

“WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY & HOW” (1:1 thru 10:18)

Reminder about class party Aug 20th at 5:30 PM at Catt’s house

It’s really good to be back with you this morning. Today we’re going to get into Hebrews Ch 10. Before we do, however, I decided it would be beneficial for us to go back and review some of things we’ve learned in our study so far. As you know by now Hebrews isn’t the easiest book to understand. It’s a challenge to teach and to learn. But we shouldn’t just ignore it. There is a reason why God inspired the writing of this book and preserved it for us. We need to at least try and understand what God is saying to us.

The writer of Hebrews, whoever he was, had a very high view of Jesus – of who Jesus is and what He’s done for us. The writer argues the supremacy of Jesus Christ above all else. [Refer to Handout]

Ch 1: Jesus is introduced in very lofty terms. READ Hebrews 1:2, 5, 8

Jesus is also described as being God’s spokesman, the Heir of all things, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, the radiance of God’s glory, and the exact image of God. And what did Jesus do for us? He made purification for our sins (v 3). Jesus dealt with our sin issue and that work is complete. Having done that, Jesus Christ “sat down at the right hand of God.”

One by one the writer takes something considered to be important by his Jewish audience and argues that Jesus is superior to it. He begins with the angels who were highly regarded by the Jews. He says that Jesus is better than the angels. None of the angels was ever referred to by God as “My Son.” But Jesus was! Not one angel was ever promised that they would have an eternal kingdom. But Jesus was!

Ch 2: The writer points out that the O.T. Law given by God to His people at Mount Sinai WAS an effective way to deal with sin. But it was

only temporary. Jesus who is eternally God left the glory of heaven and came into our world. READ Hebrews 2:9

Jesus, the Son of God, became flesh and blood. For a while He was "made a little lower than the angels." Why is that? Because humans are lower than angels. Jesus humbled Himself and became human in order to deal with our sin problem once and for all. He defeated Satan and delivered us out from under his control. Jesus "tasted death for everyone" (v 9). He died on the cross for our sins and then rose from the dead. He was made "the founder of our salvation perfect through suffering" (v 10). Jesus became our perfect Savior. He is our merciful and faithful high priest. Having been a man for 33 years, Jesus understands what it is to be human and to live in a fallen world. He sympathizes with us. Being the divine Son of God He was able to make propitiation for our sins. His death satisfied God's holy requirement for sin.

Ch 3: Jesus is next presented as being better than a person whom the Jews greatly admired. READ Hebrews 3:1-6 [*Show Q3 slide*]. Moses was a great leader. He was a faithful servant of God. He was an amazing man in many ways. But Jesus was even more faithful and even more amazing.

The writer of Hebrews implores his Jewish brothers not to be like the wilderness generation of unbelieving Israelites. READ Hebrews 3:16-19

Despite everything God had done for them (read Exodus & Numbers) the people failed to believe God and trust Him. In fact, they totally rebelled against God. The result was not good. God turned them away and refused to allow that faithless generation to enter into the Promised Land (except for Joshua and Caleb).

Ch 4: The writer of Hebrews draws from the experience of the hard-hearted wilderness generation. He warns his Jewish brothers, "Don't be like them!" READ Hebrews 4:6-11. This is a quote from Psalm 95 [*Show Q4 slide*]. He says, "Do not harden your hearts. Turn to God and enter His rest and enjoy His blessings." They must respond in obedience – to what?

To the good news that had been preached to them. The good news is that we have a great High Priest, Jesus, the sinless, compassionate perfect Son of God. So then, draw near with confidence to the throne of grace and receive mercy. Receive God's gift of salvation. Turn to Jesus TODAY!

Ch 5 and 7: The writer of Hebrews expands the idea of Jesus as a better High Priest than those high priests in the O.T. READ Hebrews 5:1-6. V 6, "in another place" is Psalm 110:4. [*Show Q5 slide*]. Jesus was not from the Aaronic priesthood (tribe of Levi). He is from a different order of priests – the order of Melchizedek. Who was Melchizedek? He was a king priest. He was the king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. He lived some 500 years prior to the Law being given during Abraham's time.

The writer expounds further on how Jesus met all the requirements for a high priest. He was God-appointed. He was human. He sympathized. He offered sacrifice for sins. However, the writer contrasts Jesus with those other high priests. READ Hebrews 7:26-28 and 4:15. Unlike the O.T. high priests, who had to first deal with their own sin before they could make sacrifices for the sins of the people, Jesus didn't have to do that. He was without sin.

Another important difference is that Jesus only had to make ONE sacrifice and that was the sacrifice of HIMSELF – not repeatedly like had to be done with the O.T. sacrifices.

Ch 6: Here we have an interlude – an interruption of the main argument of the book. The writer of Hebrews feels a deep burden for his fellow Jews. They've been presented clear evidence from their scriptures (from the O.T.) that Jesus is their promised Messiah and, therefore, He is their long-awaited Savior. Some Jews had responded in faith and believed. Sadly however, many Jews had not. They had come close to accepting Jesus, but then they turned away. So, the writer urges this group to turn to Jesus. He gives them a dire warning. READ Hebrews 6:4-6. This is strong language! Here's his point: If you walk away from the light you have been

given, then you are treading on dangerous ground. A hard heart that ignores God is an evil heart!

The rest of Ch 6 is addressed to those Jews who apparently DID believe in Jesus. For this group the writer's fear is that they might become discouraged and seek to abandon their newfound faith in Christ. For them the writer offers the example of Abraham. He had to wait 25 years from the time God promised him a son until Isaac was born. In the end God proved to be trustworthy. He came through. He did the impossible! So then, the writer's message is to be diligent and follow the example of those who receive what God promised. "Be strong in your faith and be patient." After all, God does not lie. His truth and His promises are sure. You can count on them. You can hold fast to the hope set before you.

Ch 8: Here we are told that the new covenant in Jesus is better than the old covenant of the Law. READ Hebrews 8:7-13. With the introduction of the new covenant, the old covenant has been rendered as obsolete. It's null and void. This should come as no surprise to the Jews. After all, their very own prophet Jeremiah had told them that God was going to make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. The old covenant of the Law was never intended to be permanent.

Ch 9: The writer's focus shifts to the all-importance of Jesus's death on the cross. READ Hebrews 9:12 and 26, 7:27. Jesus's "once for all" sacrifice secured for us an "eternal redemption" (Heb 9:12). The O.T. animal sacrifices only covered a person's sin. The blood of Jesus removes the sin completely. Jesus's death ratified the new covenant. It satisfied God's holy requirement, which is, that sin be paid by a blood sacrifice. Jesus became our substitute. He died in our place. He took our place on the cross. He made the payment for our sin.

At the end of Ch 9...READ Hebrew 9:27-28. These verses spring-boarded us into a two-week side discussion of end time events. I deviated from our Hebrews study to talk about what we as Christians have to look forward to. When Jesus "appears a second time" (v 28). In His first

appearance 2000+ years ago He dealt with our sin. Before He left He promised that He would return for us. When He does it will set into motion a whole series of events – Rapture, Second Coming, Marriage Supper of the Lamb, Judgment Seat of Christ, Millennial Kingdom, creation of a new heaven and a new earth. And that’s where we left off. Questions?

READ Hebrews 10:1

The Law and all the things associated with the old covenant were merely a shadow of good things to come. They were only pictures of future realities. An innocent animal (lamb, bull, dove) sacrificed on an altar for the sins of the people was a picture of Jesus who would later sacrifice Himself on a cross for our sins. The high priest sprinkling the blood on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies was a picture of Jesus becoming our great High Priest and presented His own blood before the throne of God in heaven. If you take the time to do an extensive study of the tabernacle, offerings, priesthood, and furnishings you will see parallels between them and the work that Jesus did for us.

All those animal sacrifices served a purpose. They had their place. But they were ineffective in bringing salvation. They only covered sin temporarily. But they could not save us. That phrase “make perfect those who draw near” means to bring us salvation. Those old covenant sacrifices could not provide direct access to God. The point the writer is making here is that if they could save us, then there would have been no reason to replace them with a new covenant. But they couldn’t.

READ Hebrews 10:2-4

In v 2 the writer talks about the “consciousness of sins.” In v 3 he says that the people under the old covenant were reminded of their sins every year. When was that? On the Day of Atonement when the high priest offered a sacrifice for the sins of the people and sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat. That repetition constantly reminded the people that they were still sinners. Over and over again, every year, nothing changed. There was

still a sense of guilt because their sins caused innocent animal to be slain by the hundreds and thousands on their altars. There was this constant fear of impending judgment for having sinned against a holy God. They had no real peace. Their sins had devastating results and were never completely removed. They were only covered for a while – until they sinned again. They were caught up in this endless cycle of sin, sacrifice, sin, sacrifice, over and over again.

Blood sacrifices sanctified a person “for the purification of the flesh” (Heb 9:13). They covered a person’s sin but it did nothing for their conscience. By contrast the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross “purified our conscience” (Heb 9:14). No longer do we have an overwhelming sense of guilt and judgment. First John 1:9 says that we are CLEANSED from ALL unrighteousness. Romans 8:1 says that there is now NO condemnation for those of us who are in Christ Jesus.

So which system is better? (A) the old covenant of the Law with repeated sacrifice of animals year after year and no relief from guilt and judgment; or (B) the new covenant in Christ with His once for all sacrifice that removes condemnation and allows for reconciliation and forgiveness?

The whole argument the writer of Hebrews is making is that obviously the new covenant is better. So then, why are you hanging on to the old?

In verses 5-7 the writer quotes Scripture, from Psalm 40...

READ Hebrews 10:5-7

The heading of Psalm 40 says that David penned this Psalm. But the writer of Hebrews attributes it to Jesus. “When Christ came, this is what He said...”

What was the point of this psalm? That God takes no pleasure in the old sacrificial system. Even by David’s time, 1000 years before Jesus was born, the old Levitical system had become merely ritualistic and had no real meaning. By contrast the sacrifice of Jesus pleased God. At His baptism

God declared of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased" (Matt 3:17). The Father looked down thru the corridor of time and saw what Jesus would do.

Well, having just quoted from Psalm 40 the writer of Hebrews now gives the following commentary on it:

READ Hebrews 10:8-10

V 9, "the first," the old covenant of the Law has been done away with "in order to establish the second," the new covenant in Christ. And what is the result of this?

V 10, by "that will," God's will, WE have been sanctified. Who is WE? Those of us who by faith believe in Jesus, who embrace the new covenant. We have been made holy. We have been set apart for God. And how was this accomplished? "Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

READ Hebrews 10:11-14

The new covenant in Christ's blood, His sacrifice, is obviously better than the old covenant and the blood of animals. V 12 says, "a single offering perfected for all time."

Again the writer of Hebrews quotes Scripture. This time he quotes Jeremiah 31. He quoted this same passage back in Ch 8.

READ Hebrews 10:15-17

God says that He is going to replace the old covenant with a new covenant. The writer of Hebrews here shines the spotlight on the Jews own scripture. He puts his Jewish audience in a tough spot. Will they continue to practice the old covenant of the Law even though God told them it was going to be replaced? And the evidence is clear from scripture that Jesus fulfilled all those prophecies about the Messiah. He did everything Messiah was supposed to do. Jesus claimed to be from God. He proved by signs

and miracles that He truly was from God. The new covenant is obviously better than the old covenant. So what will they do given all this evidence? The writer of Hebrews tells them to turn to Christ and be saved. Embrace the new covenant. That's his message.

READ Hebrews 10:18

Jesus did it all. Forgiveness of sins is the result. There is no need to go back to the sacrifices.

John MacArthur makes an interesting observation regarding the Jews rejection of Jesus as their Messiah. He says [quote]: "it's an interesting thing that they have also forsaken the sacrifices. They really stand in limbo. They not only do not accept the final sacrifice of Christ, but they fail to continue the sacrifices of the old covenant. They find themselves talking themselves into a security standing in limbo between two systems and going through a ritualistic, symbolic representation of the old, which is anti-scriptural." [end quote]

For the Jewish audience the message of Hebrews is crystal clear. Turn to Jesus! Embrace your Messiah! Enter God's rest! There is salvation in no other name but Jesus. At some point with any belief system faith is required. You can carry logic only to a certain point and then you must exercise a degree of faith. And that's what the next section beginning in v 19 is all about – faith. We'll pick it up there next time.