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THE TRUTH FOR THE TIMES
By Tony Marshall Anderson

VOLUME I

God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. Heb. 1:2.

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DEDICATED

To the general assembly and church of the first-born and to them that believe to the saving
of the soul.

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SUBJECTS OUTLINED FOR STUDY

- I. Truth for the time past.
- II. God's message for this present age.
- III. The sufficient salvation.
- IV. God's mindfulness of man.
- V. Our consideration of Christ.
- VI. The promised rest of faith.
- VII. The Author of eternal salvation.

VIII. Completeness in Christ.

IX. The heirs of promise.

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FOREWORD

Many sincere requests have come to me in recent years to prepare a series of studies on the great cardinal truths of redemption revealed in the Epistle to the Hebrews. I humbly request my readers to disregard my apparent lack of learning and accept this work as a labor of love and a work of faith.

It has been my delight to preach on these inspiring truths in many churches, conventions, conferences and holiness camp meetings. I have discovered that the people of God are hungry for the bread of life contained in the living Word of God.

I have prepared these studies in outlines based on the immediate context. These studies have been enlarged to give the student a measure of understanding relative to the subject.

I have made no attempt to produce a commentary. My readers will not find the last word to be said on the subjects presented for study. I have enlarged the studies for the benefit of preachers, teachers, and students of the Holy Scriptures.

If these studies serve to promote a greater interest in the Scriptures I shall be compensated in full measure for the hours spent in preparing this work for publication.

I present these outlined studies as a free gift to all students of the Scriptures.

In the Master's Name,

T. M. Anderson

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HEBREWS, CHAPTER I

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

8. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

9. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

10. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:

11. They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

12. And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

13. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

14. Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: TRUTH FOR THE TIME PAST

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

I. THE DISPENSATION OF REVEALED TRUTH IN THE TIME PAST.

1. The measure of time past.
2. The messengers in time past.

3. The message in time past.

II. THE DISCLOSURE OF REDEMPTIVE TRUTH IN TIME PAST.

1. GOD REVEALED HIS TRUTH IN THE PROMISES.

(a) The promised gift of the Son. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Isa. 9:6. Isa. 7:14.

(b) The promised government of the Son. "The government shall be upon his shoulder." Isa. 9:6-7.

(c) The promised gift of the Spirit. "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." Joel 2:28.

2. GOD REVEALED HIS TRUTH IN THE PRECEPTS. Deut. 6:4-9.

(a) The moral law revealed in the commandments.

(b) The measure of love revealed in the commandments.

(c) The meaning of life revealed in the commandments.

3. GOD REVEALED HIS TRUTH IN THE PATTERNS,

(a) The pattern of Christ revealed in time past.

(b) The pattern of the church revealed in time past.

(c) The pattern of the cross revealed in time past.

(d) The pattern of the conquerors re-vealed in time past.

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

I. THE DISPENSATION OF REVEALED TRUTH IN TIME PAST.

"Spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." Ver. 1.

God has given the revelation of His plan of salvation in two stages. The first stage was completed in the past. The second stage is the present revelation of His plan of salvation revealed in His Son.

This present stage is final. We are now in the last days, or the last dispensation of grace proclaimed in the Gospel.

(1) The measure of the time past. "God . . . spake in time past."

The dispensation of time past evidently extended from the creation of the world to the crucifixion of Christ. The Old Testament time began with the creation of Adam and ended when Christ appeared in the end of world, or age, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (Heb. 9:26)

The sacrificial offering of the body and blood of Jesus Christ superseded the offerings for sin made under the ceremonial law of Moses. We are now in the Gospel age of the better things promised in the new covenant of grace, and provided for us in the sacrifice of Christ.

(2) The messengers in the time past. "By the prophets."

The Holy Scriptures reveal that God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began. (Luke 1:70) This period of inspired prophecy evidently began with Adam and closed with Zacharias, the father of John Baptist.

We are told that God spake "at sundry times", or in many parts. Each inspired prophet contributed an important part to the whole plan of redemption. God did not give the full and complete revelation of His Divine nature and will in one revelation. He was pleased to give many separate revelations, each of which set forth in clear light some essential and fundamental part of saving truth. He disclosed the difference of the character and content of the various revelations "in divers manners," or in many ways by the ministry of the holy prophets.

God elected to reveal Himself and His eternal purpose through such renown worthies as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. (Heb. 11)

The sterling character and unfeigned faith of these eminent saints served to exemplify and emphasize the essential facts of redemption.

The illustrious Seers were God's chosen messengers, enlightened and empowered by the Holy Ghost, to give the heartening news of the promised Messiah. The elect company of anointed prophets testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. (I Pet. 1:11)

(3) The message in the time past. "Spake unto the fathers."

The holy prophets revealed God's promises, patterns and precepts to the holy fathers. These shining saints were made custodians of the eternal verities of the promised redemption. The righteous Lord elected to reveal the knowledge of His saving truth to holy men, who could be trusted to impart the knowledge of salvation to His people.

The stern and resolute prophets spake one message. There were many prophets, but only one message. All prophecy was focused upon the coming Redeemer. The ministry and miracles of the prophets voiced one inspiring message of hope and help. Every word uttered by the anointed messengers of Jehovah disclosed some essential phase of the divine plan of salvation.

The world has not been left to grope in darkness without some rays of divine light to guide the erring feet of lost mankind into the way of salvation. Creation speaks to men about God. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. 1:20.

Luke records the genealogy of the holy father. He begins with the birth of Christ and follows the line of succession back to Adam, the son of God. (Luke 3:23-38). These holy fathers preached righteousness in their day and generation in obedience to God's command.

II. THE DISCLOSURE OF REDEMPTIVE TRUTH IN TIME PAST.

1. GOD DISCLOSED HIS TRUTH IN THE PROMISES. The sacred writings contain many exceeding great and precious promises. These imperishable promises reveal the intelligence, integrity, and immutability of Almighty God to all mankind. The inspiring and illuminating promises fortified the embattled sons of God with an encouraged heart, an enduring hope, and an eternal happiness, as they wended their way toward the fadeless dawn of an endless day.

I have selected certain outstanding promises for the purpose of showing the redemptive truth revealed in time past. We do well to keep in mind that these certified promises are an integral part of the whole plan of redemption revealed in time past and in time present.

(a) The promised gift of the Son. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Isa. 9:6.

The prophetic words, "A child is born," apparently refer to the incarnation. The inspired words, "A son is given," evidently refer to the global love of God revealed in the gift of His only begotten Son.

The concept of the promised Son was enhanced in a greater measure by the prophetic names given to the Son. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace." These names given to the Son reveal certain inherent qualities of His Divine nature. The name Wonderful reveals His power to perform miracles, signs, and wonders. We have not ceased to be amazed at the wonders performed in the holy name of Jesus. A sinner transformed by the power of the Son is an astonishing miracle of divine grace.

The name Counsellor reveals the authority of the Son to advise and guide His children by His supreme wisdom and sovereign will. The Son is our Advocate with the Father, our Master, and our Teacher. The name The Mighty God reveals His omnipotent power to defend and deliver His trusting people. The name The Everlasting Father reveals His abiding presence and parental love. This comforting fact is supported by many glowing promises in Holy Writ. The Everlasting Father comforts His children in sorrow, cares for them in suffering, and cherishes them in sickness.

The name Prince of Peace reveals His eternal kingdom of peace. He has provided peace for us in His cross, produced peace in us by His cleansing, and shall present us in peace at His coming.

(b) The Promised Government of the Son. "The government shall be upon his shoulder." Isa. 9:6-7.

God's anointed prophet saw the cross placed upon the shoulder of the immaculate and invincible Son of God. The burdens and bewilderments of broken and benighted mankind were placed upon the strong shoulder of the suffering Son of God. A rugged cross was placed upon His bruised and bleeding shoulder to provide reconciliation for lost men. The only begotten Son shouldered the tremendous responsibility of purging our sins, perfecting us in salvation, and preserving us blameless unto His glorious appearing. He requests the indisputable right to govern us by His will, garrison us by His Word, and gird us for His work.

It is written, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

This remarkable prophecy assures us that the promised reign of the Son shall endure to all eternity. He shall reign in Majesty and in Might without a rival or a rebel to challenge His sovereign right to govern His everlasting kingdom in righteousness and peace for evermore.

The perfect principles of the Redeemer govern our moral character and conduct in this world and in the world to come. He establishes our hearts in holiness, judgment, and justice. He terminates all inner strife and struggle by the power of His grace, and imparts the inherent qualities of His own blessed peace to our trusting souls.

(c) The Promised Gift of the Spirit. "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." Joel 2:28.

The ages past waited eagerly and expectantly for the fulfillment of this gracious promise. A few of God's enlightened worthies saw the enrapturing promise from afar and appropriated it by an achieving faith. These notable saints testified to the transcendent gift and transforming grace received in the fulfilled promise.

The promise contained all the fullness of God. He willed to pour out His limitless love in full measure in the gift of the Spirit. He disclosed His willingness to make the heart of an humble man His temple for all time and eternity.

The promise included a glorious freedom through the Spirit. The blessed Holy Spirit released the latent potentialities in the human soul and directed them into the service of the Savior. (Acts 1:8). Our Lord assured His people that the Holy Spirit would enable them to understand the things pertaining to truth (Jno. 16:13-15).

The outpoured plentitude of the Holy Ghost enlightens, empowers, and endows the children of God for labors of love in this world. The holy Scriptures speak of the seal of the Spirit, the strength of the Spirit, and the supply of the Spirit. (Eph. 1:13; 3:16; Phil. 1:19)

These are only a few of the wonderful spiritual realities contained in the promised gift of the Spirit revealed in the sacred Scriptures.

2. GOD REVEALED HIS TRUTH IN HIS PRECEPTS. "Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently." Psa. 119:4.

This divine command has never been changed. The keeping of His holy precepts are as binding in the present as they were in the past.

His unchangeable command regarding His precepts is immutable because His divine nature is immutable. In fact, the inherent principles of God's changeless character are contained in every command revealed in His Word. In order to comprehend the meaning of God's precepts it is necessary to study them in the clear light of divine revelation.

(a) The Moral Law Revealed in the Commandments. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." (Psa. 19:7).

The eternal verities contained in the law of God were given to man for the express purpose of converting his soul, or turning his soul back to God. The moral law was designed to rule man's moral being, and regulate his moral and mental behavior. God's immutable law revealed in His binding precepts was first written on tables of stone. In the covenant of Grace it is stated specifically that the laws of God shall be written in the hearts and minds of His people. The prophet saw this marvelous truth and testified to it in his prophecy. (Jer. 31:31)

The moral and spiritual law of God was emphasized, exemplified, and enforced by the inspired prophets and holy fathers in Israel. The guilty were punished when they willfully violated the law, and the obedient were rewarded when they observed the law. Our Lord said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. 5:18.

It is revealed in the Word that the righteousness of the moral law shall be fulfilled in the character and conduct of God's ransomed children. (See Rom. 8: 3-4)

(b) The Measure of Love Revealed in the Commandments. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Deut. 6:5

It obviously required all that man is in heart, soul, mind, and strength to love God according to this commandment. Mortal man cannot give more than all his love to God, and he certainly cannot give less than all and expect to be approved by his Maker. Man has the mental and moral capacity to love God with an undivided affection and unalloyed motive. God's pleasurable love is reciprocal and real according to the words of Jesus who said, "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Jno. 14:21.

There is a measure of completeness in love, a mental contentment of love, and a moral consciousness of love.

The command to love God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength is not grievous. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments." I Jno. 5:2-3.

(c) The Meaning of Life Revealed. "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." Deut. 6:6-9.

God's people were commanded to teach the words of the Lord to their children, talk of them when sitting in their houses, and when walking in the way. This command obviously discloses the pattern of life and the principles of law to be incorporated in the daily deportment of the people. Their conversation, choices, and convictions of life were motivated by obedience to the law of the Lord.

Man's concept of life has been greatly impaired by reason of sin. It has been difficult to impress man with the fact that his chief aim in life should be to serve his Maker. Man was evidently created for the express purpose of sharing life in sacred fellowship with the Creator in time and in eternity. The Creator stated this truth when He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." Gen. 2:18.

This amazing statement reveals that God and man are meant for each other. There is a true sense in which God is alone without the man, and the man is alone without God.

We cannot interpret the meaning of life except we interpret it in the light of creation. Man was not created for a plaything or a pet; he was created to be a living complement and a loving companion of Almighty God. These abiding truths are contained in the words of the command given to God's people in time past. They were commanded to talk of these things, and travel in the way with these things in mind.

3. GOD REVEALED HIS TRUTH IN THE PATTERNS. "At sundry times and in divers manners." Ver. 1.

The divers manners evidently refer to the various patterns which God employed to reveal Himself to His people. The anointed Apostle speaks of "The patterns of things in the heavens." Heb. 9:23.

(a) The Patterns Revealed Christ in Time Past. "Your lamb shall be without blemish." Exod. 12:3-5.

The patterns disclosed to the prophets and holy fathers in Israel portrayed certain essential facts relative to the redemptive work of Christ. The paschal lamb clearly revealed the supreme sacrifice of the promised Savior. Peter identified the paschal lamb to be a perfect pattern of Christ's supreme sacrifice when he spoke of "The precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." I Pet. 1:18. Moses said, "Your lamb shall be without blemish." The ritual of the Passover revealed the vast scope of the redemptive sacrifice of Christ. Moses said, "They shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house." Mark the significance of the words, "Every man a lamb." Every man must look to the Lamb of God for salvation.

The office of the high priest was a pattern of our Great High Priest, Christ Jesus. The dedicatory prayer of king Solomon was a pattern of our Lord's intercessory prayer. This remarkable prayer of king Solomon included every need of God's redeemed people. (See II Chron. 6)

God revealed the pattern of the tabernacle, and the patterns of the instruments used in the service of the tabernacle. (See Exod. 25) After disclosing these patterns to Moses, God said, "Look that thou make them after their patterns, which was shewed thee in the mount."

We may consider God's specific instructions relating to the patterns to be applicable to us in these last days. He is saying to us, "Look that thou make thy character and conduct conform to the pattern revealed to thee on Mount Calvary.

(b) The Pattern of the Cross Revealed in Time Past. "Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole." Num. 21:9.

A merciful Lord made this provision for the people who had sinned in speaking against Him, and against Moses. "And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Jesus identified Himself with this pattern when He said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Jno. 3:14-15.

When we look unto Him in simple faith, He removes the condemnation of death from our troubled hearts and heals our sinful souls by the inherent virtue of His divine nature. The efficacy obtained through faith in Jesus is the only effective cure for the sin of our soul.

The plan of redemption and the pattern of the cross were conceived in the mind of God before the foundation of the world. He calculated the cost of man's redemption and foresaw the sacrificial death of His Son on the cross long before a tree flourished in the fertile soil of mother earth and long before the skillful hand of time carved the hill called Calvary on her wrinkled face.

(c) The Pattern of the Church Revealed in Time Past. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . . therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Gen. 2:23-24.

The Apostle Paul quoted these prophetic words of Adam when speaking of Christ and the church. (See Eph. 5:31-32)

We know that God created the woman out of the body and blood of Adam. We also understand that the creative efficacy that brought the church into being came out of the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ.

The pattern of the purity, perfection, and final presentation of the Christ's church was vividly revealed when God made the woman and brought her to the man.

It is a serious mistake to conclude that the church did not exist before the day of Pentecost. It is apparent that the believers assembled with one accord in the upper room were members of Christ's organized church. When Jesus said, "Upon this rock I build my church," He was obviously speaking of the fortitude and firmness of His church. The Scriptures show us that the church was conceived in the mind of God before He created the first man. The church of Jesus Christ is a holy family. God made His choice relative to His holy family in Christ before the foundation of the world. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:4.

Stephen said that Moses was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount. (See Acts 7:38)

The inspired Psalmist was speaking of Christ and His church when he said, "In the midst of the congregation (church) will I praise thee." Psa. 22:22. (See Heb. 2:12)

In the clear light of God's Word, we are warranted in affirming that the church of Christ has no sinners in it and no saints out of it. "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." Eph. 3:21.

(d) The Pattern of the Conquerors Revealed in Time Past. "Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation."

The pattern of the conquering saints of God is revealed in their song of holy triumph. (See Exod. 15)

God's ransomed people are made invincible because He is invincible. He delivered His people out of the bondage of Egypt in great triumph, and defended them against their foes. He lifted their horizon of hope and disclosed to them their holy habitation. He gave them the promised liberty, the promised leading, and the promised land.

The amazing achievements of the conquering worthies are recorded in the Lamb's book of Life. These intrepid saints were made immortal in sacred history by their dauntless courage and unwavering faith in the Omnipotent God. Their imperishable faith enabled them to draw supernatural power from Almighty God to stop the mouths of lions, quench the violence of fire, escape the edge of the sword, wax valiant in fight, and defeat the armies of the aliens.

When we look at these triumphant sons of God we discover what it means to be more than conquerors through Him that loves us. The victories achieved by the embattled saints of God are recorded on the pages of Holy Writ to encourage us to fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, and endure to the end of the way.

The fitting epitaph inscribed by the hand of God on the monuments of His sainted dead is, "These all died in faith." They died in the triumph of faith with a fixed purpose to enter into the city of God, and live forever in the resplendent glory of His eternal presence.

These pilgrims and strangers on the earth lived by the faith of the Son of God, who loved them, and gave Himself for them. They followed the path of the just until they reached the gates of gold, and obtained an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom. They have joined the innumerable company of redeemed, who sing the songs of Moses and the Lamb in the home of the soul where it is high noon for evermore.

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: GOD'S MESSAGE FOR THIS PRESENT AGE.

Text: "God... hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Heb. 1:2.

1. GOD HAS SPOKEN BY THE PERSON OF HIS SON. Ver. 3.

(a) The Image of the Son. "Being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."

(b) The Immutability of the Son. "Thou art the same." Ver. 12.

(c) The Immortality of the Son. "Thy years shall not fail."

2. GOD HAS SPOKEN BY THE POSSESSIONS OF THE SON.

(a) The Revelation of the Heir. "His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things."

(b) The Resources of the Heir. "Heir of all things."

(c) The Rights of the Heirs. "Heirs of salvation." Ver. 14.

3. GOD HAS SPOKEN BY THE POWER OF THE SON. "Upholding All Things by the Word of His Power." Ver. 3.

(a) He Upholds Us in Our Cleansing. "When he had by himself purged our sins.

(b) He Upholds Us in Our Character.

(c) He Upholds Us in Our Conflicts. "'Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.'" Ver. 13.

4. GOD HAS SPOKEN BY THE PRE-EMINENCE OF THE SON. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Ver. 8.

(a) The Authority of the Son. "Thy throne, O God."

(b) The Administration of the Son. "A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

(c) The Anointing of the Son. "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

1. GOD HAS SPOKEN IN THE PERSON OF HIS SON, "The brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." Ver. 3.

The inspired Author of the Epistle makes his first great affirmation in explicit language, saying, "God hath spoken unto us by His Son." When God speaks it is the revelation of Himself, to make known the otherwise hidden thoughts and dispositions of His holy heart.

All previous revelations proceeding from the Divine Speaker are one in design and character with that which is full and complete.

God fully intends to be understood by men. It is obviously His purpose to communicate His perfect will to all men through the ministry and message of His beloved Son. God would have us know how He loves us and longs for us, how He wants to save and bless, how He would have us draw nigh and live in holy fellowship with Himself.

The message of the Son is God's message of light, life, and love for these last days. The Son's message contains God's last call to repentance, His last call to reconciliation, and His last call to righteousness. The Son's message reveals the final word of conviction, the final word of cleansing, and the final word of confirmation.

Jesus Christ is both the Messenger and the Message of glad tidings of full and final salvation. The former revelations of redeeming grace were given through the anointed prophets, but the new and complete revelation is given by the Son, Who is Prophet, Priest, and King.

God hath spoken. Who among the sons of men can estimate the value of God's immortal words? Each word carries with it all the life, love, and saving power of the Son. God speaks in His Son out of the depth of His heart to the depth of our pulsating heart.

This would be a forlorn, forsaken and forgotten world in which to live if God had not spoken unto us by His Son. Can we conceive of a world without a message of glad tidings of hope and help for mortal man? Such a world would be a place of eternal emptiness shrouded in speechless hush. It would be a hopeless, helpless, and homeless earth doomed to abide in unutterable loneliness and despair.

Such would be the plight of lost men if the Everlasting Father had mercilessly decreed to clothe Himself in perpetual silence, leaving Adam's fallen race to perish in the impenetrable gloom of eternal night.

God hath spoken. The immortal Word declares that God has spoken unto us by His Son. Mark well the words, "unto us." The lines of divine revelation have fallen unto us in pleasant places. One is moved to join the prophet, and shout, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken." Isa. 1:2. His gentle voice will guide our faltering footsteps into the way of peace if we will hear the message of the Son.

God's well beloved Son can be touched by the outstretched hand of sinners feeling after Him. His truth guides the penitent seekers to the place of salvation.

The pleading voice of the seeking Son of Man shattered the silence of the ages when He lifted the sky line of hope and proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord. The Galilean clothed with a seamless robe proclaimed the dawn of the day of deliverance.

The glorious light of divine revelation reached the zenith, and the hands on the unhurrying clock of time pointed to high noon when the anointed Son of God appeared to preach the unsearchable riches of redeeming grace. The immaculate Son walked out of eternity into time and, rolling back the draperies of the darkness, declared Himself to be the way, the truth, and the life. The Teacher of all truth opened the gates of a new day in the history of the World.

His glad tidings of truth made the eternal verities of God glow with a new meaning for mankind. His stirring messages contained all the passion, all the pleading, all the provision of the Heavenly Father. His inspiring teachings were filled with God's promises, fragrant with His pleasures, and freighted with His pity. He made both friend and foe feel the dynamic power of His penetrating words in His parables and preaching. Of Him it was said, "Never man spake like this man."

(a) Image of the Son. "The express image of his person."

The Person of the Son is introduced in language which elevates Him beyond all comparison. Even in His deep humiliation and infinite condescension, He is exalted above the holy angels.

The brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person introduce the immaculate Son to be essentially the same in substance as the Father. The brightness of His glory is the revealed splendor of the invisible God. The express image of His Person is that by which all the likeness of the original becomes manifest and is a perfect image of the whole.

The glory of the Father revealed in the Son is the revelation of the inherent glory of the Divine Nature. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the express image of the invisible God because He is very God in Person. This imperishable truth is the sure foundation on which we rest our faith for an uttermost salvation. If Jesus Christ is not the express image of the eternal Father, then He is not

the Redeemer of all mankind. If He is not very God in His Divine Nature and Person, then He is not the appointed Heir of all things as set forth in the inspired proclamation.

The just claims of Christ are based upon the sublime proclamation which declares that God has spoken unto us by His Son. The message of eternal truth spoken unto us by the Son clearly reveals that God has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son. (Rom. 8:29).

This glorious message of saving truth is the central theme of the Gospel of redeeming grace. It is written, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." II Cor. 3:18. This is the glorious hope extended to us in the message of the Son, who is the express image of the invincible God.

(b) The Immutability of the Son. "Thou remainest Thou art the same." Verses 11-12. Psa. 102:26-27.

The inspired Psalmist saw the immutable Christ revealed in the clear light of God's eternal purpose to redeem mankind from sin. After creation has served the inscrutable purpose of the Creator, it shall be laid aside like an outmoded garment, but the changeless Christ shall remain forever to comfort and confirm His adoring people by His abiding presence.

The innumerable years which have fled into the dateless past have not impaired the immutable Son, and the oncoming ages will not improve Him. Nothing can be subtracted from Him, and nothing can be added to Him. His moral likeness, His meritorious life, and His measureless love are the immutable facts on which we base our faith for eternal redemption.

When the Psalmist said, "Thou remainest," he was speaking of the immutability of Christ. This assuring truth confirms our faith in the constancy of Jesus, our Lord. Heaven and earth shall pass away, and all creation shall be changed, but Christ continues unchanged in His relationship to His ransomed saints. Their holiness, their happiness, and their heritage remain to all eternity. These spiritual realities remain constant and comforting because they have been obtained from the changeless character of the Divine Nature of God's immutable Son.

The immutable Son laid the corner stone of creation when time was young. He set the silent stars in their courses and kindled the flaming fires of innumerable suns. He measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, meted out heaven with a span, comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, weighed the mountains in His scales, and the hills in a balance. All these things shall be changed and the glory of them perish, but the immutable Son shall remain forever to beatify and beautify His triumphant saints throughout all ages, world without end.

(c) The Immortality of the Son. "Thy years shall not fail." Ver. 12.

The Psalmist was evidently speaking of the immortal Son of God when he said, "Thy years shall have no end." Psa. 102:27. The writer cited these inspired words of the Psalmist to confirm our faith and establish our hope for eternal life.

Our faith for everlasting life rests on the assuring words of the triumphant Christ who said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. 1:18. The immortal Savior had triumphed over hell and death by the power of His endless life. It pleased Him to announce His signal victory to His astonished disciple in exile on the desolate and dreary isle called Patmos.

The immortal Son of God has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Defeat could not overwhelm Him, death could not overcome Him, and devils could not overthrow Him. He came into this world of death and destruction on a mission of mercy with a message of eternal life. He gave everlasting consolation and good hope to His believing people when He said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Jno. 14:19. These words of the immortal Christ provide us with a sure foundation on which to rest our hope for an endless life.

The immortal Son sustains life, satisfies life and secures life. He maintains our life by the inherent power of His Divine life. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. We constantly draw life from Him through unwavering faith. We receive life, retain life, and reign in life by faith in the immortal Christ. He maintains us in poverty and in plenty, in want and in wealth, in sighing and in song. His supply of life always equals the demands, and His resources always equal our requirements. We expect to share life with Him where our frames are not bent by the weight of the years and our faces never wet with the tears of sorrow. The vigilant watchman hath said, "The morning cometh."

2. GOD HAS SPOKEN BY THE POSSESSION OF HIS SON. "His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." Ver. 2.

God's proclamation reveals the immortal, invincible, and immutable Son to be the appointed Heir of all things. In the clear light of this divine announcement we perceive the Son as the Possessor of all things and Maker of all worlds.

(a) The Revelation of the Heir. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Ver. 5, Psa. 2:7.

The Author of the Epistle has quoted these words of the Psalmist to show us certain essential facts relating to God's appointed Heir.

Our attention is focused upon the inspired words, "This day have I begotten thee." These remarkable words do not imply that the Son is not co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. These words of the Psalmist focus attention on certain significant facts relative to the birthright.

Holy Writ reveals that the fathers in Israel bestowed the birthright blessing upon the firstborn son. We see this custom disclosed in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The firstborn son was made the legal heir of his father's estate. It was his duty to give the legal heirs their portion of the inheritance.

The custom of bestowing the birthright blessing on the firstborn son was obviously a pattern revealing that the Heavenly Father has bestowed the birthright blessing on His only

begotten Son, whom He hath appointed Heir of all things. It is apparently true that the Son of God is now Possessor of all things contained in the birthright blessing which the Heavenly Father has willed to all His children. The Father would have us understand that He has appointed His Son Heir of all things for the express purpose of bestowing the birthright upon all His legal heirs.

The birthright was not bestowed upon the firstborn son unless he was worthy of such honor. Isaac rejected Esau because he sold his birthright for a morsel of meat. (Gen. 25:13). Isaac bestowed the birthright blessing upon Jacob, whom he evidently considered to be the better of the two sons. Jacob proved himself worthy of the blessing by surrendering to the will and purpose of God. (Gen. 32:24-30).

Jacob rejected the licentious Reuben and bestowed the birthright blessing upon the twelve tribes of Israel. (Gen. 49).

These truths recorded in the Word enable us to comprehend God's purpose in His Son, whom He has appointed Heir of all things.

We must keep in mind that salvation is an inheritance received from the only begotten Son of God. The gracious spiritual realities contained in the experience of salvation are the things willed to the children of God, who are the "heirs of salvation." Ver. 14.

The Creator evidently bestowed great and gracious possessions on Adam. But Adam was disinherited as a consequence of his unjustifiable transgression. The birthright blessing reverted to God, the original owner. It has pleased the Heavenly Father to bestow Adam's forfeited possessions upon the well beloved Son, whom He hath appointed Heir of all things.

The firstborn Son of God has inherited a more excellent Name than the holy angels. (Ver. 4). "Therefore, the angels are commanded to worship the Holy Heir of all things. It is written, "When he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Ver. 6.

Seeing that these high and holy beings are commanded to worship the Son, it is certainly becoming of all members of the redeemed family in heaven and in earth to humble themselves before the appointed Heir of all things and devoutly confess that He is Lord to the glory of God, the Father.

(b) The Resources of the Heir. "Appointed heir of all things."

The vast scope of the Son's possessions cannot be grasped by the mind of man unaided by the Spirit of God. The Scriptures reveal that it is God's will to give us all things pertaining to life and godliness through faith in His Son. It is written, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32. We recall that Jesus said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." Matt. 11:27.

We certainly have no valid reason to doubt or question the truth disclosed in these statements of Holy Writ. In the clear light of these facts we are persuaded to believe that the

boundless resources of the appointed Heir are made available to the children of God by simple faith in the Son. It is written, "All things are yours."

There are three great spiritual realities contained in the birthright, which the appointed Heir wills to bestow upon the children of God. The birthright blessing contained the right of kings, the right of priests, and a double portion of the estate. We perceive these three spiritual blessings revealed in the birthright which Jacob bestowed upon his twelve sons. (See Gen. 49). The right of kings was given to Judah. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The blessing of the priesthood was, apparently bestowed upon Levi and the double portion bestowed upon Joseph and his two sons.

The blessings revealed in the birthright bestowed upon the twelve sons of Jacob are patterns of the blessings contained in the spiritual birthright received from the firstborn Son of God. The Word declares that Christ has washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father. (Rev. 1:5-6).

Peter made these gracious spiritual realities clear when he said, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." I Pet. 2:9.

It certainly is not difficult to perceive that the state of grace disclosed by the Apostle Peter would include the double portion of the Spirit of God, the right of kings, and the right of priests.

(c) The Right of the Heirs. "Heirs of salvation." "Ver. 14.

The message of the Son contained in the Hebrew Epistle is focused upon the heirs of salvation. Their inalienable right to receive the birthright blessings is the central truth disclosed in the Epistle. This being true, we must therefore conclude that salvation is an inheritance obtained through faith in the Son, whom the Father has appointed Heir of all things.

Salvation is obviously a completion of all things lost to mankind in the fall of Adam. Peter said that the heaven must receive Christ until the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of the prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:20-21).

When the Author speaks of the heirs of salvation he is referring to the children of God, who are the only legitimate heirs of God. We must be born of the Spirit before we can claim our right to the birthright blessing of full salvation. It is not difficult to comprehend this important truth when once we make a clear distinction between the heirs of God and their legal right to receive their inheritance in grace. Paul made this important distinction when he said, "Thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Gal. 4:7. We evidently do not receive our inheritance at the moment we are delivered from the servitude of sin.

When considering salvation as an inheritance it is well to keep in mind that the Author of the Epistle is dealing with the entire scope of salvation. It is apparent that we are not saved to the uttermost extent of Christ's redemptive work when we are born of the Spirit and baptized with the

Spirit. These two works of divine grace complete us in the experience of full salvation, but they do not perfect us in final salvation. These two great works of saving grace are the earnest of our heavenly inheritance received in the seal of the Spirit.

Peter speaks of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (I Pet. 1:4-5). Christ's works of regeneration and sanctification constitute the essential fitness of character to receive the inheritance reserved in heaven for the faithful family of God.

God's legal heirs have a right to claim their birthright blessing of a holy heart from the appointed Heir of all things pertaining to full and final salvation. God's people need to stress the importance of possessing the peace and purity, without which no man shall see the Lord. Christ stand ready and willing to bestow the blessing upon the heirs of God who come to Him in implicit faith.

There, is a true sense in which all the sons of Adam's fallen race are heirs of salvation. Adam's unborn generations were disinherited in the fall. The Son of God came into this world to restore to all mankind the possessions lost through the fall of Adam. Every son and daughter of Adam's race has a right to come to the Son of God to receive salvation by grace through faith.

We consider this to be the message of redeeming grace delivered unto us in these last days by the Heir of all things.

3. GOD HAS SPOKEN BY THE POWER OF HIS SON. "Upholding all things by the word of his power." Ver. 3.

The Author's assuring statement relative to the power of the Son shows us that His teachings are maintained by His invincible power. There is not the slightest possibility that His teaching shall be destroyed by the cunning craftiness of wicked men. Evil men may deny the validity of His teachings, but they cannot disprove them. God's foundation stands sure and steadfast, being certified and confirmed by His veracity and integrity.

The immortal teachings of Jesus Christ shall abide to bless and benefit His worshipping saints long after the wicked have perished in their folly, and their deceptive doctrines and disgusting dissertations forgotten by all mankind.

(a) He Upholds Us in Our Cleansing. "When he had by himself purged our sins." Ver. 3.

The Victorious Son, having accomplished purification of our sins by the sacrifice of Himself, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He could sit down on the Father's right hand as One who had finished the work of redeeming lost mankind by the supreme sacrifice of Himself. It is obvious that the provision for purging was a single definite act performed before He sat down at the right hand of God.

Note the significance of the words, "by himself" He suffered alone in His hour of anguish on the middle cross. The holy angels could not join Him in such an hour of intense sufferings for our sins. No animal could be substituted for the Lamb of God.

Our great Redeemer was sufficient within Himself to achieve complete victory over sin and death, He could not give more than Himself, and He did not offer less than Himself. He gave all He is in Person, all He is in power, and all He is in prayer to purge our hearts from sin.

(b) He Upholds Us in Our Character. "Upholding all things by the word of his power." Ver. 3.

When the Author of the Epistle speaks of all things he is speaking of "all things" pertaining to Christ's redemptive works of grace.

The redeeming work of Christ performed in the heart of man is a masterpiece of His creative skill. We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2: 10).

Christian character is a product of divine workmanship. It is a state of spiritual being derived from Jesus Christ through faith. He imparts the inherent qualities of His own Divine Nature to us when He purges our hearts from indwelling sin. These inherited graces are exemplified in our conduct in this evil world. Paul said, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13.

Christian character and conduct are so intimately related that one cannot exist without the other. Jesus affirmed this truth, saying, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good." Luke 6:45. He was teaching us that the good treasure of the heart is exemplified in the consistent living of a good man.

The Greek word, which is here translated "Upholding," denotes both sustaining strength and movement. The Apostle enables us to see that Christ is concerned, not only with sustaining the weight of our burdens in life, but also with maintaining us in the development of our character. The Son continues to uphold our moral character and conduct as we journey toward the City of God. In other words, the same divine power of the Son that upholds the whole created universe while in movement is the same divine power that upholds His people while they continue on their way to the Father's house.

I cannot accept the idea that the "upholding of all things" refers primarily to the Son's power to uphold the created universe. Christ's greatest concern is for the salvation of His people. They are more important to Him than the whole created universe. The great question confronting Christ is, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Creation is evidently maintained by certain fixed laws that govern the movements of worlds. A redeemed soul is not governed by certain fixed laws which cannot be broken. Man is capable of making a choice that God's laws cannot govern without the consent of man's will.

Therefore the Son's chief concern is the welfare of His people. He upholds every part of their complex being by the word of His power. The principles of saving truth contained in His

sayings are implanted in our hearts by the Spirit. God's anointed prophet revealed this gracious truth in the new covenant of grace, saying, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts." (See Jer. 31:31-34).

The Savior upholds the right decisions of the will, the normal desires of the heart, the impulses of pure love and the motives of a good conscience. The potentialities of the mind are ruled and regulated by the sayings of the Savior. We have the mind of Christ, and the meditations of Christ. Our constant prayer is, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in the sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer." Psa. 19: 14.

(c) He Upholds Us in Our Conflicts. "Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Ver. 13.

Such glowing words were never spoken to the holy angels. The Author is speaking of the triumph of Christ. Our great Redeemer, after He had offered one complete sacrifice for sin forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. We have every right to expect Him to uphold us in all our conflicts by His sustaining strength and sovereign might.

We have many desperate and designing foes to overcome in these last days. The sinful world is against us, the selfish wicked are against us, and the satanic warfare is against us, but God is for us. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

The conquering Christ is seated on the mediatorial throne to intercede for us. His intercession, intelligence, and integrity uphold us in life's conflicts. We are made invincible in this present world through faith in the victorious Son of God, who said to His disciples, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Jno. 16:33.

4. GOD HAS SPOKEN BY THE PRE-EMINENCE OF THE SON. "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Ver. 8.

The words of this glowing tribute to the exalted Son were spoken by the inspired Psalmist. (Psa. 45:6-7.) This holy prophet and jubilant songster foresaw and foretold the ultimate triumph of the glorified Redeemer and Prince of the kings of the earth.

(a) The Authority of the Son. "Thy throne, O God."

It is well to notice that the authority of the Son is the same as the authority of God, for He is very God in His Divine person, power and pre-eminence. The Son speaks to us with authority, sustains us with His authority, and sends us with authority. He has authority on earth to pardon our sins, purify our souls, and preserve us in salvation. He has full authority to deliver us from all evil, defend us from all enemies, and direct us to our eternal home.

The Son has a throne and an everlasting dominion. His truth shall abide forever, His testimony shall endure forever, and His teachings shall continue to all eternity. The throne of the

Son is the throne of Mace, the throne of glory, and the throne of government. He governs His vast dominion with the sceptre of uprightness.

(b) The administration of the Son. "A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Ver. 8.

The sceptre is the emblem of Christ's everlasting sovereignty. He reigns supreme in regal splendor and righteousness for evermore. He would have us perceive that the sceptre of His enduring kingdom is a sceptre of uprightness which governs both the character and the conduct of His obedient subjects. The full assurance of His righteous rule is revealed in the statement, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity." These manifest qualities of the Divine Nature of the Son clearly reveal Him to be God's qualified representative in the world.

The inherent principles obtained in Christ's redemptive work are plainly revealed in His love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity. It is not difficult to find these same fundamental facts disclosed in the new covenant of grace.

These abiding principles of the Saviour's redemptive work are implanted and inworked in our minds and hearts by the Spirit of God.

These inworked principles of grace enable us to love righteousness and hate iniquity. The inherent love of righteousness prevents us from compromising with sin under all conditions and circumstances of life in this evil world. We find it incompatible with Christian character and conduct to condone sin in any form, at any time.

We find the principles of our Lord's saving grace vividly set forth in Paul's lucid statement relative to the new creature in Christ. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Cor. 5:17.

These glowing words of the Apostle leave no doubts in our minds concerning the complete transformation that takes place in the soul of the new man created in Christ Jesus, our Lord. It is evident to all that the redemptive works of Christ create a new being in life, cause a new beginning in life, and control a new behavior in life.

The gracious Savior governs our will and ways in such a perfect manner that all our normal and natural desires are regulated and ruled according to the immutable laws of His immovable kingdom.

I cannot give place for one moment to any doctrine that does not offer a complete deliverance from both the principle and practice of sin in this present life. To me, the love of righteousness and the hatred of iniquity is the norm of Christian deportment as set forth in the New Testament.

(c) The Anointing of the Son. "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Ver. 9.

The Holy Scriptures clearly reveal that the kings, priests, and the holy prophets were consecrated to their sacred offices by the holy anointing oil. This solemn and sacred anointing patently signified the gracious gifts and enablements of the Holy Ghost. The Scriptures disclose the amazing fact that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power. (Acts 10:38)

Christ Jesus is the Anointed One. He is anointed with the holy oil of gladness above His associates in heaven and in earth. Perhaps the inspired words relative to the anointing of the Son include the joyful festivities which shall attend the crowning of Christ. It will be a glorious event when the saints come marching in to celebrate the gladsome day of the Saviour's complete triumph over all sin and death. It is written, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The holy prophet saw the crowning day from afar, and uttered this glowing testimony of unwavering faith. (Isa. 35:10)

Jesus Christ, and none but Himself, can be King immortal over the vast dominion of all creation. Christ Jesus, our Lord, is qualified to be a Great High Priest to all the redeemed family of God, and Holy Prophet to all intelligent beings in heaven and in earth. The Anointed Son is worthy to receive the highest honor, praise and glory from God, the Father, from the innumerable company of angels, and from the general assembly of the church of the firstborn.

* * * * *

HEBREWS, CHAPTER II

1. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

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

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

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

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

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

8. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: THE SUFFICIENT SALVATION

Text: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation." Heb. 2:3.

1. THE PLEADING OF THE SPEAKER. "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard." Ver. 1.

(a) The Lord Spoke to Us at the First. "At the first began to be spoken by the Lord." Ver. 3.

(b) The Lord Spoke to Us of the Facts. "The things which we have heard." Ver. 1.

1. (c) The Lord Spoke to Us of Faithfulness. "Lest at any time we should let them slip." Ver.

2. THE PROVISION FOR OUR SINS. "How shall we escape?" Ver. 3.

2. (a) Provides an Escape from the Past Sins. "Every transgression and disobedience." Ver.

(b) Provides an Escape from the Power of Sin. "Disobedience."

(c) Provides an Escape from the Punishment for Sin. "Received a just recompense of reward." Ver. 2.

3. THE POSSESSION OF THE SPIRIT. "Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." Ver. 4.

(a) The Spirit Completes Us in the Will of God. "According to his own will."

4. (b) The Spirit Confirms Us by the Witness of God. "God also bearing them witness." Ver.

(c) The Spirit Comforts Us by the Words of God. "The world to come, whereof we speak." Ver. 5.

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

1. THE PLEADING OF THE SPEAKER. "We ought to give the more earnest heed." Ver. 1.

The faithful Author continues to stress the astonishing fact that God has spoken unto us in the last days by His Son. He now draws our attention to the message of the great salvation.

It is exceedingly difficult for us to comprehend the vast scope and measureless extent of so great salvation, but we certainly owe it to ourselves to devote some time to ponder seriously the fundamental facts relating to the sufficient salvation provided for us through the immeasurable sacrifice and sufferings of Christ on the cross.

(a) The Lord Has Spoken unto Us at the First. "At the first began to be spoken by the Lord." Ver. 3.

The compassionate Lord has spoken to us first relative to our need of so great salvation. The Divine Speaker gives us the first call to salvation, the first conviction for sin, and the first command to seek.

The fact that our Lord speaks to us first regarding our salvation reveals the importance of giving the more earnest heed to His plea.

The loving Lord seeks us with infinite patience, and speaks to us with gentle voice, saying, "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." Rev. 3:20.

We are the keeper of the door of our own hearts. We are capable of opening our immortal souls to welcome the Son of God to abide within us for evermore.

So great salvation, purchased at so great sacrifice, merits our undivided attention. We must give the Saviour the first place in our hearts, the first place in our honor, and the first place in our hope. Our chief concern in life should be to obtain so great salvation.

(b) The Lord Has Spoken to Us by the Facts. "The things which we have heard." Ver. 1.

The things which we have heard are vast in scope and far-reaching in extent. The Word of God places great emphasis upon our willingness to hear the message of eternal truth proclaimed in the Gospel of Christ. We are not following cunningly devised fables when we accept the facts about a great Savior and a great salvation. Our hope for eternal life rests on God's infallible truth revealed in His Son. The things which we have heard are the things disclosed in the person of Christ, and proclaimed in the message of the Gospel.

We have heard about the crucifixion of the Son, the cleansing of the soul, and the crowning of the saints. These abiding facts constitute the unshakable substructure supporting our implicit faith in Christ. He is the Rock on which we build life's superstructure. We are like the wise man that heard the sayings of Jesus, believed the truth, and built his house upon a rock. "The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." Matt. 7:24-25.

We have no justifiable reason to expect the Lord to prevent the rain, the floods, and the winds of adversity from beating upon our house; but we can expect Him to fortify us with the enduring facts to support us in life's trying times of storms, stress, and strain.

(c) The Lord Has Spoken to Us about Faithfulness. "Lest at any time we should let them slip." Ver. 1.

This sobering exhortation merits our thoughtful consideration. The anointed Speaker uttered a timely warning when he said, "Lest at any time we should let them slip." We are in grave danger of allowing the gracious spiritual realities to slip from our grasp through carelessness and indifference. The Speaker is saying in effect, "Lest at any time we should let the things of salvation carelessly pass by us, or flow by us."

We cannot afford to ignore this timely word of caution. We must watch and pray, lest we allow the things pertaining to our spiritual lives to leak out of our hearts.

The inspired Author anticipated the dangers of neglect when he confronted us with the challenging question contained in the text.

We owe it to ourselves to face frankly the startling implications in the question, "If we neglect so great salvation?" We do well to keep in mind that our experience of salvation is received and retained on probationary tenure, and therefore may be forfeited through neglect and indifference.

Christian character is not fixed by any work of grace received in this present life. We can depart from the living God by neglecting to watch constantly and pray without ceasing. Our faithful Savior admonished us regarding these things when He said, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:34-36.

Life moves at a rapid pace in these last days. We are crowded and congested by the multiplicity of earthly things. We are careful and troubled about many things. We find it difficult to keep in close touch with our Savior because we live in such close touch with our substance. We are paying a high price for our low living.

How shall we escape the poverty of soul resulting from our neglect? "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The Master's unanswered question will haunt us to all eternity, if we neglect so great salvation.

2. THY PROVISION FOR OUR SINS. "How shall we escape?"

We are confronted with this challenging question from our birth to our burial. "How shall we escape?" We must face the unalterable truth that without the saving grace of Jesus there is no escape from sin's inevitable consequences. Our only hope for escape is found in the redemptive sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

(a) Christ Provides an Escape from Our Past Sins. "Every transgression and disobedience."

The footprints of the transgressor shall never be covered by the sands of time. The evil deeds of our unholy lives are recorded on the pages of the history we have made in this present world. The dark stains of our iniquities are indelibly stamped on our guilty souls, and the intolerable burden of our accumulated evils rests on our unclean hearts like the weight of the hills. We are constantly reminded that God has said, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." This unqualified indictment charges us with the sins of our past, the sins of our practice, and the sins of our passions.

Our only way of escape from our past sins is through faith in the Son of God, who was manifested to take away our sins. He has power on earth to forgive sins. We can flee to Him for pardon, call on His Name in prayer, and trust in His mercy for peace.

(b) Christ Provides an Escape from the Principle, of Sin. "Every disobedience."

We cannot consistently overlook the obvious fact that man is disobedient to God in principle and practice. The man is disposed to sin, dominated by sin, and deceived by sin. The principle of sin rules the will, the ways, and the wisdom of man. The innate principle of sin binds the sinner, blinds his senses, and blights his soul. The sinner is a helpless victim of his own perverseness, perniciousness, and passions. Christ has provided the only way of salvation for lost men.

(c) Christ Provides an Escape from the Punishment for Sin. "Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." Ver. 2.

The just and righteous law of a Holy God demands that the sinner be punished for his willful transgressions and insolent disobedience. God's Word declares, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. 18:20. This inexorable law of condemnation shall be carried out by rewarding the guilty with the punishment richly deserved for disobedience. If God's Word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall the guilty sinner escape punishment for his sins, if he refuses to accept so great salvation?

God's comforting word of hope is, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20. Christ has provided an abundant grace to sterilize every cesspool of iniquity. He has provided an ocean of holiness for every stagnant pond of sin, and an Amazon river of purity for every stream of evil flowing out of the human heart. There is an escape from the punishment for our sins because there is efficacy in the passion of the Savior. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is apparently no escape from the consequences of sin in this present life. This is saying that the effects of sin on the body and mind are not removed when we are pardoned for our transgressions.

The scars of sin remain to trouble us in body and mind until they are removed by the power of the resurrection. Many good people will reap the effects of their past sins all the days of their lives. Many will have reasons to regret the years spent in dissipation and disobedience. During the advancing years they will realize the effects of sin in their weakened wills and impaired minds.

3. THE POSSESSION OF THE SPIRIT. "Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." Ver. 4.

Jesus placed great emphasis on the promised gift of the Holy Ghost. He had much truth in His teachings relating to the Comforter and the Spirit of truth. It is apparent that His teachings relative to the gift and gifts of the Holy Ghost are incorporated in the doctrine of salvation proclaimed in the Epistles.

(a) The Spirit Completes Us in the Will of God. "According to his own will."

God's Word reveals that the gift of the Son, the gift of salvation, and the gift of the Spirit are given according to the will of God. The new birth is a great and gracious work of saving grace performed in the soul by the Spirit, according to the will of God.

It is apparent that the epochal experience of the new birth and the epochal experience of the baptism with the Spirit are not the same, and never occur simultaneously. A man must be born of the Spirit before he can be baptized with the Spirit. Jesus stated specifically that the world could not receive the promised gift of the Comforter.

The promised gift of the Holy Ghost completes us in purity of heart according to the will of God in Christ. Peter gave a clear testimony to this fact, saying, "God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Acts 15:8-9.

It is obviously the will of God in Christ to cleanse our hearts from indwelling sin. We are not saved: from all sin without and within until we have been pardoned for our transgressions, and purged from: Innate depravity and inner defilement.

Knowing that it is God's will to sanctify us wholly through faith in the sacrifice of His son, we ought to give the more earnest heed to this marvelous truth, lest at any time we should let it slip.

(b) The Spirit Confirms Us by the Witness of God. "God also bearing them witness." Ver. 4.

The Scriptures reveal that we are confirmed in our experience of salvation by the will of God, by the works of God, and by the words of God. These three basic facts satisfy our hearts and stabilize our hopes while we journey in the narrow way which leads to the Father's house of many mansions. These three conscious realities constitute the witness of the Spirit. We have received the full assurance of our faith when we know that God's will, and works, and words have been fulfilled in us through Christ Jesus our Lord. These comforting facts remove all doubt, discontent, and distress from our hearts and minds.

The assuring witness of the Spirit imparts a conscious sense of God's love shed abroad in our hearts. The Holy Spirit enables us to perceive the tender care and parental concern bestowed upon us by our Heavenly Father. We sense the fact that His love is complete, constant, and changeless.

The witness of the Spirit enables us to understand that salvation is a rest, a refuge, and a restoration through faith in Christ. The work of the Spirit relieves us of our burden, releases us from our bondage, regulates our behavior, and rewards us with His blessing.

Let us not assume that we have the Spirit's witness because we devote some time to the service of the church and other interests of Christ. We can ill afford to be deceived in the important matter of our relationship to Christ. We must have no doubts about the pardon of our sins and the purity of our souls. Paul stated this essential fact, saying, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8:9. In the clear light of this plain truth it behooves us to be complete, certified, and conscious of our relationship to Christ.

(c) The Spirit Comforts Us by the Words of God. "The world to come, whereof we speak." Ver. 5.

Creation had no place for a redeemed soul. Therefore it was necessary for Christ to prepare a place for His ransomed people. When Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you," He confirmed the faith of His people by revealing to them the final consummation of His redemptive purpose.

When the inspired Author speaks of the world to come, he is obviously speaking of the place prepared for the redeemed family of God. It is apparent that the world to come is the future state of glory which the glorified saints shall share with the glorified Savior. This pleasing prospect shall be fulfilled by the Son to the glory of the Everlasting Father and the eternal admiration and joyful acclamation of His adoring saints. To this we say, "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

It is interesting to note that the angels have not provided the place for the redeemed children of God. The holy angels have not suffered for our sins in order to provide for us a land of endless day and a legacy of everlasting delight. Our great Redeemer has put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. He is the Prince and Captain of our salvation, appointed by the Father to bring many sons unto glory.

There are times in this world when our minds are sorely perplexed and our hearts troubled by the bewildering problems incident to life in the holy way of salvation. There are times when we are tempted to accept defeat. But in such an hour the loving Lord revives our faltering courage by lifting the veil between time and eternity enabling us to see the city which has foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.

When the faithful Author speaks of the world to come he enables us to see the home of the soul with the eyes of our understanding and embrace the resplendent prospect with the arms of our unwavering faith. Let us press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: GOD'S MINDFULNESS OF MAN

The Text:

"One in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Heb. 2:6.

1. GOD IS MINDFUL OF MAN'S CREATION. "What is man?"

(a) The Pattern of Man's Creation Revealed. "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Gen. 1:26.

(b) The Purpose of Man's Crowning Revealed. "Thou crownedst him with glory and honour." Ver. 7.

(c) The Possibilities of Man's Capacity Revealed. "That thou visitest him." Ver. 6.

2. GOD IS MINDFUL OF MAN'S CONDITION. "Now we see not yet all things put under him." Ver. 8.

(a) We See the Fall of Man Revealed. "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels." Ver. 7.

(b) We See the Forfeiture of Man Revealed. "And didst set him over the works of thy hands." Ver. 7.

(c) We See the Fears of Man Revealed. "Who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Ver. 15.

3. GOD IS MINDFUL OF MAN'S CLEANSING. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified." Ver. 11.

(a) The Condescension of the Savior. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." Ver. 9.

(b) The Completeness of the Sanctified. "Are all of one."

(c) The Confession of the Son. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Ver. 11.

(d) The Commitment of Our Souls. "I will put my trust in him." Ver. 13.

(e) The Captain of Their Salvation. "To make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Ver. 10.

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

1. GOD IS MINDFUL OF MAN'S CREATION. "What is man?" Ver. 6.

The anointed Apostle called attention to God's concern for man by quoting the testimony of David. (Psa. 8:4-8)

The Holy Scriptures reveal God's grave concern for all men. His perfect provision for the redemption of man is the central theme of the Gospel message.

A merciful God evidently considered man's redemption to be worth the price paid in sacrifice and suffering to ransom fallen man.

Christ is the only answer to the question, "What is man?" When we see Jesus, we see the Man approved of God, and the perfect pattern of all the redeemed.

(a) The Pattern of Man's Creation. "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Gen. 1:26.

Man is evidently the only being in heaven and on earth created in the image and likeness of God. In the original creation man stood at the head of all the works of God, and next to his Maker. The creation of the first man was the grand climax of all the works of God. The first man was a revelation of the ingenious skill of the Infinite Artist, who was pleased to make man different in character and capacity from all angelic beings. Concerning angels, He said, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. 1:14.

It is apparent that each Person in the Holy Trinity imparted His image and likeness to the first man in the original creation. "God said, Let us make man." The creation of man was planned in the council chamber of the Godhead before the foundation of the world. The Everlasting Father, Beloved Son, and Holy Spirit imparted the inherent qualities of their image and likeness to the man. The first man was a revelation of the Godhead, an express image of the Triune Maker.

(b) The Purpose of Man's Crowning. "Thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands."

This was true of Adam in his state of innocence, for he was set over all the works of God in this world. We find it difficult to form a mental picture of man crowned with the effulgent glory and eternal honor of God reigning in regal splendor and sovereign right over the works of the Creator. The crowning with glory and honor evidently gave Adam absolute authority and universal dominion over all the works of God on earth. It is written, "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." Ver. 8.

The intelligent Creator evidently had a definite purpose in mind when He crowned man with glory and honor and set him over the works of His hands. Perhaps the Infinite God designed the crowning of the first man to be a revelation of the crowning of the exalted Christ. It is written, "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:9-11.

Almighty God did not abandon His eternal purpose when Adam sinned and forfeited his crown of glory and honor. A loving God visited the sons of Adam in the Person of Jesus Christ. The incarnate Son of God gave His life to restore the sons of Adam to the image and likeness of God, and gave them the inalienable right to be crowned with glory and honor and reign with Him to all eternity. I am thoroughly convinced that the inspired Author was speaking of the final triumph of the exalted Redeemer when he said, "For in that he put all things in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him." Ver. 8. The King of kings, and the Lord of lords, shall reign in Majesty and in Might, to the glory of the Father, throughout all ages, world without end.

(c) The Possibilities of Man's Capacity. "We see Jesus." Ver. 9.

It is apparent that man has the mental and moral capacity to see the Savior revealed in His sufferings and death on the cross. Man has the capacity to behold his Redeemer and believe on Him for life everlasting.

We see the revelation of God, the righteousness of God, and the relationship with God when we see Jesus. These three fundamental facts are clearly emphasized in the message of the Gospel of Christ.

Man has the spiritual capacity to know the love of God, the life of God, and the likeness of God. He has the capacity to experience the holiness of God, become the habitation of God, and possess the heritage of God. It has been revealed to man that he has the mental capacity to choose his own destiny, complete his own destruction, and consent to his own death. He can obey or disobey the truth, believe or disbelieve the truth, and receive or reject the truth. He is capable of comprehending the effectual provision of Christ, and complying with the essential principles of Christ, and cooperating with the eternal purpose of Christ. These abiding truths have been revealed to man.

Man has the capacity for the righteousness of God. He can be made the righteousness of God in Christ. (II Cor. 5:21)

Man has the moral capacity to enter into a holy relationship with God. He can receive power from Christ to become a child of God. He can be a member of the body of Christ, and enjoy fellowship with all believers and brothers in Christ. Man is capacitated to be a child of the Heavenly Father, and a member of the holy family, and a partaker of the heritage of the faithful.

2. GOD IS MINDFUL OF MAN'S CONDITION. "Now we see not yet all things put under him." Ver. 8.

It is not difficult to perceive that man's present moral state does not reflect the image and likeness of God. We do not see the man crowned with glory and honor reigning in spiritual excellence and supreme authority over all the works of God's hands. Something tragic and terrifying has happened to man as a direct result of his disobedience to Almighty God.

(a) We See the Fall of Man Revealed. "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels." Ver. 7. When the inspired Psalmist said, "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels," he was obviously speaking of the fall of man.

A careful study of the original Greek discloses that the inspired writer was saying in substance, "Thou hast placed man for a little while inferior to the angels." The man created in the image and likeness of God was made higher than the angels, but by sin he was brought low, and subject to death. It is obvious that the man was greatly reduced in rank and dignity as a consequence of his willful transgression. The creature crowned with glory and honor and set over all the works of the Creator's hands fell from his exalted position by an overt act of unjustifiable disobedience.

The man was defiled, depraved, and demoted as a direct result of sin. He no longer sings with the morning stars and shouts for joy among the sons of God. The song of his soul ceased when he sinned against God.

Adam's unwarranted violation of God's command involved the whole human race in the fall. It is written, "By the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation . . . By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Rom. 5:18-19. Paul's statement regarding the dreadful consequences of Adam's transgression expresses the unutterable lament of suffering mankind in this evil world. We are confronted by the indisputable fact that all men are sinners in the sight of God. The imperishable Word declares that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. When David said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," he stated the true condition of all mankind. Man is neither a victim of circumstances nor a product of his evil environment. He is a fallen son of Adam, a forlorn soul, and a foolhardy sinner.

The inane teachings of false prophets and faithless preachers have failed to provide an answer to the problem of sin and death in the world.

The plight of fallen man is pitiful, but not utterly hopeless. There is mercy implied in the words, "Thou hast placed him for a little while inferior to the angels." When David said, "for a little while," he was saying that man's condition resulting from the fall will not continue without hope of redemption. David's words of hope reveal God's concern for man. He fully intends to provide a sacrifice for man's sin, and restore him to the image and likeness of his Maker.

(b) We See the Forfeiture by Man Revealed. "He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." Ver. 8.

A careful study of these words reveals that something has been forfeited by man. There was a time when all things were put under him, but now we see not all things put under him. He has forfeited his dominion and his dignity. He has departed in shame from the presence of God and the peaceful garden. He went out to compete with thorns and thistles in a sweltering struggle to wrest a living from the reluctant soil of a cursed earth. He departed to die among the briars and be buried among the brambles. He forfeited a garden fragrant with flowers, clothed in festive colors, and blooming in pristine beauty. He closed Eden's gates behind him forever and entered a world of disease, desolation and death.

Adam forfeited his moral image, identity, and integrity. His sinful act was punished by the loss of his holiness, his happiness, and his heritage. He forfeited the companionship, the consolation, and the confirmation of his Creator when he violated the sacred trust by his willful transgression. The fallen man forfeited the likeness, the life, and the liberty inherited from the Divine Nature of the Triune God, and departed from His presence without His comforting peace, certified purity, and constant pleasure.

A merciful Lord is mindful of man's weakness, wickedness, and wretchedness. The promise of a Redeemer has lifted man's horizon of hope. All that was lost as consequence of the fall can be restored fully by simple faith in the sacrificial offering of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The beloved Son extended a generous invitation to all mankind when He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28.

(c) We See the Fears of Man Revealed. "Through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Ver. 15.

This Scripture reveals man's tormenting fear of death in startling language. It shows that the fear of death rests on the guilty soul of mortal man like the pall of perpetual night. The tormenting fear of eternal death haunts the conscience of a sinful soul like the slinking shadows of innumerable ghosts.

The fear of death was produced in the soul of the first man the day he disregarded and disbelieved God's irrevocable ultimatum, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The evil fruit of disobedience to God produced the fear of eternal death. Guilty man knows intuitively that he is destined to die, deserves to die, and shall be deserted to die unless he repents of his sin and calls, on the Savior for pity and pardon.

A man may have no fear of committing sin, but he does have fear of the consequences of sin. The fact that he is gay, gratified, and godless during his lifetime does not lessen his fear of death nor relieve his conscience of remorse. He knows that it is impossible for him to evade, erase, and escape the tormenting truth of his misspent yesterdays for which he shall be judged by an impartial Judge.

The vacant heart and mind of an ungodly man becomes the valley of the shadow of death through which his soul walks alone, frightened by the unanswered question about eternity. He is a forlorn figure of despair going toward the engulfing darkness of an everlasting night. His thoughts trouble him and his fears torment him. He can visualize himself lost in an endless night made hideous by the black ravens of despair croaking the dirge of death in the lurid light of the place where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

Into this seething caldron of misery and nightmare of fear came the Son of God, vested with authority and power to deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

There is hope and help for the penitent sinner that calls on Jesus for remission of sins and release from the bondage of fear. The grace of so great salvation is made available to all mankind through faith in the only begotten Son of God, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil.

3. GOD IS MINDFUL OF MAN'S CLEANSING. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." Ver. 11.

God's mindfulness for man's sanctification is clearly revealed in the Scriptures. The Author states the fact of man's cleansing so clearly that one cannot find reason to doubt the possibility of such a glorious experience of divine grace.

(a) The Condescension of the Savior. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Ver. 9.

This is a remarkable revelation of the humiliation of Christ. The inspired Speaker reveals the Just suffering for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. (I Pet. 3:18)

It is interesting to note that the Author quotes the words of the Psalmist when he refers to the condescension of Christ. It is affirmed that Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. The inspired writer is saying that Christ's condescension placed Him lower than the angels for a little while. The man was set in a place lower than the angels because of his transgression. Christ has condescended to a place lower than the angels in order to recover fallen man to the image and likeness of God. The Psalmist is obviously speaking of the condescension of Christ when he said, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Psa. 40:2. Our wonderful Redeemer descended into the horrible pit of death in order to bring us out of death, depravity, and defilement, and set our feet on the unshakable Rock, and establish our goings.

The infallible Word declares that Jesus tasted death for every man. He was sustained and strengthened in His hour of anguish and suffering by the grace of God. He laid down His life and offered up His sinless soul in supreme sacrifice on the hill called Calvary where the formation of rocks resembled the eyeless sockets and fleshless bones of the human skull. He died on the middle cross without a floor under His hallowed feet or a ceiling over His sacred head. He suffered in agony for our sins in the enveloping darkness of the sunless hours made horrifying and hideous by the screams of tortured thieves and the shouts of a merciless mob. His broken and bruised body was placed by loving hands in Joseph's new tomb hewn in living stone in a peaceful garden among the nameless dead.

The Son of God paid the full price for man's redemption when He tasted death for every man. His triumph over death was complete and eternal. It was not possible for death to conquer the immortal and invincible Christ. A borrowed sepulchre could not hold Him, a Roman seal could not hinder Him, and Satan's power could not chain Him. The immortal Son entered death in order

to end it, and obeyed death in order to overcome it. He tasted death by the grace of God and triumphed over death to the glory of God.

The victorious Redeemer is alive for evermore. He holds the keys of hell and death in the firm grip of His nail-scarred hand. Some glorious day He will insert the key in the ponderous lock on the gates of death, and release His sainted dead from the silent dust of mother earth, and transport them to the city of the living God.

Our victorious Lord gave comfort and hope to His trusting saints, saying, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life." Jno. 5:28-29.

In the light of this gracious promise we have reason to join the Psalmist, saying, "My heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Psa. 16:9-10.

(b) The Completeness of the Sanctified. "All of one." Ver. 11.

This positive declaration reveals the Saviour's relationship to His purified people. The Sanctifier and the sanctified are all of one and the same standing or value. They are all one in the Father, one in His family, one in His flock, one in His fold, one in His favor, and one in His fellowship. The sanctified are all united in sacred oneness with God through the one offering of Christ on the cross. Such a state of holy oneness with the Heavenly Father could not be achieved without the sacrificial suffering of the only begotten Son. Our Lord provided for our oneness with God in His passion, prevailed for our oneness with God in His prayer, and perfected us in oneness with God by His power. It is not difficult to discover these three great cardinal truths relative to oneness revealed in the Scriptures.

The sanctified enjoy oneness with Christ in purity, in peace, and in purpose. They are one in His inherent likeness, one in His infinite love, and one in His immortal life. The sanctified have the mind of Christ, the ministry of Christ, and the merits of Christ. They are comforted by Him, confirmed by Him, and cherished by Him. They are made partakers of His holiness, made perfect in His holiness, and made presentable by His holiness.

It is evident that sanctification is the prerequisite to oneness with God. It is apparent that Christ tasted death for every man for the express purpose of sanctifying the people with His own blood. The Word of God reveals that man's sinful nature prevents him from being in perfect harmony with God. Man's sin was the direct cause of his separation from God. It was imperatively necessary for Christ to provide a way to restore fallen man to a proper relationship with God. The Speaker emphasized this salient fact when he said, "We see Jesus." When we see Jesus in the clear light of divine revelation, we will see that the Sanctifier and the sanctified are all of one.

(c) The Confession of the Son. "For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Ver. 11.

The Author's statement reveals the Son's recognition of His oneness with the whole family of God. He expresses His unabashed delight in His holy people by calling them brethren. He feels no sense of embarrassment because His people are sanctified. The pleasure of the Sanctifier is enhanced by the purity of the sanctified.

Consider the Author's glowing words, "For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." The Son, who is the brightness of God's effulgent glory, the express image of the Divine Person, and exalted in dignity and honor above all created beings is not ashamed to identify Himself with all His holy people, and acknowledge them as His brethren.

Our gracious Lord has bestowed the Name of God upon His sanctified people as an evidence of His unalloyed pleasure in them. He said, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." Ver. 12. (Psa. 22:22)

Christ confirmed and certified this promise in His intercessory prayer for His people, saying, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Jno. 17:26.

Our great Savior has obviously conferred the Holy Name of God upon His ransomed people as a token of His infinite love for them. It is apparent that He fully intends to enlighten them throughout all time regarding the unlimited possibilities and power in His more excellent Name.

The great Sanctifier confessed His unspeakable joy in His sanctified children when He said, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." Ver. 13. (See Isa. 8:18.) This remarkable passage enables us to see the close relationship existing between Christ and His devout people. Our Lord is saying in effect, "Behold I am here in the midst of my assembled people: call on me, for I stand ready to render assistance in all matters relating to life."

The Holy Scriptures are replete with amazing incidents and remarkable answers to prayers which show the willingness of the Redeemer to help His believing people in every problem of life.

The inspired Speaker would have us perceive the importance of resting our faith on the conscious sense of the nearness of Jesus. Unless we recognize His protective presence, and fortify ourselves with this comforting fact, we shall not achieve the victory over sin and Satan in this present world.

(d) The Commitment of Our Souls. "I will put my trust in him." Ver. 13.

The Author apparently refers to the words of David, saying, "My God, my strength, in whom I will trust." Psa. 18:2. These words evidently belong to the Messiah, who states His complete trust in God.

These inspired words clearly reveal Christ's Sonship and brotherhood with His sanctified children. He discloses His likeness to all His brethren, saying, "I will put my trust in him." Christ

is saying, in effect, "I must place my trust in God and depend on Him for strength and support like all my holy brethren."

The faithful Author has called our attention to Christ's complete dependence on God to show us that we must put our complete trust in God, and depend on Him for sustaining strength in daily life. It is obviously true that our commitment to Christ in faith must be as full and complete as His commitment to God.

Such a thorough commitment of our souls unto Jesus involves a decision of our will. We must make our commitment a complete decisive choice of implicit faith in Jesus. This commitment must be made without the slightest indication of unwillingness, reluctance, or reservation.

We are under obligation to join Christ in His perfect commitment to God, saying, "I will put my trust in Him." We must underscore these immortal words in our thinking, incorporate them in our being, and implement our lives with all included and implied in the profession of our trust in Christ.

We yield ourselves unto the Savior with the understanding that it means a giving of all we are in body, mind, soul, and strength to Him in faith. We cannot expect to succeed in life unless we make a thorough and radical commitment of ourselves unto the Savior. We must not overlook His warning words, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke 9:62.

If we are mindful of the country from whence we came out, we can return to the old ways of life. Satan will certainly make many bids for us to return to the world with its passing pleasures.

When tempted to look back, let us remember that God has said, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Heb. 10:38. Let us give the more earnest heed to the Word which says, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." Psa. 37:5.

(e) The Captain of Their Salvation. "To make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Ver. 10.

The triumphant Son of God is the Captain of our salvation. He is the chosen Leader and exalted Prince appointed by the Father to bring many sons unto the final consummation of all things embraced in the scope of the great salvation. It has pleased our Heavenly Father, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, to make and constitute Jesus Christ, His beloved Son, the Captain of our salvation. It is the Son's high and holy purpose to bring the redeemed family of God unto the promised possession of their eternal inheritance in glory. Their heavenly inheritance was purchased for them by the sufferings of Christ, whom the Father has appointed Heir of all things. Therefore, the Son is the qualified Leader and Prince of our salvation.

It was necessary for Christ to be made perfect, of completely fit for the full execution of His office, by enduring various and extreme sufferings in this present world. Now, as consequence

of His divine appointment, Jesus, the great Sanctifier, is dedicated and devoted to the task of bringing the children of God safely through all difficulties incident to life, and enable them to achieve final victory over sin and death.

The Author has assured us that the power of Satan has been overcome through the death of Jesus. "Through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Ver. 14. The death brought into this world by Satan has been counterworked and rendered completely ineffectual by the sacrificial death of Jesus. By His own meritorious death on the cross, He procured the almighty power of the Holy Spirit to render useless all the ungodly operations of the devil, who had power to bring death into this unhappy world.

The Captain of our salvation was challenged by the powers of death on the rocky crest of Calvary. The prince of perdition mobilized the cohorts of hell, and marshaled the iniquitous inhabitants of the infernal regions to wage war against the Prince of Peace. The ultimate outcome of the conflict was never in doubt. The final victory of the cross was decisive. The power of Satan was destroyed, and the sting of death was removed. It was ordained of God from all eternity that the Seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent.

The Captain of our salvation is able to sustain us in sore trials and severe temptations. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Ver. 18.

Our loving Lord has suffered being tempted. He fought the battle of the wilderness in terrible solitude and sufferings. He suffered with cold, hunger, and loneliness in a dreary desolate waste, forgotten and forsaken by mankind. His sufferings in soul and body were intensified by the insulting insinuations and sensuous suggestions of the devil.

The Captain of our salvation understands our weakness and want. He is a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the faults and failures of His people. He is able to succour us in temptation, sustain us in trials, and share with us in our tears. He gives us riches for our wants, rest for our weariness, and rewards for our witnessing.

Let us not forget that the Captain of our salvation has been appointed by our Heavenly Father to bring us unto glory. We must have faith to trust Him to counteract the powers of Satan, consummate the purpose of His sufferings, and crown His people with salvation. We must continue to believe that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day. "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude utters this timely admonition for the purpose of encouraging the embattled saints, who are contending for the faith. Jude 20-21.

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HEBREWS, CHAPTER III

1. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2. Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

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

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

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

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

7. Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice,

8. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9. When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

10. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

11. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: OUR CONSIDERATION OF CHRIST

Text: "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Heb. 3:1.

1. CONSIDER THE PROFESSION OF CHRIST, "Our profession, Christ Jesus."

(a) The Calling of Christ. "Partakers of the heavenly calling."

(b) The Children of Christ. "Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we."
Ver. 6.

(c) The Confidence in Christ. "If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Ver. 6.

2. CONSIDER THE PARTAKERS OF CHRIST. "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end." Ver. 14.

(a) We Are Made Sharers of Christ. "Made partakers."

(b) We Are Made Secure in Christ. "If we hold the beginning of our confidence."

(c) We Are Made Stedfast in Christ. "Stedfast unto the end."

3. CONSIDER THE PLEADING OF CHRIST. "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Ver. 15.

(a) The Willingness to Hear. "If ye will hear."

(b) The Warning to Heed. "Take heed, brethren." Ver. 12.

(c) The Wandering of Heart. "They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways." Ver. 10.

4. CONSIDER THE PROVOKING OF CHRIST. "For some, when they had heard, did provoke." Ver. 16.

(a) The Displeasure of the Spirit. "I was grieved with that generation." Ver. 10.

(b) The Deceitfulness of Sin. "Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Ver. 13.

(c) The Disinherited by the Savior. "So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest." Ver. 11.

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

1. CONSIDER THE PROFESSION OF CHRIST. "The Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Ver. 1.

When we seriously consider Christ Jesus in the light of divine revelation we perceive that He is the first cause, the fixed center, and the final conclusion of everything in God's plan of redemption.

Our profession of Christ means infinitely more than merely assenting to certain fundamental tenets embraced in our theological views. Our profession must include an acceptance by faith of all that Christ is revealed to be in His Divine Person. We must prove our profession by appropriating Christ's great salvation by faith and continuing to abide in His sustaining grace by obedience and faith.

Christ Jesus is the Apostle of our profession because He is the One sent of God, and vested with full authority to be the Messenger, the Minister, and the Mediator of the new covenant of redeeming grace. He is the appointed High Priest of our profession. The Heavenly Father has chosen the beloved Son to be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. (Heb. 9:17)

(a) The Calling of Christ. "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." Ver. 1.

The holy brethren are persons consecrated to Christ, and called to holiness of love, holiness in life, and holiness in labors.

The heavenly calling is an invitation. We are invited to leave the bondage of sin and enter the kingdom of God. We are made partakers of the heavenly calling when we embrace the good news of the Gospel, and are brought into a state of salvation by faith. We are made partakers of the heavenly calling, the high calling, and the holy calling in Christ Jesus our Lord. We are made partakers of His rest, His riches, and His righteousness.

(b) The Children of Christ. "Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we." Ver. 6.

The Author is apparently speaking of Christ as a Son over His own household, or family of believers. We are His children and members of the redeemed family of God.

The inspired writer would have us perceive that Christ, the Son, is pre-eminent in His household, present with His family, and pleased with His children. The church is the household of Christ and the Bride of the Lamb. Our Lord has established the body of blood-washed believers upon the firm foundation of unwavering faith. He has endued, endorsed, and endowed His faithful family with His more excellent Name, and empowered them by His Spirit to achieve ultimate and final victory over Satan, sin, and death. He has assured them that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His invincible company of believers.

The Apostle reminded us of this salient fact when he said, "He that built all things is God." Ver. 4. The divine Architect of the ages has made an ample provision to build our moral character for eternity. The Master Builder predetermined that His people shall be conformed to the image of the Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

It is essential that we consider these assuring facts when we consider Christ as a Son over His own house.

We must not overlook the obvious truth that the faithful Christ intends to bring His redeemed family into their inheritance. This is the burden of the Speaker's message concerning Christ as a Son over His own household.

(c) The Confidence in Christ. "If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Ver. 6.

The Greek word, which is here translated confidence, means freedom of speech and liberty of access to God.

When the Author said, "If we hold fast the confidence," he would have us understand that we are Christ's church, and members of His household, and shall continue to be such, and be acknowledged by Him, if we continue to obey the heavenly calling, and maintain the true profession of faith firm unto the end.

Our attention has been called to the fact that Moses was faithful in all his household, as a servant, but the people did not hold fast their confidence unto the end. They defeated the purpose of God by refusing to enter the promised land. (See Ver. 5)

The Author has cited this tragic event in the history of Israel to warn us regarding our confidence in Christ. We are admonished to hold fast our freedom of speech and liberty of access to God firm unto the end. This is saying that Christ as a faithful Son over His own household will bring His children into their inheritance, if they continue steadfast in faith to the end of the way.

The children of Christ have a valid claim and an inalienable right to the promises of God and the provision of His grace. The faithful Son is the appointed Heir of all things pertaining to our inheritance. He wills to bestow the birthright blessing on the heirs of salvation.

The anointed Author would have us understand that it is the will and purpose of Christ to bring the regenerated sons of God into the inheritance of heart holiness, even as it was God's purpose to bring His people into the promised land under the leadership of Moses.

This truth is the central theme of the Hebrew Epistle. This accounts for the exhortation to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

2. CONSIDER THE PARTAKERS OF CHRIST. "We are made partakers of Christ." Ver. 14.

According to the words of the Apostle, we are made partakers of the Holy Christ and the heavenly calling. These two cardinal facts afford us much comfort in our consideration of Christ.

(a) The Sharers of Christ. "We are made partakers."

The partakers are the companions, associates, and sharers with Christ. They are made partakers of His Divine Nature and sharers of His more excellent Name. Christ has willed that His holy people shall enjoy an unbroken fellowship with Him in all time and to all eternity.

God's faithful people are made sharers with Christ in the eternal inheritance received from the Heavenly Father. It is written, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Rom. 8:17.

It has been revealed that the Son is the appointed Heir of all things. The Author obviously has this fact in mind when he speaks of partakers of Christ. We share with Christ in all things pertaining to so great salvation. It is evident that we shall share with Him in His final triumph over sin and death, and share jointly with Him in the inheritance of eternal life. According to His promise we shall share in His gracious consolation, share in His grand coronation, and share in the glory of His final consummation.

(b) The Security in Christ. "If we hold the beginning of our confidence." Ver. 14.

This plain statement of Holy Writ discloses that our security in Christ's redemptive purpose is conditional.

The Greek word, which is here translated confidence, is not the same word translated confidence in verse six. This Greek word means to place or stand on a firm foundation. It refers to the foundation on which something else is built, and by which it is supported. It is apparent that the word confidence refers to something basic and fundamental, received at the beginning of spiritual life. These fundamental principles obtained at the beginning of spiritual life constitute the foundation on which something else relating to salvation is built, and by which it is supported.

The Word of God reveals that the basic principles of spiritual life begin in the experience of the new birth. Seeing that this is true, we must conclude that we receive the beginning of our confidence in the epochal experience of regeneration. Therefore the Author is saying that we are

made partakers of Christ, who is the appointed Heir of all things, if we hold the fundamental principles of the new birth firm unto the end.

When we embraced the plan of so great salvation we were made heirs of salvation. Our faith in Christ entitles us to receive all the benefits of Christ's redemptive work in this world and in the world to come. We have the inalienable right to receive complete fulfillment of all the exceeding great and precious promises relative to the eternal glories in the Father's house of many mansions.

The inspired Speaker admonishes the children of God to hold the fundamental principles of their regeneration firm until they receive the birthright blessing of holiness through faith in the appointed Heir of all things. When the children of God receive their birthright in Christ they are made partakers of the inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith. (See Acts 26:18)

The gracious epochal experience of entire sanctification is an inheritance received in this life by faith in Jesus. It is the fitness of moral character necessary to receive the eternal inheritance in a holy heaven with the saints in light. This is the obvious truth set forth in the Hebrew Epistle and confirmed by the Spirit of God.

(c) The Steadfast in Christ. "Steadfast unto the end."

A thoughtful consideration of the truth revealed in the immediate context enables us to perceive the imperative necessity of continuing steadfast unto the end.

The inspired Speaker would have us see that the promised rest is the grand objective obtained through faith in Christ. The land of Canaan was a type of the promised rest and heavenly calling which the people of God received when Moses brought them out of Egyptian bondage. Their deliverance from bondage was the beginning of their confidence. If they had continued steadfast in the faith, they would have entered the land of promise under the leadership of Moses.

These facts taken from the history of Israel are emphasized by the Author to show us the importance of continuing steadfast in the faith until we enter into the second rest. We have no justifiable reason to expect Christ to maintain us in blessed fellowship with Himself unless we hold the basic principles of regeneration until we receive the promised inheritance of a holy heart. The faithful servant of Christ shows us that we prove ourselves to be faithful children of God if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast until the final goal of our faith is reached, and we enter into the birthright blessing of rest.

I am convinced that this interpretation of revealed truth is in perfect harmony with the message set forth by the Author of this remarkable Epistle. I find sufficient support for this interpretation of truth clearly revealed in all the sacred Scriptures. I find nothing in Holy Writ to warrant the claim that the people of God cannot forfeit their state and standing and be lost for ever. The Author's warnings regarding unbelief and disobedience establish this view relative to our continuing steadfast unto the end. There is not one word in Holy Writ to substantiate the current dogma of unconditional eternal security.

3. CONSIDER THE PLEADINGS OF CHRIST. "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Ver. 15. Psa. 95:7-11.

We are confronted with the astonishing truth that a loving Lord finds it necessary to make such an appeal to His people. Christ's urgent appeal reveals the pitiful plight of a people blinded and bewildered by their ungodliness and unbelief.

(a) The Willingness to Hear. "If ye will hear his voice."

The implications revealed in these words of the Holy Ghost are startling. Much depends on our willingness to listen to the voice of the Spirit when He speaks to us regarding our obedience to the Saviour. Much depends on our ability to discern the truth we hear.

We must have the capacity to hear the concern to hear, and the conviction to hear. It is possible to lose the capacity to hear the voice of Christ. We must have ears to hear the message of the Master. It is possible to lose all concern about hearing the voice of Christ. It is possible to become indifferent and unmoved by the Word of truth. It is possible to lose conviction regarding the message of hope revealed in the Gospel, and perish without the knowledge of truth.

We must be disposed to hear the voice of the Savior. We must have a desire to hear His voice, and make a firm decision to hear His voice. The man who is unwilling to hear the voice of Christ will probably never hear His voice. Such a disobedient soul is in grave danger of being left to live in a voiceless void, in an eternal silence.

If we have the right attitude toward the truth, and give serious attention to the truth, and show a willingness to accept the truth, our gracious Lord will speak to us the message of truth. A man is obviously in a deplorable state of moral and mental darkness when he has no serious concern to hear the voice of the Savior calling him to salvation. We are admonished to walk while we have the light, lest darkness come upon us. (Jno. 12:35)

(b) The Warning to Heed. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Ver. 12.

This is a timely and terrifying warning delivered to the people of God by His faithful minister. It is a stern and sobering warning relative to the dreadful consequences of unbelief.

It is apparent that unbelief proceeds out of an evil heart. The innate depravity of man's unholy heart is the direct cause of his unbelief and consequent unwillingness to accept the redemptive work of Christ. The inherent antagonism of the evil heart of unbelief was clearly demonstrated when the people refused to enter the land of promise under the faithful leadership of Moses. They deliberately departed from the living God, and willfully rejected the earnest plea of their leaders.

The Author has called our attention to this tragic event in the history of Israel for the obvious purpose of warning us regarding the promised rest of faith. It is written, "I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest." Ver. 11. Psa. 95:11.

The children of God are confronted with an important decision when they hear the voice of the Savior pleading with them to enter into His rest of faith. The Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, is the faithful Leader appointed to bring His children into their inheritance. When the faithful Speaker issued his warning relative to the evil heart of unbelief he was saying in effect, "Take heed, children of God, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in turning you away from the living Christ when He pleads with you to receive the birthright blessing of a holy heart."

The evil heart of unbelief has caused many to turn away from the complete cleansing provided for them in the sacrificial death of Jesus. Many of these unfortunate souls have become victims of unscriptural doctrines which offer no assuring hope of deliverance from indwelling sin in this life. Many unhappy souls have been misguided and confused by their own unbelief and by the unbelief of false teachers. They have missed the way to holiness of heart and peace of mind. They have not considered that Christ Jesus was manifested to purge their hearts from inherited depravity, and give them the joy of full deliverance from sin.

(c) The Wanderings of the Heart. "They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways." Ver. 10. Psa. 95:10.

This startling statement vividly discloses the wilderness wanderings of a people suffering the disastrous results of their unwarranted and inexcusable unbelief.

When God said, "They do always err in their heart," He is saying in substance, "They continue to wander aimlessly in a desert of unrest and uncertainty." This dreary and dreadful roaming is set in contrast with the peace and plenty of the land of promise. It was evidently not the purpose of God in the beginning to sentence the people to suffer forty years of aimless wanderings in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness. Their deplorable plight was the inevitable consequences of their evil heart of unbelief.

Their evil record has been written indelibly on the pages of sacred history by the hand of a Holy God for the express purpose of warning us relative to the dire results of unbelief. The children of God, who deliberately refuse to go on unto holiness of heart, will be doomed by their own unbelief to wander aimlessly in a wilderness of fears and failures all the days of their lives. They will suffer constantly from disturbing doubts and distressing defeats. They will live all their disconsolate days outside of the perfect will of God, and never know the pleasure resulting from a pure heart and a tranquil mind. Unless they believe God, it will be said of them, as it was said of unbelieving Israel, "They have not known my ways."

4. CONSIDER THE PROVOKING OF CHRIST. "For some, when they had heard, did provoke." Ver. 16.

In our study of these startling facts it is necessary to keep in mind that God is speaking of the rebellious unbelievers. (See Num. 14)

We must not consider their stubbornness and hardness of heart to be an example of true Christian conduct. God obviously intends to make these things serve as a warning to us in these last days.

(a) The Displeasure of the Spirit. "I was grieved with that generation." Ver. 10.

God's chosen people had the greatest opportunities ever given to any generation on earth before the birth of Christ. They had received the promise of Christ in the covenant of Abraham. They had been delivered out of the bondage of Egypt by the mighty arm of God. He protected them by His presence, provided for them by His power, and preached to them by His prophets. He promised to give them the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and make of them a great nation to dwell on the face of the earth. "But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness."

They rejected the earnest entreaties of God's faithful servants, and grieved the Holy Ghost by their contumacious spirit and hardness of heart. These obstinate unbelievers died in a desert land unmourned and unmissed as consequence of their willful disobedience, and were buried in unmarked graves among the infamous and nameless dead.

Let us not overlook the fact that God has spoken unto us in these last days by His Son, whom He has appointed Heir of all things. The Holy Ghost is speaking unto us in these last days, saying, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." We will suffer the displeasure of the Spirit if we refuse to enter into the cleansing provided for us in the sacrifice of Christ. This blessed experience is our land of promise. It is God's purpose in His beloved Son to give us an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith. Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit by disobeying the pleading voice of the Savior.

Concerning the unbelieving Israelites, God said, "Your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years." Ver. 9. Take note of the fact that they saw the works of God for forty years, and proved Him to be worthy of their trust and obedience, yet they provoked Him and grieved Him constantly with their hardness of heart and unbelief.

Let us give serious consideration to the challenging question confronting us in this enlightened age of the Gospel. "With whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" Ver. 17. Let us not overlook the note of warning sounded in this important question. God is speaking to this generation by His Son.

When the people of God, living in any age or generation, refuse to believe on Christ for holiness of heart, they grieve the Spirit of God, and forfeit His pleasure and power. If they persist in their willful unbelief, and turn away from the provision of Christ, they shall suffer the fiery indignation which shall destroy all unbelievers. This is the startling truth the Holy Spirit would have us see when He said, "I was grieved with that generation."

(b) The Deceitfulness of Sin. "Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Ver. 13.

The Author obviously has in mind the evil report of the ten spies. We are reminded that the people refused to enter the land of promise after hearing the evil report of the ten frightened and faithless men.

The faithful Author cites this tragic event in the history of Israel to warn us, lest we be hardened through the trickery of sin and sinners.

The people in this day and age of the Gospel are being deceived and misinformed by the deceitfulness of unbelievers. It is not difficult to find certain teachers who belittle the truth of entire sanctification. These blind leaders of the blind deceive the people, and turn them from the way of holiness of heart and life.

We are also aware that certain persons have rejected the light of true holiness revealed in the Word of God, and have become bitter opposers of the glorious doctrine of full salvation. These deceitful sinners bring back an evil report of the land of perfect rest and peace, and cause some of God's people to miss the way to their inheritance.

We frequently find persons who are disposed to look at the faults and failures of others, and allow these inconsistencies to prevent them from entering the way of holiness. These unbelieving souls have become hardened through the trickery of their own sinful hearts.

It is possible for a man to be deceived by his own sinful heart, and convince himself that he has no need of holiness. He can persuade himself that he is capable of making his way through the severe trials and subtle temptations without the sanctifying grace of Christ. Such an unfortunate person has become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and blinded by his own self-confidence and self-conceit.

Knowing that these things are true, we should diligently exhort one another daily, while it is called today, lest any be hardened through the trickery and deception of sin and sinners.

(c) Disinherited by the Savior. "And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?" Ver. 18.

The Author raises this disturbing question to direct our attention to the awful punishment meted out to the unbelievers. It is exceedingly difficult for us to comprehend God's anger. There is evidently some place where God's patience ends and His righteous wrath begins. There surely must be something desperately wicked and despicably wanton in the conduct of unbelievers to merit eternal exclusion from the heavenly rest promised to the people of God.

Let us not overlook the obvious fact that Adam was deprived of all his possessions, expelled from the peaceful garden, and disinherited as consequence of his unbelief and disobedience. In the clear light of this terrifying truth we have reason to believe that all persons who willfully reject the truth of holiness of heart, and continue to abide in their unbelief, shall be disinherited in this life, deprived of all hope, and disavowed by the Lord in the day of judgment. If such hapless and misguided persons persist in their unbelief, and continue to sin against the clear light of divine revelation, they shall perish utterly in the dark despair of God's wrath.

Mark well the Speaker's startling statement, "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Ver. 19. The walled cities and armed foes did not prevent Israel from entering the promised land. It was their unwarranted unbelief that kept them out of their promised possession. The combined forces of evil cannot prevent God's people from entering into His rest if they believe His immortal promises.

When we stand in the white light of the judgment, and hear the Judge of all the earth pronounce the sentence of doom and death upon all unbelievers, we will understand in a measure the frightful consequences of unbelief.

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HEBREWS, CHAPTER IV

1. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3. For we which have believed do enter into rest. as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

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

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

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

9. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

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

12. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

14. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

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

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

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: THE PROMISED REST OF FAITH

Text: "For we which have believed do enter into rest." Heb. 4:3.

1. THE REST REVEALED TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD. "We which have believed."

(a) The Rest Revealed in the Promise. "A promise being left us of entering into his rest." Ver. 1.

(b) The Rest Revealed in the Pattern. "If they shall enter into my rest." Ver. 5.

(c) The Rest Revealed in the Preaching. "Unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them." Ver. 2.

2. THE REST RECEIVED BY THE PEOPLE OF GOD. "Do enter into rest."

(a) The Believer Has Ceased from His Own Works. "He also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Ver. 10.

(b) The Believers Receive Completeness in God's Works. "The works were finished from the foundation of the world." Ver. 3.

(c) The Believers Have Contentment in God's Works. "If they shall enter into my rest." Ver. 5.

3. THE REST REMAINING FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Ver. 9.

(a) The Rest of an Eternal Day Remains. "God did rest the seventh day from all his works." Ver. 4.

(b) The Rest of Eternal Deliverance Remains. "Touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Ver. 15.

(c) The Rest of an Eternal Dwelling Remains. "We have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens." Ver. 14.

4. THE REST RETAINED BY THE PEOPLE OF GOD. "Let us hold fast our profession." Ver. 14.

(a) Believers Retain the Rest by Obeying the Truth. "The word of God is quick, and powerful." Ver. 12.

(b) Believers Retain the Rest by Overcoming Temptation. "Was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Ver. 15.

(c) Believers Retain Rest by Obtaining Mercy at the Throne. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace." Ver. 16.

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

1. THE REST REVEALED TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD. "We which have believed do enter into rest."

The Author's emphatic statement places great emphasis upon the nature and necessity of the rest revealed to the people of God.

Much of the preceding chapter has been devoted to a timely warning against hardness of heart and unbelief resulting from the deceitfulness of sin. The Author now focuses attention on the promised rest of faith.

(a) The Rest Revealed in the Promise. "A promise being left us of entering into his rest." Ver. 1. The Author speaks on behalf of the present generation. He assures us that we have not been born too late to claim the valid promise of God, enter into His rest of faith and enjoy the rich benefits provided in Christ.

This particular rest must be considered as a spiritual legacy left to the heirs of salvation. The Author would have us understand that this promised rest is an inheritance received through faith in the Son, whom the Father has appointed Heir of all things.

The promised rest is an epochal experience entered into second and subsequent to the new birth. It is the faith of the children of God which carries them into His rest. The Author is saying that entering into the rest of faith is a fact which characterizes us as being true believers in Christ.

The faithful Author uttered a sobering admonition when he said, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Ver. 1. The words of this searching exhortation warn us regarding the consequences of unbelief. We are reminded that the Israelites forfeited all rights to the promised rest of Canaan through blind unbelief, and perished in a desert land under the frowning displeasure of God.

Seeing the significance of this terrifying event in Israel's early history, let us therefore fear, lest we come short of the promised rest of soul through willful unbelief.

It is dreadful to think of missing the way to holiness of heart and rest of soul through obstinacy and disbelief. When we miss the way to holiness we miss the way to heaven. No matter how near we are to the blessing of spiritual rest, it avails us nothing if we come short of it. Let us not fail to take the last step of implicit faith to obtain the promise being left us of entering into His rest. Every true believer should expect to find the fulfillment of the gracious promise in Christ, and believe that the rest of soul is obtainable in these last days.

(b) The Rest Revealed in the Pattern. "If they shall enter into my rest." Ver. 5.

The Lord gave the land of Canaan unto His people for an everlasting possession. (Gen. 17:8.) The promised possession was evidently a type or pattern of the rest of faith promised to the children of God.

The Greek word, which is here translated rest, denotes a permanent place of rest, or a state of settled cessation. The Apostle uses this Greek term several times in his message relating to the rest of faith.

The Israelites did not enter into a permanent state of rest the day God delivered them from the bondage of Egypt. They were not settled in their promised possession until they entered the land of Canaan under the efficient leadership of Joshua.

This obvious fact shows that believers do not enter into the promised rest of faith when they are born of the spirit. The Apostle has labored faithfully to make this truth clear to the devout believers.

Some true believers evidently thought that the promised rest of faith had been fulfilled when Joshua brought Israel into the land of Canaan. The Apostle corrected this error, saying, "If Jesus (Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." Ver. 8. He points out the obvious fact that the Holy Ghost had spoken of another day in the inspired words of the Psalmist, long after the people had entered into the land of promise.

We have reason to believe that many devout Christians have failed to enter into the rest of faith because they have not seen the promise. There are some who do not believe that the children

of God can enter into a settled state of spiritual rest in this present world. These hapless souls have failed to see the truth revealed in the Gospel of Christ. They have come short of the rich promise of soul rest through unbelief.

(c) The Rest Revealed in the Preaching. "Unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them." Ver. 2.

It should be perfectly apparent to all devout persons that the rest of faith is an important part of the message of the Gospel for these last days. The Author of the Epistle shows us that the promised rest was the central theme of the good tidings spoken unto the fathers by the prophets.

It is evidently God's purpose to enlighten all true believers regarding the rest of soul provided for them in the sacrifice of Christ.

It is clearly revealed that the Gospel message precipitates a crisis of faith, presents the conditions of faith, and proffers the choice of faith, to enter into the promised rest.

We are aware that it is possible for the people of God to derive no spiritual benefits from the glad tidings preached unto them in the Gospel message. The Word preached did not profit the Israelites, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it (Ver. 2). This deplorable state of unbelief prevented them from obtaining fulfillment of the certified promise of God. They forfeited all the blessed benefits pledged to them by a gracious and generous Lord.

Faith must be mixed with all we hear in the Gospel message in order to make the living Word of God effectual to our personal salvation. Unless we combine faith with the tidings of truth we hear relative to the rest of soul, we cannot enter into the blessed inheritance.

The failure to mix faith with the truth of the Gospel has resulted in some distressing problems in the holiness movement of this age. A multitude of misguided souls have sincerely assented to the Word preached, but they have not combined faith with what they have heard. This deplorable situation accounts for the doubts, defeats, and discontent extant in the church today. We find holiness people without holiness, and dedication for service without deliverance from sin.

2. THE REST RECEIVED BY THE PEOPLE OF GOD. "Do enter into rest."

Everything provided in the redemptive works of Christ can be obtained by faith. All the promises of God in Christ are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God. (II Cor. 1:20)

(a) The Believer Has Ceased from His Own Works. "He also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Ver. 10.

The Author is saying that the believer has entered into a state of settled cessation. The true believer has ceased from his own works in order to enter into the rest of faith.

It is difficult for people to perceive that they cannot enter into Christ's rest by their own efforts. They try to effect an entrance into the rest of faith by their own feeble strivings, and by so

doing miss the way of simple faith. Such meaningless and misguided efforts can bring a measure of mental relief, but all such useless strivings can never bring moral and spiritual rest to their troubled souls.

Faith is an act of the will which places all we are in ourselves in the hands of God. We follow the example of Jesus, saying, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit." Psa. 31:5.

Such a decisive act of the will includes the surrender of self to will of God, the submission of self to the will of God, and the sacrifice of self to the will of God. We must give all of self in order to receive all of the Savior.

The obedient soul enters into rest, enjoys rest and exemplifies the rest in daily deportment. We neither purchase the rest of soul by our works, nor produce rest of soul by our works, nor procure the rest of soul by our works. We must cease from our own works as God did from His.

"We which have believed do enter into rest." We cannot enter into His rest a moment before we believe, but we do enter into His rest the moment we do believe. There is no element of risk in faith, but there is an experience of rest received through faith.

(b) The Believers Receive Completeness in God's Works. "The works were finished from the foundation of the world." Ver. 3.

The Author assumes that we are acquainted with the story of creation which declares, "God did rest the seventh day from all his works."

He would have us perceive that God's finished works of creation are a pattern of His finished works in redemption. The Word reveals that a redeemed soul is a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Keep in mind that it required six consecutive acts of God to complete the present order of creation. Let us also keep in mind that it requires several acts of God to complete the new creation in Christ Jesus. These epochal works of divine grace are integral parts of the whole plan of redemption. Each work of grace is complete, but it requires all the works of grace to finish the eternal purpose of God in redemption.

Conviction for sin is a work of God's prevenient grace, but conviction does not complete the works of Christ in redemption. Regeneration is a finished work of grace, but regeneration does not complete the plan of salvation. Entire sanctification is also a complete work of grace, but this blessed cleansing of the heart does not complete us in the grace and glory of the resurrection and final glorification. These obvious facts are clearly revealed in the entire scope of divine revelation.

The regenerated sons of God are entitled to the rest of faith by virtue of their sonship. The Author affirms this fact, saying, "We which have believed do enter into rest." He is saying in effect, "We believers, who have embraced the promised rest by faith, do enter into rest." Entering into the promised rest is a present fact which proves that we are true believers in Christ.

We now enjoy the promised rest of soul obtained by faith in the Lord. We do not claim to be complete in the work of final salvation, but we do claim to be complete in work of full salvation. We are not fully soul, but we are fully delivered from sin.

(c) The Believers Have Contentment in God's Works. "If they shall enter into my rest." Ver. 5.

For the purpose of clarity, let us emphasize the words, "My rest." These words denote a state of spiritual rest like God's state of rest.

We which have believed do enter into a state of peaceful rest of soul like the perfect rest manifested in the life of Jesus in this world.

Our gracious Lord wills to give us an untroubled heart in this troubled world. He wills to share the inherent qualities of His own rest with us in this disturbed and disquieted age. Jesus would have us understand that we can enter into His own peaceful rest and enjoy a full measure of spiritual contentment of heart and mind in this restless world. There is no real and lasting contentment to be found in this turbulent earth without Christ. He is The Prince of Peace. The earthly possessions, pleasures, and pursuits of this peaceless age of strife and struggle cannot provide us with a permanent state of restful contentment.

Focus attention on the implications contained in the words, "If they shall enter into my rest." Consider what possibilities of grace and glory can be enjoyed by the people of God, if they will enter into His rest by simple faith. Think of the innumerable blessings missed by the Lord's people when they fail to enter into the contentment of His rest.

Our confidence and courage depend on the inherent qualities of God's rest received through faith in Christ. We cannot achieve the victory over Satan and sin in this world unless we are fortified by a rest of soul and peace of mind. We cannot cope with the doubts and disappointments incident to life unless we have the anchor of spiritual rest to hold us secure and steadfast in life's stress and strain.

Let the true believers give all diligence to enter into the rest provided for them in the sacrifice of Christ. Let us look to the Son of God, who is the appointed Heir of all things relating to the promised rest and contentment of soul.

3. THE REST REMAINING FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Ver. 9.

The Greek word, which is here translated rest, denotes a spiritual Sabbath. This blessed Sabbath is a sacred kind of rest, of which both body and soul partake. This is true, whether we understand the Sabbath rest as referring to the rest of heart, or to the final rest in heaven.

This sacred Sabbath of rest remaining for the people of God obviously does not refer to the Millennium. The glorious millennial reign of our Lord continues for one thousand years, but this sacred Sabbath of rest continues to all eternity.

This Sabbath rest remains for the people of God after they have entered into the settled state of abiding rest and holiness of heart.

The holiness of heart is the spiritual fitness prerequisite for entrance into the final Sabbath rest remaining for the people of God.

According to the holy Scriptures, the redemptive purpose of Christ will not be fulfilled until He appears the second time without sin unto salvation. He disclosed this truth to His disciples, saying, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Jno. 14:3.

In the clear light of our Lord's encouraging promise, we join the inspired Author, saying, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Let us strive with all diligence to be counted worthy of such a rich reward reserved in heaven for the faithful saints of God.

(a) The Rest of the Eternal Day Remains. "God did rest the seventh day from all his works." Ver. 4.

The Author apparently employed the word Sabbath in order to identify the rest remaining for the people of God with the rest enjoyed by the Lord Himself when He blessed and sanctified the Seventh Day.

This sacred Sabbath of rest is not an ordinary rest, but one which receives actual fulfillment in God's own rest. The faithful people of God reach a definite stage of spiritual contentment and satisfaction when they enter into His Sabbath of perfect rest.

The significance of the Sabbath rest lies in its being God's rest which the true believers share with Him to all eternity. God's peculiar rest is His satisfaction with His people; but this satisfaction can be full and complete only when His people are in perfect harmony with Him. God could not rest from all His creative works until man was created in His image, after His likeness. When man appeared God was satisfied, for here was one in His own image. Here was a creature that would require God's resources and resourcefulness, and call forth the deepest love in His Divine Nature. God's rest is not perfect until He receives His people unto Himself in the final consummation of an uttermost salvation.

The Seventh Day is obviously a period of eternal light. The record of creation makes no mention of a cycle of time in the Seventh Day. The six days of God's creative works have a movement of time from evening to morning. The movement of time was through the increasing darkness toward the approaching dawn. The Seventh Day has neither evening nor morning; it is high noon for evermore.

The six days had no period of time without some measure of light. "God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also." Gen. 1:16. The wise Creator enthroned the sun to rule the day, crowned the moon empress of the night, and pinned back the velvety veil of darkness with the silent stars.

In this restless world we have seasons of sunshine and shadows, light and darkness. But God's Day of eternal rest has no lingering shadows of sorrow and suffering to disturb the Sabbath of everlasting rest and supernal peace in the highest heaven. The Seventh Day was blessed and sanctified by the Maker of all things and designed to prefigure the endless Day of rest provided for His holy people. The Sabbath of perpetual peace and rest began when God's immutable purpose in creation had been accomplished and the Maker of all things rested from His works. The eternal Day was conceived in the mind of God and born at high noon. The grand finale of creation was fittingly celebrated by declaring the Seventh Day to be a Holy Sabbath of everlasting rest for the people of God. The Heavenly Father has appointed His beloved Son to reign in regal splendor over the unending Day of rest. "And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 22:4-5.

Let us hold fast our profession of faith until the day of deliverance dawns with resplendent glory and the shadows of the long night flee away. "In his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Psa. 30:5.

(b) The Rest of Eternal Deliverance Remains. "Touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Ver. 15.

It is apparent that we which have believed do not obtain rest and relief from our mental and physical infirmities in the holy way of life. We find much comfort in the fact that our great High Priest can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Our great Redeemer has made an ample provision to sustain us in life's tests and trials which tend to weaken our resistance to temptations.

We are frequently perplexed, perturbed, and plagued by our mental and physical hindrances and human limitations. We long to be delivered from these distressing afflictions and bewildering handicaps. We yearn to triumph over our trials and tears, and loin the blood-washed throng in the songs of final redemption. In the clear light of these sobering facts we must conclude that God has provided a rest of eternal deliverance for His faithful people. The treasure which we now have in earthen vessels shall some day be revealed in all its beauty and enjoyed in its blessedness.

The assuring truth that our great High Priest can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities includes much more than His ability to sustain us in trials and temptations in this world. Christ Jesus has been so deeply touched by our pitiful plight that He has provided an eternal deliverance for us in His finished work of eternal salvation. The sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us on the morning of the glorious resurrection. The faithful saints who have followed the Savior's steps along life's tortuous trail shall find the gates of the perfect day opened to welcome them home to rest from their labors. The heralds of light shall announce the Savior's triumph over disease and death to all creation. The

gates of pearl will swing wide to receive the saints of all ages into the everlasting joys of their adorable Lord.

(c) The Rest of an Eternal Dwelling Remains. "We have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens." Ver. 14.

Our great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High in the eternal abode of God. According to His consoling promise, He will come again, and receive us unto Himself. Jesus revealed this same blessed truth in His immortal prayer, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." Jno. 17:24.

The original creation had no place for a redeemed soul. Therefore it was necessary for Jesus to provide a place for His ransomed people. This world is not our permanent abiding place. We are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. There are no homeless children in the city of God. All shall dwell in stately mansions throughout the endless day.

We frequently meditate on the place prepared for the people of God. We envision the skill of the Infinite Artist who has blended the prismatic colors of white light to enhance the resplendent glory of our heavenly home. It affords us great pleasure to know that we shall dwell in the Father's house. The very fact that we are homeward bound enables us to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

The anointed Prophet saw the triumph of the redeemed from afar, and portrayed the pleasing prospect in glowing language, saying, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa. 35:10. Our great High Priest shall fulfill this inspiring prophecy to the everlasting delight of the redeemed. Some day He will open the gates of life with His nail-scarred hands, wipe away all tears from our eyes and, rolling back the burdensome years of time, make us young for evermore. We shall enter into His rest, and dwell in the Father's house of many mansions throughout the endless day.

4. THE REST RETAINED BY THE PEOPLE OF GOD. "Let us hold fast our profession." Ver. 14.

The writer exhorts God's people to retain their Christian confession, or profession. The profession apparently includes the state of spiritual rest which is the central idea of the Apostle's message.

(a) Believers Retain the Rest by Obeying the Truth. "The word of God is quick, and powerful." Ver. 12.

We should keep in mind that we are dealing sincerely with God's Word of promise relating to the rest remaining for His people. God's Word of promise is a living and powerful force in our souls. His living Word remains as efficacious, valid, and operative as it was when first spoken unto us by His Son. The writer is saying that the living Word is active, effective, and still

accomplishing the finished works of God's promised rest in the hearts of all true believers. The living Word of promise assures us of fellowship with God in time and to all eternity. The thoughts and intents of our hearts must be in full accord with the will of God revealed in His infallible truth. Our inmost desires and intentions are discerned and examined in the clear light of truth. In the light of the living Word it is infallibly discovered and determined whether we truly love God and sincerely seek to please Him in all things.

The Author of the Epistle stated this truth when he said, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Ver. 13.

The startling truth revealed in these stern words of warning should alert us to the dangers of neglect and indifference. We cannot retain our Sabbath of spiritual rest unless we obey God, and regulate our daily lives according to His Word. It is not difficult to please our Heavenly Father. "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." We which have believed do retain the rest of soul by obeying the infallible Word of God.

(b) Believers Retain the Rest by Overcoming Temptation. "Was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Ver. 15.

These remarkable words reveal that our great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, has suffered the same temptation and endured the same ills as we have in this wicked world. The fact that He Himself has suffered being tempted proves conclusively that He is able to succour them that are tempted. This comforting truth is our safeguard against all forms of doubts relating to God's concern for us in the trials of life.

The wise Author would have us understand that Jesus has felt in His consciousness the difficulty of being holy in this ungodly world. He knows the subtle temptations and strong inducement that incline men to turn away from God. Every part of Christ's human constitution has known the pain and conflict with which alone temptations can be overcome. His temptations were real and He triumphed over them by the same means made available to His trusting children in these last days.

We must keep in mind that one great difference between our temptations and those of Jesus is that His temptations never resulted in sin. "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Jesus was not tempted in all points as a sinner is tempted; He was tempted in all points as a man without sin in his soul is tempted. His sympathy in temptation is extended to His holy people, and not to sinners. There are many militant and malicious forces arrayed against us in these last days. Every step toward heaven and home is bitterly contested by a malignant opposition to holiness of heart and life. False prophets and faithless persons will divert us from the narrow way unless we watch and pray. We must hold fast our profession by availing ourselves of the power of God vouchsafed to us by our great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, who was tempted in all

points of His mental and moral being as we are, yet without sin, will enable us to overcome all temptations.

(c) Believers Retain the Rest by Obtaining Mercy at the Throne. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Ver. 16.

Our sympathetic and victorious High Priest can be approached with perfect confidence. We can touch Him at the throne of grace with the fingers of our unfaltering courage and unfeigned faith.

Prayer is evidently an integral part of the divine plan of salvation. The throne of grace is an essential part of God's economy of grace. He has established the throne of grace for the express purpose of giving aid and comfort to His embattled saints through the medium of prayer. We are invited to approach the throne of grace with implicit confidence in our Lord's willingness to give us all things pertaining to life and godliness in this evil world.

The faithful Apostle evidently has a definite purpose for exhorting us to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy. There must be some underlying cause for such an urgent appeal for mercy and grace. The fact that we are tempted in all points of our physical, mental, and moral being makes it imperatively necessary to seek mercy and grace through earnest prayer. One of the most dangerous of all temptations is to believe that we can triumph over temptations by our own strength, unaided by the help of our merciful Savior. The hapless victims of this treacherous form of temptation fail to retain the Sabbath rest of soul they once enjoyed. We cannot hold fast our profession without diligently seeking mercy and help from our great High Priest.

There is sustaining grace to be found in time of need. Assistance in hours of severe temptation must be timely or it is useless. The Lord's help is never given one moment too late to meet our urgent needs. He is not indifferent to our plea for mercy, neither is He reluctant to give us help in time of need. The fact that we have entered into His rest gives us the, inalienable right to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and grace to retain the rest of soul.

* * * * *

HEBREWS, CHAPTER V

1. For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

2. Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

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

4. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

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

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

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

8. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

9. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

10. Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

11. Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

12. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: THE AUTHOR OF ETERNAL SALVATION

Text: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Heb. 5:9.

1. THE AUTHOR'S PERFECTION IN ETERNAL SALVATION. "And being made perfect." Ver. 9.

(a) The Producer of Eternal Salvation. "He became the author of eternal salvation." Ver. 9.

(b) The Priesthood of the Son. "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Vet. 6.

(c) The Prayers of the Savior. "He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Ver. 7.

2. THE AUTHOR'S PRINCIPLES IN ETERNAL SALVATION. "The first principles of the oracles of God." Ver. 12.

(a) The Power of the Son's Endless Life. "Thou art my Son . . . Thou art a priest forever." Psa. 2:7. Psa. 110:4.

(b) The Power of the Son's Endless Love. "This day have I begotten thee." Psa. 2:5-8.

(c) The Power of the Son's Endless Liberty. "The author of eternal salvation." Vet. 9.

3. THE AUTHOR'S PEOPLE IN ETERNAL SALVATION. "Unto all them that obey him." Ver. 9.

(a) His People Procure Eternal Salvation by Obedience. "Obey him."

(b) His People Progress in Eternal Salvation by Obedience. "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age." Ver. 14.

(c) His People Persevere in Eternal Salvation by Obedience. "Unto all them that obey him." Ver. 9.

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

1. THE AUTHOR'S PERFECTION IN ETERNAL SALVATION. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation."

The Greek word, which is here translated perfect, refers to the completion of the Savior's intense sufferings which ended with His crucifixion. The Savior required the special discipline of severe sufferings as a training for His office of High Priest. He endured the various sufferings on earth in order that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest for men in things pertaining to God. The Savior, having experienced human sufferings in His own body and spirit, could be touched with the feeling of our human infirmities and weaknesses.

When the Incarnate Son of God humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the ignominious death of the cross, He reached the end, or goal, fixed by the will of the Heavenly Father. It was in this sense that the Son learned the lesson of perfect obedience to the Father's will in the plan of eternal salvation.

Christ's perfect unison with the will of God purchased a full, finished, and free salvation for all mankind. All the gracious benefits of divine grace contained in eternal salvation can be received through faith and obedience in the merits of the Savior's atonement for sin. When we

behold the crucified Christ, we behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (Rom. 5:11)

(a) The Producer of Eternal Salvation. "He became the author of eternal salvation." Ver. 9.

The Greek word, which is here translated author, denotes a causer, or originator, or producer.

It is not exceedingly difficult to understand that the Son of God is the Causer, Originator, and Producer of eternal salvation. He is the first cause and only producer of the inherent qualities and essential graces received in the experience of so great salvation.

It is certain that the conscious reality of true Christian life cannot be produced in the heart by the will of man. (Jno. 1:12-13)

We are aware that the vital spiritual realities of the new birth and entire sanctification are both effectually produced in our souls by the Author of eternal salvation.

The Son of God humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, for the express purpose of providing eternal salvation for us and producing the enduring principles of eternal salvation within us.

Christ's miraculous works of grace remove all doubts and fears from our hearts and minds regarding our relationship to God. Let us be mindful of the fact that it requires something more than the shadow of the good things of grace to satisfy our hearts in this world. We must have the very image and substance of Christ's redeeming grace in order to have the ineffable joy of realness in this present life. Only the clear confirming witness of the Holy Spirit can give the full assurance of faith needed to support and strengthen us in the various trials and temptations incident to life in these last days.

(b) The Priesthood of the Son. "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Ver. 6. Psa. 110:4.

The eternal priesthood of the Son is an essential part of His eternal salvation. His Priesthood and Saviourhood are both inseparably interwoven in the whole divine plan of salvation.

The inspired writer enables us to understand the priesthood of the Son by calling attention to the high priest taken from among men. "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." Ver. 1-2.

Our great High Priest was not taken from among men. The words of the inspired Psalmist reveal Christ as an eternal Priest, independent of human descent, and far superior to the Levitical priesthood.

The Son was called of God, and made a High Priest according to the high order of Melchisedec, priest of the most high God, King of righteousness, and King of peace. (Heb. 7:1-2)

There is great comfort in the fact that our High Priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God. He has been appointed to the holy office of High Priest for the express purpose of effecting a happy and harmonious relationship between God and man by offering Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the people.

Our great High Priest can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. He is capable of showing great pity for great sinners. He is neither too severe nor too tolerant in His feelings toward ignorant and erring humanity. It is written, "When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." The very fact that the compassionate Christ was moved with great pity and sympathy for the discouraged, scattered, and unshepherded multitudes, reveals His priestly compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.

The words, "ignorant and out of the way," afford us an accurate description and a scriptural concept of the plight of perishing humanity. These sobering words clearly disclose that God considers Adam's fallen race to be utterly devoid of spiritual knowledge, and out of the way of peace and harmony with all holy beings.

All unregenerate individuals are deceived and ignorant of the true nature of evil. Jesus disclosed this obvious fact when He prayed for His enemies, saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. The plotting priests, ungodly Pharisees, and wicked people did not know the depth, defilement, and degradation of sin. Israel's fanatical, hypocritical, and merciless leaders were utterly wanting in spiritual perception and wisdom.

The apostle Paul was evidently referring to man's deplorable lack of the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world to bring us to glory, when he said, "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." I Cor. 2:8.

The mental and moral darkness and deception of sin has produced a multitude of conceited unbelievers and egotistical liberalists who deny the faith once delivered unto the saints and speak evil of the things of saving grace which they know not.

Let us not overlook the astonishing fact that one may be versed in the knowledge of religion, yet be lacking in the true knowledge of salvation. Jesus made this truth clear when He said to Nicodemus, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" Jno. 3:10. This eminent teacher of religion was lacking in the essential facts of the new birth. He knew the ritual, but did not know the Redeemer.

Nicodemus is evidently not the only master and teacher devoid of the essential knowledge of spiritual life. We have reason to fear that a similar condition exists within the organized groups of nominal Christians in this enlightened age of the Gospel.

It is apparent that ritualism has, to a great extent, displaced the vital realities of redemption. It is possible to emphasize good works more than God's Word, and stress the program of the church more than the presence of Christ.

All unsaved persons are out of the narrow way which leads unto life everlasting. The unregenerate souls are out of the way of freedom, and out of the way of favor and fellowship with the Author of eternal salvation. Their moral blindness has caused them to turn away from the only way of peace, purity, and pleasure in this world. The ungodly know not the way of true holiness, true harmony, and true happiness provided for all mankind in the sacrifice of Christ.

The complex and inescapable problem of sin has made it necessary for the Son to be ordained High Priest to mediate for men in things relating to God. The spotless Son has been perfectly equipped with every qualification for carrying out the will of God in things pertaining to the complete redemption of all mankind.

The writer of the Epistle makes it very clear that the Son has been ordained High Priest for the specific purpose of offering both gifts and sacrifices for sins. In the clear light of this significant truth, we must conclude that the offering was not acceptable to God unless it included both gifts and sacrifices for sins.

The sacred Scriptures reveal that God's people presented various gifts to Him through the ministry of the Levitical priesthood. Doubtless many of these gifts were sincere expressions of deep gratitude to God for His manifold blessings of prosperity and merciful protection.

It is convincingly true that certain gifts represented the willingness of the worshipers to give themselves unreservedly to God. These special gifts of the devout people and the blood of the sacrifices were taken into the most holy place by the high priest, and presented unto God as an offering for sins.

This sacred ritual so carefully observed by the Levitical priesthood was a figure of the true Priesthood and Saviourhood of Christ. It is written, "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9:24.

There is a very true sense in which Christ now at this present moment appears in the presence of God for us. He is now the mediator of the better covenant established upon better promises. (Heb. 8:6)

Our personal sin problem cannot be permanently settled until we give ourselves to Jesus, the great High Priest, and trust the merits of His efficacious sacrifice and atoning blood to make us acceptable unto God. There is a very true sense in which Christ presents us before God. He fulfills

the high and holy office of High Priest by offering our contrite souls and His shed blood as both gifts and sacrifices for sins.

The gift of ourselves to God reveals the deep longing of our souls. Such a gift is expressive of an insatiable thirst which cannot be slaked with anything less than water of life. It is a gift indicative of the intense hunger of heart which Christ only can satisfy.

We do not give ourselves unto God as payment for temporal blessings and earthly gains. True worshipers have no selfish and ulterior motives back of the gift of themselves to God.

It will enrich us in mind if we tarry for a time to ponder the gifts of the unsparing God. What motivated Jesus to give Himself for us? What deep inner compulsion of His Divine Nature constrained Him to make Himself of no reputation, and take upon Himself the form of a servant? What impelling power of boundless love for a lost world moved Almighty God to give His only begotten Son to save perishing mankind?

There is no element of selfishness in God's promise to give good things to His praying people. Giving is an inherent quality of the Divine Nature. His liberality and generosity are interwoven in the fabric of redemption. God's willingness to give Himself to His people is the central theme of the Gospel message and the corner stone of eternal salvation.

The clear light of divine revelation convinces me that all gifts offered to God come far short of the true significance of sincere worship unless the gifts include the more excellent gift of ourselves.

At no time has Jesus Christ ever hesitated to give all that He is in Himself to us when we meet Him at heaven's holy altar and mercy seat with the complete gift of ourselves. This is the true sense in which Jesus, the High Priest, presents the devout believers before God to be sanctified wholly on the merits of His sacrificial death and shed blood.

There must be no attempt on our part to evade these great issues relative to the eternal salvation by offering our earthly substance and human services instead of offering the sum-total of ourselves to God.

If we desire to obtain Christ's supreme gift of Himself to us in this world, we must bind ourselves to the horns of His altar with cords of sacrificial love, plead earnestly for the crucifixion of self, and yield our souls to Him for time and eternity. Christ's supernal good for us in this world, and in the world to come, cannot be obtained for less. We must give all in order to receive all. All for God becomes our watchword. All for God indicates the soul's inspired desire. Not a moment, a thought, a word, a possession, a person excepted. God is worthy of this. He claims this on our part, and nothing less will satisfy Him. He made our hearts to be filled with Himself.

(c) The Prayers of the Savior. "He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Ver. 7.

The intercessory prayers and fervent supplication of Jesus, our High Priest, are integral parts of eternal salvation. "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7:25.

Mark the significant words, "offered up prayers. and supplications." Remember that our High Priest not only offers both gifts and sacrifices, but He also offers up prayer and supplications with strong crying and tears.

The Saviour's passion is revealed in His earnest prayers and ardent supplications. When the writer speaks of "strong crying and tears," he may be referring to the Saviour's agonizing prayers in Gethsemane. It is written, "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly." Luke 22:44.

It is apparent that the inspired writer is referring to something in the agony of the Savior which we mortals find difficult to comprehend.

Can mortal man interpret the true meaning of Christ's strong crying and tears? Can we grasp the significant fact that His noble face was wet with tears? What mystical language of passionate intercession did His copious tears speak in the ears of God? Why should the Son of God feel sorrow and cry in agonizing prayer for erring mankind? We find the answer to all our perplexing questions in the consoling fact that Jesus, our great High Priest, can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.

The writer informs us that the Son offered up intercessory prayer and supplication "in the days of his flesh." He filled every day of His life on earth with prayers and supplication. He was in constant touch with the throne of grace, and enjoyed unbroken fellowship with the Father.

The Savior made prayer an essential part of His daily life. His physical strength was constantly replenished through ceaseless prayer.

Mark revealed this fact relative to the Savior's praying, saying, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." Mark 1:35.

We are not told where the Savior found this peaceful place to pour out His heart in importunate prayer. We can picture Him praying in sacred seclusion beneath the overhanging boughs of a stately tree while nature remained speechless and the morning star looked down in silent reverence. He may have offered up prayers and supplications in some voiceless valley filled with holy hush. Perhaps He found a quiet place among the friendly hills where the silent shadows of the departing night lingered until hastened into hiding by the beneficent light of the approaching dawn.

Holy Writ tells why Jesus offered up fervent prayers and tearful supplications in the days of His flesh. The Word affirms that the Son offered up prayers and supplications "unto him that was able to save him from death." The fear of impending death moved the Son to pray with great agony of soul in the days of His flesh.

I am convinced that Jesus was not praying to be saved from the death of the cross. He had no reason to fear that His foes would kill Him. He said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." Jno. 10:17-18.

Jesus had no fear of death. It was not possible for death to overcome the Prince of life: He never entertained the slightest doubt regarding His resurrection and final triumph over sin and death.

He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears for the express purpose of saving His people from the fear of death.

Jesus Christ, the great High Priest, is so closely related to His people that He dispels all fear of the second death. We perceive this sublime truth revealed in the incarnation of Christ. It is written, "He took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God." Heb. 2:16-17.

It is obvious that Christ took part of flesh and blood that He might deliver the children of God from the fear of death. He makes the seed of Abraham, the children of God, the object of His redeeming grace. God would have us understand that His Son has taken on Himself the obligation to pilot His children safely through the straits of" sorrow and sighing, and bring them into the placid harbor of final deliverance from the fear of the second death.

Let us tarry for a time to consider the fear that moved the Savior to pray with such fervency unto Him that was able to save Him from death. The Word of God convinces me that Jesus was deeply concerned about man's fear of the second death. He was able to see the final consequences of sin. He understood the nature of the second death and knew the power of the devil. He could have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; therefore, He was moved to offer up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save all men from the tormenting fear of the second death.

Let us keep in mind that Jesus, our High Priest, can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.

What do we mortals know about the terrible sequences of sin? Can mortal man comprehend the terrifying significance of the lake of fire? Can the wise man measure the depth of the bottomless pit? No man knows the unutterable despair that shall overwhelm all workers of iniquity when they hear the Lord say, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." We cannot comprehend the awful fear that shall seize the evil doers when they hear the Savior say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." It is not possible for an individual to realize the everlasting remorse and endless accusations of conscience that shall relentlessly pursue the frightened inhabitants of the lightless regions of the damned.

Can mortal man imagine the terrifying realization of doom that shall startle the inhabitants of earth when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire

taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? Can we imagine the plight of the disobedient unbelievers who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power?

The terrifying consequences of sin moved the compassionate Son to offer up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save all men from the awful fear of death.

We must not overlook the fact that the overwhelming fear of death has troubled mankind since the day that Adam and his co-partner in disobedience took their first irretraceable steps across the line where life was blighted and death was born and sin began.

Their resplendent robes of pure white light fell away leaving them stark naked, cringing and cowering in shame. They trembled with the first sense of fear when they were called from hiding by the voice of God. The guilty man, standing abashed and condemned in the holy presence of the Creator, heard Him say, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3:19.

The uncounted ages unmistakably revealed the irrevocable finality of God's infallible words, Man has marched through all the days and years of his brief lifetime on his unhappy return to dust. The onrushing stream of time carries its human freight unerringly to the grave. The sons and daughters of Adam's race receive a one-way ticket to the tomb before they are born.

The Lord said, "It is appointed unto men once to die;" therefore, every man has a rendezvous with death. Nevertheless there is deliverance from the distressing fear of death through faith in the Son of God. We are told that the Son was heard in that He feared. He was heard on account of His godly fear and reverence. The obedient Son took into account all that was involved in His urgent requests. He knew His Father's will regarding the purpose of His suffering on the cross. He could lift up His eyes unto heaven, and say, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always."

The well beloved Son had the ear of God when He presented Himself before the throne of mercy and grace with strong crying and tears to make His importunate plea against death and its ravages.

Let us devoutly consider the comforting fact that the effectual fervent prayers of the righteous Son, and great High Priest, achieve much in these last days. He is now saying to all His people, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that your faith fail not."

Let us now appropriate His assuring promise, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Rev. 2:11.

3. THE AUTHOR'S PRINCIPLES IN ETERNAL SALVATION. "The first principles of the oracles of God." Ver. 12.

The Greek word, which is here translated principles, denotes the primary elements, or rudiments, of Christian profession. The Greek term translated oracles denotes a divine communication, or a divine revelation.

It should not be difficult for anyone to see that the first principles, or primary elements, of salvation are communicated to us by the Author and High Priest of eternal salvation. It is also evident that the Author of eternal salvation produces the primary elements of the oracles of God in our hearts in the initial stages of Christian experience. These first principles of the divine revelation are the firm foundation on which we build moral character for the endless ages of the world to come.

(a) The Power of the Son's Endless Life. "Thou art my Son . . . Thou art a priest forever." Psa. 2:7. Psa. 110:4.

The Apostle has brought these two statements of Scripture together in order to focus attention on both the Sonship and Priesthood of Jesus Christ. It is obvious that the Priesthood of Jesus has its basis in His Divine Sonship, and is therefore eternal and changeless.

The inspired writer makes these words glow with a new and vital significance for the devout people of God. Our great High Priest is not like the high priest taken from among men. The Priesthood of the Son is eternal and changeless because He Himself is immortal and immutable. The worshipping Psalmist was evidently beholding the immortal and immutable Priesthood of Christ when he said, "Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Psa. 102:27.

Jesus Christ is High Priest forever in virtue of the power of the endless life which dwelt in Him (Heb. 7:16.) This fact enables us to see that the miracle of eternal life is performed within our immortal souls by the power of the indissoluble life of the Son.

Jesus revealed Himself to be the original Causer and effectual Producer of eternal life when He said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." He is saying that His resurrection is our life. Jno. 14:19.

The endless life which dwells in the Son of God and the eternal life which He produces in the hearts of His people are the same in essence and substance. "As he is, so are we in this world." I Jno. 4:17.

The inherent principles of life received from the Author of eternal salvation are exemplified in the behavior of true believers. The Son gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. (Tit. 2:14)

Jesus revealed the cardinal truths relative to Christian conduct when He said, "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit." Luke 6:43-44.

His parable teaches us that the principle of godliness produced within the moral nature of a true Christian is like the nature of the good tree. The good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can the corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Jesus would have us see that the principles of a pure heart are as invariable as the nature of the good tree. The good tree does not have seasons of good fruit and seasons of evil fruit. Such variability is contrary to the laws of both the natural world and the spiritual world.

The graces of Christian character may be somewhat obscured and overshadowed by the infirmities of body and mind. It is possible to have true holiness of heart yet be lacking in maturity of life. The primary elements of holy living do exist in our hearts despite the fact that we are hindered by human limitations. God's little children must learn to walk. Christ is a merciful and faithful High Priest in things relating to God. He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

(b) The Power of the Son's Endless Love. "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Psa. 2:5-8.

These enduring words express the Father's pleasure in His well beloved Son. The Father manifested His great delight in the Son, saying, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

It was the power of the Son's endless love that constrained Him to give His life to provide eternal salvation for all them that obey Him.

This same compelling power of endless love moved the Son to produce a full measure of divine love within our hearts through faith.

The holy Scriptures affirm that God is love. It is His Nature to love. His infinite love moved Him to give His Son to die for us. The incarnation of Christ was love made manifest in human form. His messages and miracles were expressions of His measureless love. The indwelling Christ is love made perfect within our hearts. "God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." I Jno. 4:12.

We owe it to ourselves to seek diligently to know more about the transcendent love of Christ. The Swirling tides of selfishness and sensuality in this present: age will sweep us away from our spiritual moorings unless we are anchored securely in the endless love of Jesus. We should earnestly pray that the meek and lowly Christ will show us the true nature of the more excellent way of divine love.

Consider the endearing love of the Savior. He revealed His endearing love in His priestly prayer, saying, "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Jno. 17:26.

Perhaps we have been exceedingly slow to comprehend the significance of this amazing prayer for love. It seems incredible that God could love us as He loves His own adorable Son, but it is certainly true.

God loves His obedient children with the same quality of holy love that He has for His well beloved Son. There is a real sense in which God's love for His children is as pure and impartial as the love He has for Jesus, our Lord.

Meditate on the enduring love of Christ. John disclosed the enduring love of Jesus, saying, "When Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Jno. 13:1.

The enduring love of Jesus is implied in the fact that He loved His own which were in the world. "His own" were the earth-bound men He had called to preach the Gospel of full salvation, His enduring love for His disciples is the same enduring love which He has for "His own" earth-bound people in these last days.

"His own" are limited by human infirmities. They are far from being perfect in mind and judgment. They make mistakes and errors like little children. Their lack of spiritual perception often hinders their usefulness in the work of the Master. The Master frequently admonishes them regarding their littleness of faith and needless concern about temporal things.

The world's sneering remarks do not lessen Christ's love for His own. He knows the real value of His faithful followers... It is written, "He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man." Jno, 2:24-25,

We should strive to excel in holy living that we may: be counted worthy to receive the fadeless crown of eternal life. The power of Christ's enduring love can make us more than conquerors in this evil world.

His enduring love is pure, pleasing, and protective. His endless love constrains us, comforts us, and calms us in life's tensions and troubles.

His everlasting love gives us contentment, confidence, and certitude in the more excellent way leading to the Father's house. He loves his own in all time, and shall continue to love them throughout all the endless ages of the world to come.

(c) The Power of the Son's Endless Liberty. "The author of eternal salvation." Ver. 9.

We understand eternal salvation to mean a salvation in which all the conditions, pleasures, privileges, and heavenly rewards surpass all conditions, circumstances, and limitations of time. It is certain that such an all-essential salvation would include the complete deliverance of our bodies, minds, and spirits from all effects of sin.

Surely nothing less than an everlasting emancipation would be a credit to the Divine Author and High Priest of an eternal salvation.

The stark reality of sin's evil effects can be seen in the deformed and diseased bodies and minds of suffering humanity. The just and the unjust suffer like afflictions in this earthly life.

We groan in our earthly house of this tabernacle of clay, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house from heaven. We long to see the gladsome day when mortality shall be swallowed up in life.

The unutterable lament of God's earth-bound saints will be heard in high heaven some glorious day. The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. The holy people shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption by the power of the Son's endless life. They shall know the unspeakable joy of the glorious liberty promised to the faithful children of God.

The sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared with the resplendent glory which shall be revealed when Christ appears the second time without sin unto salvation. The agonizing groans of the suffering saints shall cease when the trumpet of God shall announce the hour of the resurrection of the sainted dead and the rapture of the triumphant living. The loving Lord and glorified Redeemer will lift up His nail-scarred hands in holy benediction, saying, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."

The power of the Son's endless life and enduring love shall make His people free indeed. The old shall be made young, the poor made rich, the small made great, and the weak made strong. He shall put gladness in their hearts and songs in their souls. There will be nothing to disturb their supernal peace, for the place of His rest shall be glorious.

The ransomed of the Lord have many sweet memories of Christ's goodness in the land of the living. The glorified saints cannot forget the memorable hour they were pulled out of sin's despair and depth by the power of the merciful Deliverer. God's children can recall the eventful day they were lifted out of the devil's ditch of death and chasm of corruption by the power of the Son's endless love. They shall give Him everlasting praise for the new freedom found and the new life fashioned after the image and likeness of God.

The Holy Spirit has given us a prevision of things to come. The God of all grace has begotten us again unto a jubilant hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He has enabled us to understand something of the more abundant life promised by the Savior.

We have seen the promises of God from afar and have embraced them by the arms of our achieving faith. He has opened the eyes of our understanding, enabling us to see the City which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. He has been pleased to give us the assurance that we shall behold His unveiled face in the land of endless day, and rejoice in the radiant light of His countenance throughout all ages.

We have frequent tokens of love from Him to remind us that He has not forgotten His promise to come again, and receive us unto Himself. He that came the first time to taste death for us will surely come the second time to triumph over death for us.

It is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed.

3. THE AUTHOR'S PEOPLE IN ETERNAL SALVATION. "Unto all them that obey him."
Ver. 9.

Let us keep in mind that the Son of God was consecrated both High Priest and Lamb of God when He offered Himself without spot to God.

When He consummated the whole divine plan of redemption by His vicarious sufferings and victorious resurrection, He became the Author, Causer, and only Producer of eternal salvation unto all who obey Him.

(a) His People Procure Eternal Salvation by Obedience. "Obey him."

We must consider our obedience to Christ as important as our faith in Him. He tasted death for every man; but He is the Author and Producer of eternal salvation only "unto all them that obey him." His free grace of eternal salvation is given to all obedient believers.

Seeing that the Son provided eternal salvation by obeying the will of God, we must conclude that all men must obey Him in order to obtain eternal Salvation. His imputed obedience does not save any man. If the Author of salvation must learn the importance of obedience, so must His people,

The obedient Savior will not withhold His infinite mercy and grace from us when we exercise faith in His atoning blood, and obey His: will.

The Holy Scriptures convince us that no man can obtain eternal salvation unless he assumes full responsibility for his past and present sins, reveals the innate defilement of his unclean heart, renounces all sinful ways and yields himself to Christ for. time and eternity. A sincere person cannot do more than this, and he dare not do less and expect to receive the fullness of Christ, and grace for grace.

No man will find it easy to make such a complete commitment of himself to God. He will not find it easy to renounce himself in the sight: of God, and disclose the hidden sin of his soul to his Maker. A true confession of sin is something more than merely admitting wrong-doing. A real confession takes full responsibility for sins committed. We cannot escape from our personal sin problem by blaming others for our faults and moral failures. "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14:11-12.

We cannot obtain salvation unless we sever all connections with sinful pursuits, pleasures, and practices. It is written, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." II Cor. 6:17-18.

We cannot receive the gracious benefits contained in this immortal promise unless we comply with the prescribed condition set forth by the Lord Almighty.

(b) His People Progress in Eternal Salvation by Obedience. "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age." Ver. 14.

The Greek word, which is here translated "full age," means full-grown. It is a term denoting spiritual adulthood, or maturity.

There is a great difference between a babe in Christ and a mature Christian. The Apostle disclosed this difference, saying, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." Ver. 12.

These believers had made no progress in spiritual life because they were dull of hearing. (Ver. 11.) Instead of accumulating a wealth of spiritual knowledge through the years, they had lost much of the realness of the essential elements of true Christianity. They had stunted and sluggish spiritual life resulting from past neglect of advantages and opportunities.

Their deplorable lack of spiritual perception had made it exceedingly difficult for them to receive the strong meat of the truth relating to the eternal Priesthood and Saviourhood of Christ.

The inexcusable lack of spiritual understanding evidenced by these dwarfed and undeveloped Christians certainly does not reveal the norm of vital spiritual life in Christ. The loyal and obedient believers do not continue in a state of protracted babyhood in Christ. They advance from glory to glory by obeying the Spirit of God. (II Cor. 3:18)

The Scriptures reveal that all alert and obedient children of God come, in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. They are no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. (Eph. 4:13-14)

Devoted believers grow up into Christ in all things relating to full and free salvation. The deep things of spiritual life belong to them that are full-grown, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. (Ver. 14)

The Savior's faithful followers go on unto perfection by obeying the inherent principle of eternal salvation produced in their souls.

The parable of the good shepherd discloses the spiritual progress Christ's people make under His leadership. "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice."

According to the plain teachings of Jesus, His followers make great progress in the more abundant life by obeying the voice of the Shepherd.

(c) His People Persevere in Eternal Salvation by Obedience. "Unto all them that obey him." Ver. 9. According to the original Greek, the Apostle is saying, "The Son, having been perfected, became to all who obey Him the Originator, or Author Of eternal salvation."

The Apostle emphasizes the imperative necessity of constant obedience to the Author of eternal salvation. It obviously requires the same measure of sincere obedience to be preserved in salvation as it did to procure salvation from the original Source. The Apostle makes it very clear that eternal salvation can neither be received nor retained except on the condition of obedience to the Son of God. It is written, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Col. 2:6.

We were reconciled to God and harmonized with His supreme will by obedience to Christ, and we are preserved in harmony with the sovereign will of God by continuous obedience to Christ. The Savior stated the basic truth about abiding in Him by faithful obedience, saying, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Jno. 15:10-11.

The path of the just is marked by the footprints of God's obedient people who have walked in His ways throughout all ages. The obedient children of God keep their solemn covenant with Him, and He is faithful to keep His changeless covenant with them.

We have no gloomy feeling of insecurity when we love Christ and obey His will in all matters of life. It is written, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psa. 55:22.

* * * * *

HEBREWS, CHAPTER VI

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

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

3. And this will we do, if God permit.

4. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

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

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

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

8. But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: COMPLETENESS IN CHRIST

Text: "Let us go on unto perfection." Heb. 6:1.

1. COMPLETE IN THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRIST. "The principles of the doctrine of Christ." Ver. 1.

(a) The Essential Principles of Christ's Doctrine Revealed. "Things that accompany salvation." Ver. 9.

(b) The Essential Principles of Christ's Doctrine Received. "The foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God." Ver. 1.

(c) The Essential Principles of Christ's Doctrine Realized. "Made partakers of the Holy Ghost." Ver. 4.

2. COMPLETE IN THE PERFECTION OF CHRIST. "Let us go on unto perfection." Ver. 1.

(a) The Condition for Receiving Perfection in Christ. "And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." Ver. 5.

(b) The Constraint to Receive Perfection in Christ. "Let us go on unto perfection." Ver. 1.

(c) The Crisis of Receiving Perfection in Christ. "If they shall fall away." Ver. 6.

3. COMPLETE IN THE PROMISES OF CHRIST, "Followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Ver. 12.

(a) The Heirs of God's Promises in Christ. "Inherit the promises." Ver. 12.

(b) The Heritage of God's Promises in Christ. "Followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Ver. 12.

(c) The Hope in God's Promises in Christ. "Hope unto the end." Ver. 11.

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

1. COMPLETE IN THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRIST. "The principles of the doctrine of Christ." Ver. 1.

The Greek word, which is here translated principles, denotes a commencement, or a beginning of things, or first place.

The Greek word translated doctrine means the word spoken to us, or the simple teaching of Christ, or the teaching which children in Christ can understand.

(a) The Essential Principles of Christ's Doctrine Revealed. "Things that accompany salvation." Ver. 9.

The things accompanying salvation are the spiritual graces and inherent qualities which belong to the experience of saving grace.

These vital spiritual realities are confirmed and certified to us by the witness of the Holy Spirit. We receive the witness of the Spirit at the very beginning of sonship. It is written, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. 4:6.

It is apparently true that the first principles received in the teachings of Christ are the same in every true Christian. These inherent principles of initial salvation are imparted to us by the indwelling Spirit of Christ. The transformation of soul is always the same and the testimony of the Spirit is always the same. There is not a single exception to this fundamental fact relative to vital Christian experience. Paul asserted this changeless fact, saying, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8:9.

(b) The Essential Principles of Christ's Doctrine Received. "The foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God." Ver. 1.

It is obviously true that repentance for sin and faith toward God are clearly revealed in the teachings of Christ. True repentance for all past sins and implicit faith in Christ are the conditions to be met in order to receive the things that accompany salvation.

The Scriptures show us clearly that the revelation of eternal life, the relationship of eternal life, and the realization of eternal life are received through faith in Christ. John testified to this gracious truth, saying, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." I Jno. 5:20.

Christ gives us an understanding to assure us of our hope Of eternal life based on our relationship with God, This assurance received by divine revelation is an essential principle of the doctrine of Christ.

(c) The Essential Principles of Christ's Doctrine Realized. "Made partakers of the Holy Ghost." Ver. 4.

It stimulates our faith and enhances our understanding of the fundamental principles of redeeming grace when we consider Paul's assuring affirmation relating to the foundation of God. The anointed servant of Christ said, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." II Tim. 2:19.

The loving Lord affixes the certifying seal of ownership on His purchased people when He gives the promised Holy Spirit to abide with them forever.

The willing Savior responds immediately to our faith by giving us a change of heart, and confirmation of hope and citizenship in heaven. (Phil. 3:20-21)

I sincerely consider these conscious realities of Christian experience to be the essential and enduring principles of regeneration. I believe these things of initial salvation to be the first principles of the teaching of Christ received by repentance and faith.

2. COMPLETE IN THE PERFECTION OF CHRIST. "Let us go on unto perfection." Ver. 1.

The Greek word, which is here translated perfection, means completeness as opposed to what is partial and limited. It means to be without shortcoming in respect to certain standards of character.

The word is used to denote a state of moral and spiritual being and behavior. Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.

Jesus is teaching Christian perfection. He has revealed the obvious truth of perfection in spiritual being in the beatitudes.

Paul used this Greek term when He said, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Phil. 3:15. The perfect mindedness refers to the essential qualities of a consecration that counts all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

John used this Greek word when he said, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." I Jno. 4:17.

The same Greek word is used with reference to the sacrifice of Christ. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:14.

I have called attention to these explicit statements of God's Word for the express purpose of showing the necessity and nature of perfection in Christ.

(a) The Condition for Receiving Perfection in Christ. "And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." Ver. 5.

In the clear light of these spiritual realities we must conclude that these believers had been regenerated by the word and power of God. The faithful Apostle would have them see that they are now eligible to receive the perfection of moral character so freely provided for them in Christ. He encourages them and exhorts them to go on unto perfection.

We must conclude that something very essential to their spiritual life lies beyond all they have received in the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. It is obvious that they are urged to go from the commencement of spiritual life to the completeness of spiritual life. In other words, they are encouraged to go on from regeneration to entire sanctification. They are exhorted to go on from the birth of the Spirit to the baptism with the Spirit.

It is not difficult to substantiate these views by the Scriptures. The great truth of Christian perfection is clearly revealed in the purpose of God, in the preaching of the Gospel, and in the provision of grace. We find it disclosed in the prayer of the Savior and in the promise of the Spirit.

Only the persons deceived by their doctrines and defeated by their defilement can fail to perceive the cardinal truth of moral completeness and cleansing promised to all the children of God.

A faithful Christ stands ready to cleanse us from all sin on the condition that we confess our deep need of holiness. (I Jno. 1:9)

(b) The Constraint to Receive Perfection in Christ. "Let us go on unto perfection." Ver. 1.

There is something compelling in these words of the Apostle. We also find a strong spiritual compulsion to purity revealed in sonship. John stated this truth, saying, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." I Jno. 3:3.

We do not enter into Christian perfection by growing in grace. We cannot achieve holiness of heart and completeness of character by a process of development. If such an experience could be achieved by either growth or development, it would preclude the necessity of Christ's supreme sufferings to sanctify His people with His own blood. (Heb. 13:12")

A regenerated man does not possess one moral quality that can be developed to such a degree that it will purify his unholy heart.

When we conclude that the exhortation to go on unto perfection refers to growth and development, we overlook the need of complete deliverance from innate depravity.

Let us not confuse the issue of our need of entire sanctification by saying that the Apostle is speaking of growth in grace when he urges the believers to go on to perfection.

According to the original Greek, he is saying, "Let us be carried on to perfection." The Apostle is speaking of personal surrender to the will and power of Christ when he speaks of going on to perfection. The true believers are assured that God stands ready to carry them forward to the fullness of the blessing of purity of soul. God offers to do for us what we cannot possibly do for ourselves. Why not look unto the efficacy of Christ's blood to deliver us from all defilement? No man should be so foolish as to think that he can deliver his own soul from indwelling sin by his own feeble efforts and achievements.

Much depends on full obedience to this timely appeal of God's faithful servant, but much more depends on obedience to the Spirit of God.

(c) The Crisis of Receiving Perfection in Christ. "If they shall fall away." Ver. 6.

The Apostle shows us the terrifying possibility of apostasy. It is apparent that a soul can reach such a state of hopelessness that it is utterly impossible to be recovered to repentance. The extreme depth of the fall is disclosed by the startling fact that one can crucify to himself the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. Ver. 6.

I am not disposed to discuss the terrifying truth of apostasy as it is disclosed in all its dreadful aspect by the inspired writer of this remarkable Epistle. Such persons as may be interested in a thorough presentation of the dangers of apostasy are advised to read what Adam Clarke says regarding the plight of such a wretched soul.

But I am minded to point out the obvious fact that such a state of despair can be reached by those who continue to reject the appeal to go on unto perfection. I can see no apparent reason for the sobering warning relative to falling away unless there is a real crisis confronting these Christians.

The failure to obey God in any matter relating to spiritual life always results in loss of moral and spiritual power. When believers refuse to go on unto completeness in Christ they suffer a direct loss of the power necessary to preserve them in this evil world.

We have no valid right to expect Christ to preserve us in a state of justification when we refuse to go on unto sanctification. What security, may I ask, has any man who refuses to obtain the purity of heart provided for him in Christ? Dare we presume that God's goodness will preserve us when we are knowingly and willingly walking back of light? How can we run with patience the race set before us except we lay aside the sin which doth so easily beset us?

No man has a valid reason to entertain the hope of entering a holy heaven and looking into the face of a holy God unless he has the moral and spiritual fitness to dwell in such a holy place and fellowship with such a holy Person.

The Psalmist raised a serious question regarding our eternal hope, saying, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." Psa. 24:3-4.

There is nothing to prevent us from falling away if we willfully refuse to go on unto the completeness so freely and fully provided for all true believers in Christ.

When we refuse to go on unto perfection in Christ we forfeit the pleasure of God. The Apostle employed a striking figure to warn us regarding the dire results of disobeying the exhortation to go on unto perfection: "The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that

which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." Vers. 7-8. The warning is clear to all who will receive it.

The earth that receives the rain responds with fruitfulness. It is rewarded with the blessing of favor because of its production. We perceive that God expects His people to respond to His earnest appeal to go on unto perfection. He expects them to be fruitful in Christian living. God's blessing of favor and pleasure will surely be given to the obedient people. But the people that reject the earnest exhortation to go on unto holiness of heart shall certainly receive the displeasure of the righteous Lord.

Only the people blinded and biased by some form of false doctrine will be incapable of perceiving the crisis confronting every truly regenerated person. The Apostle makes it clear that we either go on unto perfection or draw back unto perdition.

I join the Apostle in saying, "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." Ver. 9.

3. COMPLETE IN THE PROMISES OF CHRIST. "Followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Ver. 12.

The Holy Scriptures have much to say regarding the boundless promises of God in Christ Jesus. It is written, "All the promises of God in him are "yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God." II Cor. 1:20. This consoling statement discloses that all the promises of God in Christ are combined to give us the answer to all that pertains to life in this world and in the world to come. Christ is the fulfillment of all that God has promised to mankind in the ages now past, in the age now present, and in the endless ages to come.

(a) The Heirs of God's Promises in Christ. "Inherit the promises."

The inspired writer would have us keep in mind that we are joint heirs with the appointed Heir of all things.

In order to comprehend the essential facts relative to the heirs of the promises it is necessary to consider the two stages of spiritual life disclosed in the Epistle. "The Apostle said, "Every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age." In one stage of spiritual life we see babyhood, and in another stage of spiritual life we see adulthood.

Let us keep in mind that the babe is an heir of the promises, and the person of full age is also an heir of the promises. The great difference pointed out by the Apostle is that the babe cannot receive his inheritance until he is of full age. Paul made this difference very clear when he said, "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father." Gal. 4:1-2.

Note the fact that the child cannot come into his, inheritance until the time appointed by the father. The Apostle makes it clear that it was necessary for the child to be of full age in order to

receive the inheritance. As long as he remained a child he could not obtain his inheritance, though he be lord of all things in the father's estate. When the child comes of age, or arrives at adulthood, he reaches the time appointed by the father to give him the inheritance.

The writer would have us perceive that Christian perfection is the state of full age, or spiritual adulthood. He shows us that this state of spiritual completeness is the time appointed by the Heavenly Father to bestow the vast riches of the inheritance on His heirs.

It is at this point that many sincere people are confused. It is apparently difficult for them to see the difference between growing in grace and going on unto perfection.

It is not difficult for one to understand this truth if he sees the obvious difference between childhood and the time appointed of the father to bestow the inheritance on the child.

We can see the pattern of these things revealed in the time that Jesus began His ministry on earth. His age at that particular time was the time appointed by the Father to anoint Him with the Holy Ghost for the arduous labors and various tasks incident to His work. The Son of God received the anointing with the Holy Ghost by appointment of the Father and not by a process of mental growth and moral development.

The gift of the Spirit is not bestowed upon the children Of God as the result of their mental and moral development. The gift of the Holy Spirit is given at the appointed time of the Father on the condition of obedience. (Acts 5:32.) God has an appointed time in the plan of redemption to sanctify His sons by the baptism with the Spirit. They arrive at this glorious time when they obey the call to go on unto perfection. The epochal experience brings us to spiritual completeness in Christ, or to moral adulthood, or to full age, or unto the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:13) .

When We come to this blessed completeness in Christ we are in a spiritual condition to receive the inheritance of the promises.

Let us assume that the babes in Christ have never heard of the appointed time to receive their inheritance. Let us suppose that they have never been urged to go on unto perfection. Or it could be that they have heard the doctrine of Christian perfection but refuse to obey the truth. It is certain that in my case they will be kept out of their inheritance.

This disturbing truth accounts for the Apostle's earnest exhortation to go on unto perfection. The true believers can ill afford to miss the blessing of completeness in Christ, and as a consequence of their disobedience be prevented from receiving their inheritance.

(b) The Heritage of God's Promises in Christ. "Followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Ver. 12.

The pages of Holy Writ are filled with promises relating to every need of mortal man in this world and in the world to come. The sons of God have achieved victory over their enemies, performed miracles, and escaped death through faith in the imperishable promises of God.

Christ's redeemed people have inherited the promises of prayer, the promises of prosperity, and the promises of His presence. They have found the resources, the righteousness, and the rewards of His promises.

They have inherited His Name in the promises and His Nature in the promises. They have received the promise of salvation, strength and sufficiency. They are comforted by His promises, confirmed by His promises and shall be crowned according to His promises.

The Apostle gives us two sincere admonitions relating to the promises of God. The first admonition is, "Be not slothful."

The Greek word translated slothful means sluggish, or lazy, or dull of perception, or slow of understanding.

This dreadful state can be the result of neglecting to pray and wait before God. Lazy sons of God make no serious effort to devote time to worship and diligently seek the will and way of the Lord. These indolent souls are slow of understanding and dull of perception. They live on a low level of spiritual knowledge. Such sluggish souls have very little faith to appropriate the rich promises of God. They often wonder why others are joyful and full of praise for the wonders of God's fulfilled promises.

The second admonition is, "But followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

The Greek word translated followers means to imitate, or follow as an example, or strive to resemble.

The Apostle labors to show us that we can follow the pattern of the eminent saints who have received the full benefit of God's promises through the ages past. They inherited these promises through faith in Him who is invisible, and who, they knew, would not fail to keep His word. These towering saints patiently endured the many difficulties and adversities of life because they appropriated the promises of God by an unwavering faith.

(c) The Hope in God's Promises in Christ. "Hope unto the end." Ver. 11.

God's Word has much to say about hope. The Apostle shows us that we have hope in our labors, hope in our love, and hope in our loyalty.

To this fact the faithful servant of God witnesses, saying, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." Ver. 10.

The Greek word translated forget means to disregard, or put out of mind, or be neglectful.

It would be utterly inconsistent with the Nature of God to forget the faithful labors of love shown toward His redeemed family. This fact should greatly encourage the faith of the servants of Christ who sacrifice and serve in the harvest fields of earth. Many have gone through life unnoticed and unappreciated by those they have faithfully served. I am aware that these loyal servants of God have neither requested nor expected to be praised of men. They have been compensated for their labors of love by innumerable blessings from the Lord of all the earth.

There will come a time when the Lord shall show that He has not forgotten His promises to reward His faithful children. The gracious Savior disclosed this blessed truth, saying, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me; in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me . . . And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one Of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matt. 25:34-40.

This is the glad hour of triumph foreseen and foretold by the Savior. It will be a sufficient reward to all the faithful sons of God to come to the end of the way and receive such a sublime benediction as our Lord has revealed in this remarkable promise.

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THE STUDY OUTLINED

Subject: THE HEIRS OF PROMISE

Text: "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." Heb. 6:17.

1. GOD'S COUNSEL REVEALED TO HIS HEIRS. "To shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel." Ver. 17.

(a) The Pattern of the Sacrifice. "Hast not withheld thy son, thine only son." Gen. 22:16.

(b) The Power of the Savior. "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." Gen. 22: 17.

(c) The Promise of the Seed. "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven." Gen. 22:17.

(d) The Preaching of Salvation. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. 22:18. Gal. 3:8.

2. GOD'S CONFIRMATION REVEALED TO HIS HEIRS. "Confirmed it by an oath." Ver. 17.

(a) Christ Confirms Us in the Will of God. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly." Ver. 17.

(b) Christ Confirms Us by the Works of God. "By two immutable things" Ver. 18.

(c) Christ Confirms Us by the Word of God. "In which it was impossible for God to lie." Ver. 18.

3. GOD'S CONSOLATION REVEALED TO His HEIRS. "We might have a strong consolation." Ver. 18.

(a) The Full Assurance of Hope. "The full assurance of hope unto the end." Ver. 11.

(b) The Firm Anchor of Hope. "An anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." Ver. 19.

(c) The Final Award of Hope. "Entereth into that within the veil." Ver. 19.

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THE OUTLINE ENLARGED

1. GOD'S COUNSEL REVEALED TO HIS HEIRS. "To shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel." Ver. 17.

The Greek word, which is here translated counsel, denotes purpose, design, determination and decree of will.

It is apparent that Almighty God has a changeless purpose concerning the heirs of promise. It is certainly not difficult to find the changeless counsel of God revealed in the Saviourhood, sacrifice, and sovereignty of the only begotten Son.

There is not the remotest possibility that God's immutable counsel shall fail. The embattled saints have no reason to fear that the efficacy of Christ's atonement will come to an untimely end. The heirs of promise will never be defeated, deserted and dismayed in this evil world if they continue in the imperishable truth of God.

It is obvious that God's immutable counsel was revealed in the promise made to Abraham. The faithful Apostle called attention to this fact by quoting the promise, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." Ver. 14.

Almighty God said to Abraham, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. 22:16-18.

I have brought this remarkable promise into focus for the express purpose of arresting attention to certain essential facts relative to God's immutable counsel revealed to the heirs of promise. We do well to see these things in the clear light of the Word.

(a) The Pattern of the Sacrifice. "And hast not withheld thy son, thine only son." Gen. 22:16.

It certainly is not difficult to perceive that the offering of Abraham's only son was a perfect type, or pattern, of the offering of God's only begotten Son. It was God's immutable purpose from the beginning to offer His well beloved Son in supreme sacrifice to redeem us from all iniquity.

Faithful Abraham uttered a great truth when he said to Isaac, "My son, God will provide himself a Lamb." Gen. 22:8. Heaven, earth and hell are witnesses to the incontestable fact that God did provide Himself a Lamb. All the inhabitants of the earth are invited to look to the Lamb of God for redemption. The silence of the ages was shattered by the voice of one crying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jno. 1:29.

We have no valid reason to doubt the truth that it is God's immutable purpose to remove the sin of the world through faith in His only begotten Son. He has purposed to take away the condemnation of sin, the captivity of sin, and the contamination of sin.

(b) The Power of the Savior. "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." Gen. 22:17.

This remarkable promise evidently refers to the power of the conquering Christ. To possess the gate means to possess the city. Christ commands the entrance to the citadel of Satan and sin. Our loving Lord has power to open the doors of the prison and release the prisoners held captive by the powers of evil. It is written, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Eph. 4:8.

Our great Redeemer has power to dispossess the strong man of sin residing and reigning in the soul of man. He only asks that we open the doors of our hearts and surrender all to Him. He has power to expel the sin and emancipate the sinner. He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil and deliver us from the depravity, defilement and dominion of sin.

(c) The Promise of the Seed. "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore." Gen. 22:17.

This encouraging promise refers to Christ and His people. The Word declares that Christ is the Seed of Abraham. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is: Christ." Gal. 3:16.

When the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks concerning "the heirs of promise," he is obviously speaking of Christ's seed, or children. Paul stated this astonishing truth, saying, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29.

The Word of God discloses some very illuminating and inspiring facts concerning the heirs of promise. The Scriptures reveal that Isaac was a child of promise. (Gen. 17:6.) Christ was a Child of promise. (Isa. 9:6.) It certainly is an obvious fact that Isaac was an heir of promise. He was Abraham's firstborn son and heir to his father's possessions. Jesus Christ is God's firstborn Son and heir of all things in heaven and in earth.

God's redeemed people are heirs of promise and joint-heirs with the Son, whom the Father hath appointed heir of all things.

I have called attention to these remarkable truths in order to enlarge our concept of the heirs of promise to whom God wills to disclose His immutable counsel confirmed by an oath.

We do well to consider these essential facts relating to the changeless purpose of God as revealed in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

(d) The Preaching of Salvation. "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. 22:18.

Paul enabled us to understand this promise made to Abraham, saying, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Gal. 3:8.

It is through the preaching of the Gospel and the witnessing of God's redeemed children that the nations of the earth receive the message of salvation.

It is evidently God's immutable purpose to call all mankind to salvation through the preaching of the Gospel. It is obviously His changeless purpose in Christ to justify penitent sinners through faith, and give them the blessed knowledge of salvation by the pardon of their sins.

It is also God's immutable purpose in Christ to cleanse our hearts through faith in the sacrifice of His Son. It is written, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:4.

In the clear light of these glowing truths of redeeming grace, we are able to comprehend the meaning of the message relating to God's immutable counsel disclosed to the heirs of promise. Our resources in Christ are great, and our responsibilities to Him are great. It is written, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Luke 12:48. Again we read, "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." Luke 12:43.

2. GOD'S CONFIRMATION REVEALED TO HIS HEIRS. "Confirmed it by an oath." Ver. 17.

The Greek word, which is here translated confirmed, means an act as mediator. The Apostle uses this Greek term to show us that Christ has placed Himself between God and the heirs. The Scriptures affirm that Christ is the only mediator between God and man.

The astonishing fact is that Christ has brought in Himself as surety for the complete fulfillment of God's immutable counsel. He has placed Himself under a solemn oath to give the full benefits of eternal redemption to the heirs of promise.

(a) Christ Confirms Us in the Will of God. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly." Ver. 17.

The Apostle is saying, in effect, "Wherein God, being minded more abundantly to demonstrate, or prove, to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, established it by a solemn oath."

It is obviously true that all the rich benefits contained in God's promise made to faithful Abraham can now be fulfilled in us through faith in Christ. Jesus Christ, the Minister and Mediator of the new covenant of Grace, stands ready to fulfill the Heavenly Father's will in the hearts of all the legal heirs of promise.

We have no valid reason to doubt God's willingness to sanctify every true believer that diligently seeks for the blessing. The very fact that God is minded more abundantly to bestow His grace of holiness upon His heirs is a sure basis for their faith. We do not need to strive and struggle to obtain the blessing of a holy heart. All we need to know is that God is willing and able to perform His immutable purpose in our hungry hearts.

When the children of God perceive that God has willed to give them the blessing of a pure heart they will not find it difficult to obtain their inheritance from the appointed Heir of all things.

(b) Christ Confirms Us by the Works of God. "By two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie." Ver. 18.

The Apostle is apparently referring to God's oath and promise when speaking of the two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie. It is exceedingly important to keep in mind that God's oath and promise confirm His changeless purpose to the heirs of promise.

God's Word clearly reveals that the blessing of Abraham contained the promised gift of the Savior and the promised gift of the Spirit.

These two great cardinal facts were revealed and emphasized by the inspired prophets when they spake unto the fathers in time past.

These two immutable facts are also the central theme of Christ's glorious Gospel proclaimed to all mankind in these last days.

The inspired Word shows us that the Abrahamic covenant included both the birth of the Spirit and the baptism with the Spirit. Paul witnessed to this gracious truth, saying, "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. 3:14.

We are warranted in affirming that the epochal experience of the birth of the Spirit and the baptism with the Spirit are the two immutable things confirmed to us in the oath and promise of God.

It certainly is not difficult to find these two great spiritual blessings disclosed in the immutable counsel of God clearly revealed to the heirs of promise. Paul witnessed to the two works of grace enjoyed by the Ephesian Christians, saying, "After that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." Eph. 1:13.

The charter members of the church at Ephesus were converted under the able ministry of Apollos and later received the baptism with the Holy Spirit under the ministry of Paul. (Acts. 19:17)

Paul affirms that these two gracious epochs in Christian experience were received according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will.

(c) Christ Confirms Us by the Word of God. "In which it was impossible for God to lie." Ver. 18.

This is indeed an astonishing and assuring statement. Almighty God is the Source of all truth. It would be utterly impossible for Him to deceive us in any matter relating to life. A lie would be a contradiction of all He is in His Divine Nature.

God would have us understand that His imperishable word confirms us in the grace of regeneration and entire sanctification. These two immutable realities of Christian experience are certified to us by Jesus Christ, the faithful witness to all truth.

We have God's witness to the vital experience of the new birth. The spiritual realities contained in this epochal experience are constant in character and changeless in principles. This is saying that the inherent qualities and imparted graces are the same in the hearts and lives of all true Christians. The children of God have an assuring witness of pardon for sins and peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the people of God. We have the fruit of the Spirit, the fellowship of the Spirit, and freedom in the Spirit.

We have God's faithful witness to the blessed experience of purity of heart. We know that the God of peace has sanctified us wholly by the baptism with the Holy Ghost. We have the abiding Holy Spirit and the assuring Holy Spirit in our hearts. We are fully aware of the presence of the Spirit, the pleasure of the Spirit, and the power of the Spirit. The blessed Savior gives us the cleansing, the comfort, and the confirmation of the Spirit in the full measure of His grace.

These basic and fundamental principles are the same in each child of God. There are no exceptions to this rule of redemption. There are different approaches to these two immutable works of divine grace, but the essential principles are changeless in Christian experience.

3. GOD'S CONSOLATION REVEALED TO HIS HEIRS. "We might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Ver. 18.

The Greek word translated consolation means encouragement, or incitement, or persuasion. It is indeed true that God has given us a strong encouragement to lay hold of the eternal hope in Christ. This strong persuasion is based on the two great immutable works of grace confirmed unto us by the oath and promise of God, and produced in our trusting souls by the power of the Holy Spirit.

(a) The Full Assurance of Hope. "We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." Ver. 11.

The full assurance of hope obviously relates to our future glory. Our full assurance of hope is based on the unmistakable evidence produced in our hearts by the indwelling Christ. (Col. 1:27)

Adam Clarke gives us a clear statement relative to the full assurance of hope. "The person who has this full assurance of hope is he who not only knows and feels that his sins are forgiven through Christ Jesus, but also that his heart is purified from all unrighteousness, that the whole body of sin and death is destroyed, and that he is fully made a partaker of the Divine nature. As without holiness, complete, entire holiness, no man shall see God; so, without this, none can scripturally or rationally hope for eternal glory; it being a contradiction to profess to have the full assurance of hope to enjoy a state and place for which the soul is conscious it is not prepared. This full assurance does not imply that the man will absolutely persevere to the end; but that, if he does persevere in this same grace, he shall infallibly have eternal glory."

I am in full accord with this exposition on the full assurance of hope given by Adam Clarke. I join the inspired Apostle, saying, "We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." Our faithful Lord has given us a strong encouragement to press onward in the way of holiness and hope. We have fled to Christ for refuge and redemption. Let us continue in, the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of eternal glory.

(b) The Firm Anchor of Hope. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." Ver. 19.

The inspired writer compares our hope to an anchor which holds the soul sure and stedfast in the storms of life. The severe storms of life continue to batter us and bewilder us for only a short time.

The anchor of hope will hold us securely if fixed by faith in God's infallible truth revealed in His immutable purpose in redemption.

Our anchor of hope does not drag and it does not break, because it is firmly fixed in the sure Rock, Christ Jesus.

"Faith, like the cable, is the connecting medium between the ship and the anchor, or the soul and its hope of heaven; faith sees the haven, hope desires and anticipates the rest; faith works, and hope holds fast; and shortly, the soul enters into the haven of eternal repose." (Adam Clarke)

(c) The Final Award of Hope. "Entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." Ver. 19-20.

The Apostle speaks of "that within the veil." He has carried us on the wings of faith and hope to the end of the journey of life. He would have us meditate on the glory, honor and praise reserved for us in highest heaven. Our enduring home is within the veil, our eternal heritage is within the veil, and our everlasting happiness is within the veil. Our glorified Redeemer and great Rewarder will greet us at the veil between time and eternity and welcome us into the city prepared before the foundation of the world.

The Apostle would have us see the consoling fact that Jesus, the Forerunner and High Priest, "is for us entered." He has carried the anchor of our hope into the holy place in heaven.

We find heartening hope in the fact that Jesus, the Forerunner, has gone before us to explore and prepare the way to the Father's house of many mansions. He knows the trials and temptations incident to life in the narrow way leading to our heavenly home. The footprints of the Prophet of Palestine are clearly seen in the path of life. His way is our way, His will is our will, and His wisdom is our wisdom.

We find a calm joy and restful contentment in following the great Shepherd of the sheep as He leads in paths of righteousness for His Name's sake. Surely His abiding goodness and everlasting mercy shall follow us all the days of our life; and we shall dwell in the house of the Heavenly Father forever.

The object of hope is set before us as the city of refuge was set before the refugees, and it is laid hold of by the faith inspired and sustained by the immutable counsel of God revealed to His heirs.

In the clear light of God's promise we can boldly say, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" Psa. 118:6.

The final triumph of the Redeemer was revealed to the Psalmist who had fled to the Lord for refuge. The victorious King of glory speaks to the keepers of the gates to the city, saying, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Psa. 24:7-10.

Let us press on until we enter into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus our High Priest.

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THE END