stayed with us have blessed us as much as an angel could. Praise God!

"Be not slothful". On the one hand, we preach that you must cease from your own labors, and rest in God. Then we say that you must not be slothful, but work diligently to bless the body of

Christ. How does this harmonize? It means that we stay busy for God, but that we don't work in our own strength or in the wisdom of the carnal mind. Our "work and labor of love" must be done in the Spirit, by His direction, resting in Him.

"Be followers of them who inherit the promises". I can hear someone say, "I'll never follow anyone but Jesus". Well, if you follow Jesus, you will be following those who followed Him ahead of you. Most people are following the example of someone else. A generation of youth began to follow the Beatles and other bugs. Out of that grew a hippie culture, rock music, unrestrained sex, and narcotics to dull the pain. A lost generation, following blindly down the road to death, until they began to discover that the path they were on led to nowhere. And many of them began to find Jesus.

The Apostle Paul said: "follow me as I follow Christ". He was one of those who were out to inherit the promises. And it takes faith. And patience. In chapter 11 we read of some of those who obtained a good report through faith. But they did not yet obtain the promise. They must have patience until the full purposes of God are fulfilled in this earth and this age.

There is a time element. In the fulness of time God will unveil His many-membered Son to this world. No one can hold it back, and no one can rush it. There is a "self-projection" theory by which some feel they can come into perfection and immortality simply by believing it strong enough and declaring it to be so. This is a false and frustrating doctrine. Many who claimed for years that they could not die because they believed and preached that they had already received "life", have gone on to the grave, leaving disappointed and confused people behind. We have been infected in our own church with those who preached that it was all a matter of our faith, that none of the apostles would have had to die if they had just believed strong enough. They tell us that it is all up to us to bring this Kingdom in by faith. The truth is it is up to us to have faith **and** patience. And we shall surely inherit the promises.

### **The Promise to Abraham**

Verse 15 says that Abraham patiently endured and obtained the promise. What was it that God promised him? A seed. A son. And we see in Galatians 3 that the promised seed was not the natural Jew that came through Isaac. It was Christ, the many-membered body of Christ, including you and me. Praise be to God! "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made... and to thy seed, which is Christ. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise". (Galatians 3:16, 29).

The rest of the chapter shows how sure and steadfast the promise is to us. God swore by Himself that He would fulfill the promise to us. It is impossible for God to lie. What a consolation! What a refuge from the confusion and trouble about us in this present age. God want the heirs of promise to rest assured that there is no doubt as to the outcome of this battle. There is a hope set before us, and this hope is a refuge for the weary soul. This hope is an anchor of the soul.

### **Within the Veil**



"Let us go on to perfection". That is how we started out this chapter, and now we come to the climax of this journey in these last two verses. It says that our hope enters into that within the veil. We are not there in person yet, but because He is there, we are there in Him. By faith my anchor is already hooked into that glorious realm of God, and my "ship" is gradually but surely being pulled into His presence. Jesus has already entered. And verse 20 says that He is a "forerunner". That means that someone else is to follow. He is our pattern, that we should follow in His steps. Right through the veil, into the Holy of Holies. Into that realm of God where there is life (hidden manna), divine authority (rod), and perfect righteousness (tables of stone). When these things are ours, then we can begin our Melchisedec priesthood with Him. For it says that Jesus is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. A priest forever. That means there will forever be a need for priesthood of the Melchisedec order.

Melchisedec is mentioned 1 time in Genesis, once in Psalms, 3 times in chapters 5 and 6 of Hebrews, and 6 times in chapter 7. The next chapter of Hebrews has more to say about this mysterious priesthood than all the rest of the Bible put together. So in our next chapter we are going to make a detailed study of this subject. So far the scriptures have already established this much: that Melchisedec is greater than Abraham, is of a higher order than the Aaronic priesthood, is an eternal priesthood, and is fulfilled in the person of Christ... that is, Jesus and His body. And we see plainly that this priesthood operates beyond the veil, meaning that while we are still in this Adamic nature and likeness we are not in the Melchisedec order. The five-fold ministry of Ephesians 4:11 (apostles, prophets, etc.) are **not** the Melchisedec order. They are limited by time. They are only until. This higher order is forever. They operate while still on this earth realm, in this Adam life. Melchisedec operates only after we pass through the veil to where Jesus is, when all sin is removed and the divine authority of the King-Priest is given to us! Oh glory to God!

## Chapter 7

Chapter 6 of Hebrews begins by saying: "Let us go on to perfection" and ends by telling us that Jesus has already entered into that which is within the veil, as a forerunner for us, made an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Thus we get an introduction to this powerful chapter 7, in which Melchisedec is mentioned by name 6 times, more than all the rest of the Bible put together. This is truly the chapter of eternal priesthood of the Christ.

This man is mentioned three times in chapters 5 and 6, but all that is said about him is simply that Jesus was made an high priest forever "after the order of Melchisedec". Now in the first 3 verses of chapter 7 we learn a great deal more about the man himself. First of all, it says he was king of Salem, which is regarded as the original site of Jerusalem. As a king, he was a man of authority. "Where the word of a king is, there is power" (Ecclesiastes 8:4). And as it reads in the Amplified translation: "For the word of a king is authority and power, and who can say to him, What are you doing?" But he was not just an ordinary king. Abraham had just defeated 4 kings in battle and rescued his nephew Lot when he met this king of Salem. Hebrews 7:4 says: "Now consider how great **this** man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."

### "Shem, Son of Noah?"

A question that has troubled the minds of many scholars is, just who was this man, so great and yet mentioned only twice in the Old Testament? One thing we know for sure, he was a man, not an angel, not a manifestation of God in human form. He was a priest. Angels are not priests, men are priests.

The book of Jasher is mentioned twice in the scriptures, Joshua 10:13 and 2 Samuel 1:18. The word "jasher" is not a man's name, but a word which means "the upright and righteous record". This is a historical book, not regarded in the same light as scripture. I have a copy of this book and in chapter 16:11, in speaking of Abraham meeting (Melchisedec) this king of Salem, it says "the same was Shem". In checking this out with scripture, I found that it was entirely possible, for Shem, the son of Noah was still living at this time. In fact, he was then the oldest living man, Noah having died some years previous. Being the oldest patriarch alive, thus the federal head of the human race and the priest of the most high God to the family of God on the earth, he was the only man we know of alive at that time, who was greater than Abraham. "The less is blessed of the greater", and Shem was the only man alive qualified to bestow a blessing on Abraham. So is this Melchisedec **was** a man, there is a strong possibility that he was Shem. Shem had come from the other side of the flood. He was the only man alive who had not been born in the age following the flood, and he outlived Abraham by many years. His great-grandfather, Methuselah, was contemporary with Adam. So Shem was not far removed from the mysteries of God in Eden.

The name Shem, like Jesus, speaks of his humanity or being a son of man. But "Melchisedec" means "King of Righteousness", and as such, he is made like unto the Son of God. This speaks

of his eternal quality, his undying priesthood. We have no proof that the man Melchisedec (or Shem) is still alive. As a man he is dead. But the "order of Melchisedec" is still God's order of priesthood, and it is an eternal order. Of the 11 times his name appears in the Bible, 7 times it says: "after the order of Melchisedec", and once "after the similitude of Melchisedec". So it is not the man God is telling us about, but the order of his priesthood. With that firmly in mind, let us examine this 7<sup>th</sup> chapter and see what is in store for us in this order of priesthood behind the veil.

### **Jesus Alone?**

There is a great deal said in this chapter regarding the difference between the Levitical priesthood, which was passing away, and the priesthood of Christ. The reason for the writing of this book of Hebrews was that many of the Jewish Christians were still going through the ritual of the law of Moses, blood sacrifices, etc. The priests who were believers and filled with the Holy Ghost, still felt they had a ministry under the law, in the Levitical priesthood. "And the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of **the priests** were obedient to the faith." (Acts 6:7). "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law." (Acts 21:20). This allegiance to the Levitical law had to be smashed. They had to be shown a greater priesthood, one in which the believers were involved.

But what about this Melchisedec order? It is obvious that when it speaks of this priesthood, it refers to the Lord Jesus, the son of God. Where does that leave us? In Him! For in Hebrews 10 he says: "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." Yes, God gave Jesus a physical body to offer up, once and for all, as atonement for all our sins. But more than that, He makes it plain to us that the body of Christ is not just one man, but many (1 Corinthians 12:12).

### **The Many Membered Son**

"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone". (John 12:24). But Jesus did not intend to abide alone. That is why He died at Calvary. To pour His life, His blood, into this earth. Thus a way was made for the sons of Adam to be cleansed from their carnal nature, and to become a part of the body of Christ. It is that body of Christ, in its fulness, with Jesus as the Head, that makes up the many-membered son of God. Hebrews 2:10 says He is "brining many sons unto glory".

The life of Adam can never enter this kingdom. It is only that which was eternally pre-existent in God, that returns back to God. There is a false doctrine which teaches a conscious pre-existence for all the sons of God before the world began. This is not what the Bible teaches. The true teaching is given here in Hebrews 7.

Abraham was Levi's great-grandfather. At the time Abraham met Melchisedec, Levi's grandfather Isaac had not even been born. Yet the Bible says that Levi was in Abraham's loins, and thus Levi was given credit as paying tithes to Melchisedec. Verses 9 and 10 say "Levi also,

who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him."

The blood that flowed in Abraham's veins contained the life that would one day produce Isaac, and through him, Jacob and Levi. Levi was not a conscious entity. But he was alive, as it were, in the bloodstream of Abraham. As I tell my children: "When your dad was a paratrooper, and made twelve parachute jumps, you were all there and jumped with him, for you were at that time in his bloodstream". But only through union with my dear wife could that life become real sons and daughters. Do you see what I'm getting at? The sons of God leaped for joy and the foundations of the world, for He leaped for the joy that was set before Him, and we were in His bloodstream. His life produced us as real sons and daughters. And it is so important that we recognize that Jesus was virgin-born, that He did not get His blood from Adam. His blood came from God the Father, and this is why His life is eternal. It is this eternal life that He came to give us. That is why His blood had to be poured out upon the earth. Not because God is a blood-thirsty tyrant insisting on a blood sacrifice. But because **only** through union with mother earth could He bring forth sons and produce out of that which is earthly, a divine company in His own image. Adam's blood, life, nature has to go. It cannot enter the kingdom of God. Our life from Him is eternal.

### **An Indestructible Life**

Verses 11 through 15 tell us that we cannot be perfected by the Levitical priesthood, therefore another order of priesthood must arise. Jesus is the high priest of this new order. Therefore, since the priesthood is changed, there is also of necessity a change of the law. The old law did not get priests from the tribe of Judah. That law is changed. So therefore in this new order it does not matter what tribe, nationality, or race you belong to. Only that you belong to Christ. And in Christ there is neither Jew or Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female. So here is a spiritual order of priesthood that does not eliminate the women, as did Moses' law. Then in verses 15 and 16 the glorious statement is made that another priest arises after the similitude of Melchisedec who is made "after the power of an endless life". In the RSV translation it says he has become a priest "not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent but by the power of an indestructible life." In the Phillips translation we find the statement: "From the power of indestructible life within." And the New English Bible states: "the new priest who arises is one like Melchisedec, owing his priesthood not to a system of earthbound rules but to the power of a life that cannot be destroyed". And the Amplified Bible says he "has been constituted a Priest, not on the basis of a bodily legal requirement--an externally imposed command concerning His physical ancestry but on the basis of the power of an endless and indestructible Life." Glory to God for life that cannot be destroyed!

Is it Jesus alone who has this indestructible life, or does He share this with His body? He said in John 17:22, "And the glory which thou (Father) gavest me I have given them." Now doesn't the Bible say somewhere that God will not give His glory to another? Yes, in Isaiah 48:11 where He is speaking about idolatry and Babylon. But beloved, you are not "another". You are bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh. You are His body, His beloved. And He has given His glory and His eternal life to you. Bless His name!

## **Aaron's Rod that Budded**

After the judgment upon Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in Numbers 16, we find the Lord God settling the matter as to who constitutes His priesthood. In chapter 17 we find the Lord instructing the prince of every tribe to bring his rod to the Tabernacle of witness. Every prince has his name written upon his rod. These rods were representative of their ministry, their authority. Every one of them were dead dry sticks that once had been part of a living green tree. On the morning, every rod was still a dead dry stick, except Aaron's rod. Verse 8 says that: "the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds." "And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels." Over in Ezekiel 10:37-38 we read: "And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; And I will purge out from among you the rebels."

Now that rod was kept in the Ark of the Covenant in the tabernacle of Moses. But when the temple was built, the permanent resting place for the Ark, the manna and the rod were not to be found. 2 Chronicles 5:10 says there was nothing in the Ark save the 2 tables of stone. What happens to this rod of priesthood, the one that speaks of resurrection life, when God's eternal house is finished? Revelation 2:26-27 lets us know that it is given into the hand of the Overcomer, that great body of saints who have come into the likeness of Christ. They rule and reign with Him. And their ministry is a priesthood brought forth in the power of an indestructible life.

## **Jesus is the Guarantee**

How do we know for sure that the body of Christ will come into all that we have been talking about? We have a guarantee. We read in Hebrews 7:22 (Amplified): "In keeping with the oath's greater strength and force, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better (stronger) agreement--a more excellent and more advantageous covenant." As a forerunner, He has entered into all that He has promised for us. The Phillips translation says: "And he is, by virtue of this fact, himself the living guarantee of a 'better' agreement".

Look at Him! Behold the son of God! "As He is, so are we in this world." (1 John 4:17). He is the head of the body, the pioneer, the captain of our salvation, the author and the finisher of our faith. He is the pattern Son. It is strange to me that no one seems to mind admitting that they are like their father Adam. But very few want to talk about being like the Son of God, conformed to His image. They seem to think that either this is impossible with God, or that He does not desire it for us. But I say to you by the word of the Lord, that He has declared this to be His purpose for us, His body. And nothing is impossible with Him!

## **Bread and Wine**

As we look in Genesis 14 at the first mention of this ministry, we find him bringing forth bread and wine as he blessed Abraham. These are the elements that speak of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the very things He gave His disciples at the last supper. "This is my body, take

eat... this is my blood, drink ye all of it." These things were never brought forth during the 3 ½ years earthly ministry of Jesus. Only at the time of Calvary were these elements ministered to the disciples. This tells us that this ministry of Melchisedec will be ministering the life of the crucified and resurrected Christ.

Jesus could not bring forth sons of God in His own image until after His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. For until He ascended, He could not pour out His Spirit upon them. "For the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39). "But you have received the Spirit of adoption--the Spirit producing sonship" (Romans 8:15, Amplified). You see, everything brings forth after it's own kind. Cattle bring forth more cattle, birds bring only more birds, vegetables produce vegetables and Adam can only bring his own nature into being upon the earth. So Jesus came to bring into being a new race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. He was "the beginning of the creation of God". "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation." But He did not choose to have this race in the image of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of man in his limited humanity. He chose to wait until after His glorification before pouring His Spirit upon us to produce sons. Thus he brings "many sons into glory". But these are "sons of God", conformed to the image of the Son of God. Sons of His resurrection, of His eternal glorified state! In Revelation 21:7 Jesus says that "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son". Son of God! Who? He that overcometh!

### **"The Rod of Thy Strength"**

Except for the Genesis account, the only other place in the Old Testament that Melchisedec is mentioned is in Psalms 110: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath."

Notice in this beautiful passage all the words relating to the end-time. "Until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (see Hebrews 10:13). "Thy strength out of Zion" (Psalms 102:21 with Hebrews 2:12 show us that Zion speaks of the sons of God). "Rule thou", "in the day of thy power", and "in the day of his wrath". All these in the passage concerning Melchizedek.

The sons of God, in the image of the pattern son, become the rod of His strength. Just as Jesus was, in His ministry here on the earth. They shall rule, with Him, in the midst of their enemies until every enemy has been put under their feet. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Yes, the will of God will be done on this earth as it is in Heaven. And the Kingdom of God shall come to this earth. Of this there can be no doubt, no argument.

"The Lord strike through kings in the day of his wrath". This is not speaking of earthly kings, prime ministers, presidents, mayors, etc. It is speaking of the rulers of the age of darkness, the

principalities that shall be smitten and destroyed. The strong man of this age shall be bound, and his house shall be spoiled.

### **The King-Priest Ministry**

"There is authority in the word of a king". In the Levitical order, kings could not intrude into the priest's office, and priests could not sit on the throne. Levi produced the priests, and Judah produced the kings. But a new order has arisen in Jesus Christ. He is a king-priest. And He has made us a kingdom of priests, a "royal priesthood". Revelation 1:6 and 5:10 tell us that he hath made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. He is king of kings. Glory to His name!

There were times in Israel when the priests saw the need, but because of a wicked king, they could not minister in the temple of God. So the doors were shut, and filth accumulated in the holy place. They saw the need, had the desire, but did not have the authority. So it has been with so many ministries. But not so with the Melchisedec order. They have the ministry of the priest of compassion, and the authority of the king. What a glorious time of restoration for the earth! All things will be set in order. By the church will be seen the eternal wisdom and glory of our God! All creation shall rejoice, because they shall be brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, delivered from the bondage of death and corruption.

The balance of chapter 7, from verses 23 through 28 goes to prove the eternal quality of the priesthood of Christ. No use to depend on the Jewish temple anymore, no more sacrifices of bulls and goats to offer. Christ has replaced all other orders, and God will no longer recognize any other sacrifice as valid or effective. You are wasting your time, Jewish Christian, dabbling with the law of Moses. It is dead. Only in Christ is there life, and forgiveness of sin. Only through Him can this life and eternal ministry be shared with humanity. For "you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor that ye through his poverty might be rich."

Press on, sons of God! Press on to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Ye are called to be a royal priesthood, a king-priest company of the Melchisedec order. As we go on to chapter 8, we sum up what God has been saying about a better priesthood, a better tabernacles, and a better covenant. Our God is great, and His plan is generous, rich and magnificent! Hallelujah!