

FOUNDATION MINISTRIES (UK)
Apostolic Ministry to the Body of Christ
EXPOSITORY & INSPIRATIONAL TEACHING & SERMON NOTES

Subject: - Great Christian Doctrines

Study: - 015. Mediator of a Better Covenant (Hebrews)

Bible Reading: - Hebrews

Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews

Paul the Apostle and author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is writing to Jewish Christians who were struggling with going back into Judaism to avoid being persecuted and points out to them that Jesus hath obtained a more excellent ministry for He is the mediator of a better covenant than that given by God to Moses, and further it is established upon better promises, **Hebrews 8:6** "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Paul warns these Jewish Christians that if they fall away go back into Judaism and become entangled once again with the observance of the laws and commandments of the Old Covenant, it is then impossible to renew themselves again unto repentance for they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, **Hebrews 6:4-6** "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 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." In going back into Judaism and becoming entangled once again with the observance of the laws and commandments of the Old Covenant, they in other words reject Jesus Christ the Son of God, and align themselves with those blaspheming Jews who called Jesus an impostor, and thereby vindicate His murderers who crucified him as a troublemaker, **John 19:4-7** "Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." That is a very strong and serious charge which would be laid at their feet that is why Paul writes very firmly and seriously to awaken them to this error.

Paul in this Epistle then seeks to show these Jewish Christians' how of a surety, an absolute guarantee, Jesus is the Mediator of a better covenant, for the LORD had sworn by an oath right back in eternity before the worlds were created and therefore will not repent, that the priesthood Jesus is after the similitude of Melchisedek and was not made after the law of carnal commandments i.e. weak or frail commandments, as was the Levitical priesthood. The Levitical priesthood was weak as it ministered the letter of the Law, and not the Spirit of the Law, for it demanded perfect obedience, yet gave no assistance in obtaining it, it pardoned no sin or changed no heart or life, leaving man weak and dead in his trespasses and sin, **Hebrews 7:15-19** "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedek there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." Jesus made a priest after the power of an endless life, who being immortal has the power to confer life and immortality on those who come unto Him in true repentance, for He ever lives to make intercession for men and they who believe on him shall never perish, but have everlasting life, **Hebrews 7:24-25** "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Paul in the opening verses of this Epistle tell us that in times past God spoke to His people through the prophets, yet in these last days has spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things and by whom also He made the worlds, **Hebrews 1:1-2** "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;" Paul sets the theme of this Epistle in the first chapters in using

firstly the comparisons of God's Son to Angels, the Priesthood, and the Sacrifices, showing that Jesus is better and greater than all for He is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, who being called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek, and of whom Paul has much to say or share with them which he finds hard to utter since they have become dull of hearing, **Hebrews 5:9-11** "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedek. Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing." It appears these Jewish Christians were ready to compromise and ignore the truth of the scriptures thereby causing them to stumble in their Christian walk.

Jesus being made so much better then the Angels and hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name. Paul seeks to show the Jewish Christians that Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, was made a little lower than the angels for the purpose of suffering death on behalf of mankind, is superior to all, who being so much better than the angels which are created by God, **Hebrews 1:4-7** "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 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? And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." The Jews held a misguided belief in the excellence of the angels and the part they played in the counsels of God regarding Israel. For they held the archangels Michael and Gabriel in high esteem of whom God employed in relation to Israel whilst they were in the captivity of Babylon. Yet, we are told in scripture that Jesus is the image of the invisible God and by whom all things are created, and this included the angels, **Colossians 1:15-19** "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" The angels are but ministering spirits sent forth from God's throne to minister to the heirs of salvation, **Hebrews 1:13-14** "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" which shall also be the case in those final days, **1 Thessalonians 4:16** "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:" & **Daniel 12:1-2** "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

When God brought forth His only begotten Son into the world a multitude of angels worshiped at His birth, acknowledging Jesus Christ as God the Saviour of mankind, **Luke 2:13-14** "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Therefore God in the fulness of time and in that appointed day reveals Himself to mankind in Christ Jesus, this day have I begotten thee? bringing to fulfilment the counsels of God spoken in eternity before the world was, **Hebrews 1:8** "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," thereby laying aside His Heavenly glory, and in accordance to His will and purposes He came forth into the world, **Hebrews 1:6** "And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." The angels worshipped Jesus at His birth because He was God, yet He made Himself of no reputation i.e. He did not appear in His majestic splendour and glory which He laid aside, who being born as a helpless babe, He took upon Himself the form of a servant, **Philippians 2: 5-8** "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

The angels whom God often employed under the Law to bring about elements of His will and purposes in the earth, yet unto none of these angels did God put in subjection the world to come, being that man's eternal salvation, **Hebrews 2:5-10** "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. 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? 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: 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. 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. 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. But we see Jesus who being made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, in that God put in subjection to Him man's eternal salvation, and crowned Him with glory and honour sitting at the right hand of the Father on high, **Revelation 1:18** "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Jesus has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than the angels, for God was revealed to mankind in human form. He co-existed in eternity with the Father, thereby being the express image of His person, i.e. representation of His substance and character, **Hebrews 1:3-4** "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; "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. Back in eternity ever before God created the heavens and the earth by His Wisdom, He foreordained man's salvation in His only begotten Son, **Proverbs 8:22-23** "The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." & **Peter 1:19-20** "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you," During Jesus ministry whilst on earth, it was affirmed by God the Father, on a number of occasions that Jesus was His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased, and Peter in his second epistles confirms this, **2 Peter 1:16-18** "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." When Jesus had finished His ministry on earth He ascends into heaven to sit at the right hand of God the Father, where the angels and authorities and powers are made subject to Him, **1 Peter 3:22** "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

Jesus was 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. Jesus did not take upon Himself the nature of angels, but that of the seed of Abraham, **Hebrews 2:14-18** "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; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but 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, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Paul had warned the Jewish Christians that they should give more earnest heed to those things spoken unto them, for how shall they escape if they neglect so great salvation. For if the word spoken by those angels sent from God was trustworthy it that every transgression and disobedience of which they spoke was accordingly recompensed, i.e. consider the warning given to Lot by the two angels regarding the destruction of Sodom, **Genesis 19:1** "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;" & **Genesis 19:12-13** "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou

here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it." Wherefore although Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of mankind, yet God bore witness to those things spoken by Him, and those of the Apostles, with signs and wonders and diverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, **Hebrews 2:1-4** "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. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 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: 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?" Therefore they should give more importance to these things spoken unto them less at anytime they forget. Further we need to remember that these Jewish Christians would have had the written scrolls of the books of the Old Testament, but as yet much of the New Testament as we know it today for it was in the early stages of formation with some of the Epistles and Gospels been written and others in the process, with another fifty years or so before they were all complete.

Jesus Christ the Apostle and High Priest of our faith, or our profession, who is counted worthy of more glory than Moses, who was highly esteemed by the House of Israel, for Moses spoke with God and received from God the Law and Commandments written on tablets of stone on their behalf, **Hebrews 3:1-4** "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. 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. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God." We are now asked to consider Christ Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of our faith. He and he alone is the Apostle of faith, for the Apostle is a father who brings the seed of eternal life, and Jesus is the everlasting father, for Isaiah prophesied, **Isaiah 9:6** "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." The Apostles built the Church laying it on the sure and certain foundation of Jesus Christ, and Paul writing to the Church at Corinth as a father to his son, warns those believers who were being divisive claiming they were of Paul, whilst others of Apollos or Peter, **1 Corinthians 4:14-15** "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." Moses was but God's servant in the house of Israel, as where Christ built the house laying its foundation in his own blood that we might receive the forgiveness of our sins and inherit eternal life, thereby it is not through obedience to the Law with its works that brings salvation, yet by faith in Christ we are then members of His house, **Hebrews 3:5-6** "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Jesus Christ provides a better rest than Joshua, which rest was finished from the foundation of the world, and here Paul exalts these Jewish Christians not to harden their hearts in unbelief as did their fathers in the wilderness when they grieved God. For when they should have trusted in His care and provisions for them when He brought them out of the bondage of Egypt, instead they continuously murmured and hardened their hearts, provoking Him to anger, **Hebrews 3:15-19** "While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Paul counselled the Church at Thessalonica that in everything they were to give thanks, for although things might look and seem difficult, yet God in Christ Jesus is working out His will in our lives, therefore we should trust and not murmur, **1 Thessalonians 5:18** "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Rather than God immediately destroying those who had hardened their hearts and rebelled, He in His mercy

permitted them to wander in the wilderness for forty years until they died, which time they had raised their offspring, who then under the leadership of Joshua went over the Jordan into the Promised land entering God's rest as promised to their forefathers. These Jewish Christians' are counselled by Paul not to dismiss their salvation lightly, but to fear i.e. apply an earnest sense of reverence and respect, lest they get weighed down with being subservient to the works of the Law, thereby allowing their faith to be eroded and their salvation to slip away, **Hebrews 4:1-4** "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. 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.. 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. 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." Paul says that we who believe do enter into God's rest and the gospel was preached unto us as well as unto them who in their unbelief fell in the wilderness. If they had believed the report of Joshua and Caleb and in faith grasped the fact that their God was able to defeat and conquer all that lay before them, then they would have entered the Promised Land and found rest. Had they place their faith in God and believed it would have been but a stepping stone for them into a greater rest, which was finished by God from the foundation of the world, i.e. on the seventh day of creation.

God did not end His act of Creation on the sixth day when the physical creation was complete and which He saw was very good. God's Creation ceased on the seventh day when He ended His work rested and that seventh day is the day of God's rest or Sabbath, being His provision of Salvation for mankind, **Genesis 2:1-3** "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." God both blessed and He sanctified the seventh day or the Sabbath, thereby setting it apart because He is LORD of the Sabbath, for the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath, **Mark 2: 27-28** "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." God's creation becomes complete when man by faith enters into and embraces God's rest provided in Christ Jesus, **Hebrews 4:9-10** "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Paul goes on to speak of a better day or a better rest than that which their forefathers had experienced under the Law and Joshua's leadership, for Paul says that God limiteth a certain day. Paul is saying that God ordained or appointed a certain day, or space in time, and that being the Day of Salvation, when men shall enter into God's Rest provided in Christ, **Hebrews 4:7-10** "Again, he limiteth 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. For if Jesus* had given them rest, and then would he (God) not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." (Translators have rendered the text Jesus, and not Joshua). Paul speaking here of God's appointed or ordained period in time saying, "Again, he limiteth a certain day, and that certain day, being the period of the dispensation of His grace revealed and made manifest to us in His Son, Jesus Christ, who thereby became the headstone or chief cornerstone of mans' salvation, and David encourages us to rejoice and being glad in it, **Psalms 118:22-24** "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." For this is the Day that the LORD has made, being the appointed time in which men might be saved, **2 Corinthians 6:2** "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" Paul goes on to say for if Joshua had given them rest, than God would not have spoken of another day, which is the day of God's eternal salvation for mankind found in Christ Jesus, and Paul quotes partly from **Psalms 95**, in which David through the Holy Spirit encourages God's people, the sheep of His pasture, to hear His voice and not to harden their hearts. Sadly their forefathers through unbelief lost the opportunity to enter into God's rest.

Paul encourages these Hebrew Christians to labour or make every effort to ensure they do not fall after the

same example of unbelief, for the Word of God will discern any lurking doubt or unbelief, **Hebrews 4:9-13** "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. 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 discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 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." Therefore we should be careful to examine ourselves and be honest with ourselves and God about our thoughts and failings. Paul then continues with the exhortation to these Jewish Christians to hold on to the confession of Christ they have already made seeing that we have a great High Priest, Jesus Christ the Son of God, who is ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father interceding for us, and further they should make use of Him for they can now come boldly to the throne of grace, without fear that they will not be answered, for He understands our human frailty and we can find those acts of loving kindness and unmerited favour He displayed whilst on earth available to us, **Hebrews 4:14-16** "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. 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. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Paul then makes a further five points regarding Christ's superior priestly work.

- ❑ **Better Priest than Aaron**, seeing He is able to save to the uttermost, **Hebrews 5:1 through to 7:25**;
- ❑ **Under a Better Covenant**, which is established on better promises, **Hebrews 8:1-13**;
- ❑ **In a Better Sanctuary**, a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, **Hebrews 9:1-12**;
- ❑ **Offering a Better Sacrifice**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **Hebrews 9:13 through to 10:18**;
- ❑ **Based on Better Promises**, for He is faithful that promised, **Hebrews 10:19 through to 12:3**,

Jesus a Better High Priest than Aaron, seeing He is able to save to the uttermost, **Hebrews 5:1 through to 7:25**; I do not intend here to deal in any great depth concerning Christ's priestly ministry in regard to Melchizedek, for this subject has been covered comprehensively in my study notes entitled, N° 1111. **Exposition of Melchizedek**

Jesus Priesthood established under a Better Covenant, as it is established on better promises, **Hebrews 8:6** "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also **he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.**" Paul explains to the Jewish Christians that Christ is the minister of the true tabernacle which is pitched by the LORD and not by man, **Hebrews 8:1-2** "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." The true tabernacle which the LORD pitched and in which He dwells and ministers is in the heart of man which is clothed about with an earthly body which when dissolved leaves the true tabernacle, **2 Corinthians 5:1** "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The Tabernacle pitched in the wilderness in which Aaron the High Priest (the Levitical Priesthood) would minister, was built by man in accordance to the pattern given by God to Moses in the Mount, and this Tabernacle was but a shadow of the true tabernacle **Hebrews 8:4-5** "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." Stephen when appearing in Jerusalem before the Sanhedrin says, **Acts 7:47-50** "But Solomon built him an house. Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?" Paul then explains had the first covenant been faultless under which the Levitical Priesthood ministered, then there should no place have been sought for a

second, **Hebrews 8:7** "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." The first was made under the Law of carnal commandments and was to serve as a shadow of the good things to come and act as a schoolmaster in bringing us to Christ, which Paul pointed out to the Galatian Christians, **Galatians 3:24-25** "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." The new covenant which God was yet to bring to pass in the fulness of time, is that through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, who on behalf of mankind became the propitiation (the appeasement) for their sins, and by their faith in Him, they are justified them before God, **Romans 3:23-25** "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" and the Holy Spirit thereby puts God's laws in to their minds and writes them in their hearts whereby they will personally experience the presence of God in their lives without having to be taught, **Hebrews 8:10-13** For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Here Paul is quoting from the prophet Jeremiah, **Jeremiah 33:31-34**, and the aspect of this new covenant is that Jesus will mediate at the right hand of the Father, and they will experience the forgiveness of sin, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Jesus ministers in a Better and more Perfect Sanctuary, **Hebrews 9:11** "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;" Jesus was therefore the minister of the true or perfect tabernacle which the LORD set-up or established, **Hebrews 8:2** "A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." The tabernacle of the Old Covenant made in accordance to the pattern given by God to Moses and pitched in the midst of the twelve tribes of Israel in the wilderness, in which the High priest ministered the ordinances of divine service, although pattern of worship was not perfect yet appropriate for the time then present, imposed upon them being a shadow of the good things to come, for it stood in rites and ceremonies pertaining to the body. It was weak in that it did not remove the guilt of sin from the mind or purify the conscience from dead works, **Hebrews 9:9-10** "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." This tabernacle was an earthly or worldly sanctuary made with hands, **Hebrews 9:1-3** "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary." The High Priest would only entered the second, or the Holiest place once a year on the Day of Atonement, for here the Mercy seat was placed upon the Ark of Testimony (Covenant), **Hebrews 9:2-7** "For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:" Before entering the Holiest place the High priest was to take a censor full of burning coals and a handful of finely ground incense which he burnt upon the coals in the censor when entering thereby creating a cloud that would cover the Mercy Seat so that he did not die (no man had seen God and lived), then the High Priest sprinkled the blood of the bullock seven times upon the Mercy Seat making an atonement for the sins of himself and his family, then he sprinkled the blood of the sacrificial goat for the atonement for the sins of the children of Israel.

Paul then points out to these Jewish Christians that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest which is signified by the Holy Spirit through the pattern and ordinances of service and worship, **Hebrews 9:8** *"The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."* Jesus is then the minister of the true tabernacle pitched in Heaven having entered into the presence of God with His own blood, thereby being a greater and more perfect tabernacle which is eternal in the heavens and not made with hands, **Hebrews 9:11-12** *"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."* Jesus as the great High Priest enters into the presence of God, the Holiest of All, once and for all with His own Blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us all.

Jesus our Great High Priest enters into the presence of God with a Better Sacrifice, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **Hebrews 9:13-14** *"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"* Paul here shows the Jewish Christians that although the ordinances of divine service of the Tabernacle which were established in rites and ceremonies sanctified the High Priest, in that it permitted him to minister before God. Yet how much better and more perfect sacrifice did Christ offer, in that through the shedding of His own life's blood and by the eternal Spirit He offered Himself once and for all without spot to God, therefore He is the mediator of the New Testament (Covenant) before God, **Hebrews 9:15** *"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."* The rites and ceremonies administered by the Levitical High Priest under the Old Covenant could not bring about man's redemption from the guilt of sin, **Hebrews 10:11-12** *"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God:"* Every year on the Day of Atonement the Levitical High Priest and the people were reminded of the sins and the imperfections, when the sacrifices were offered, in that they did not purge away their consciousness of sins, **Hebrews 10:1-4** *"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."*

Paul having pointed out to these Jewish Christians how Jesus by His own blood entered into the Holiest place obtaining eternal redemption for us all, **Hebrews 9:12** *"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."* And confirms that without the shedding of blood there is no remission or freedom or deliverance from sin, **Hebrews 9:22** *"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."* In order for a testament/covenant or will to be enacted there has to be the death of the testator i.e. the person who made the will and testament, **Hebrews 9:16-17** *"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."* For all the time the testator is alive the will and testament cannot be executed and those whom it names for entitlement cannot benefit or be blessed by its provisions.

The blessing and provisions of the first covenant/will and testament given by God to Moses, could likewise only be enacted with the shedding of blood, and this was the case through the offering of the blood of calves and goats, **Hebrews 9:18-22** *"Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood*

is no remission". The High Priest performed the rite when having received the blood of the calves and goats into basins mingled with water to prevent it from coagulating and he then took a bunch of hyssop bound together with scarlet wool which he dipped in the basin, he then sprinkled the blood and water upon the people and upon the book itself, which contained the written covenant, to signify that the covenant itself was ratified by the blood. **Exodus 24:8** "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words." Paul points out that all things are purged or cleansed with the shedding of blood, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission i.e. freedom, deliverance or liberty and Jesus Christ is the testator of the New Testament being His will and covenant, brought the guilty freedom from sin through the shedding of His own blood entering the presence of God with a better sacrifice, **Matthew 26:26** "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Paul when speaking of the better sacrifice of Jesus Christ in comparison to the offerings under the Old Covenant quotes from Psalm 40, which is written by David and is a Messianic Psalm. Verses six through ten speaks prophetically uttering the words of Jesus Christ regarding His incarnation, sacrificial offering and proclamation of the good news to the Jewish people, **Psalm 40:6-10** "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation." Paul enlightens these Jewish Christians by pointing out that it was never God's will or design that the sacrifices under the law should be considered as making atonement for sin, **Hebrews 10:5-9** "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." For in the counsel of God it is written that a body was to be prepared through miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a virgin, thereby fulfilling the promise of God that the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.

Now pointing out to these Jewish Christians that once Jesus Christ had offered himself unto God, in saying nevertheless not mine but thine. Paul then states that by His one sacrifice for sin forever, He then sat down on the right hand of God, for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, for no further offering was required, **Hebrews 10:12-14** "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Jesus Christ as the testator of the New Testament is able to enact its promises, that being of God's salvation in the hearts and minds of men and women, **Hebrews 10:15-17** "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

Jesus Christ's salvation is based on Better Promises, for He is faithful that promised, therefore we come with boldness into the presence of God by a new and living way, with full assurance in our hearts, **Hebrews 10:19-23** "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised:)" As we now have a High Priest over the House of God, Jesus Christ we can come with full assurance of faith, knowing that God will accept us and hear us when we call because the

sin question in our lives has been dealt with, as our hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience. Paul encourages these Jewish Christians to hold fast for He is faithful that promised and we should encourage each other for it is easy to slip in these final days when evil abounds, **Hebrews 10:24-25** "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." For there is no going back from faith in Jesus Christ, as the Old Covenant with its canal rites and ordinances has been taken away **Hebrews 10:9** "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." Therefore if we sin willfully or deliberately and reject Jesus in fear of persecution, this wilful sin as spoken of here, for it is that of rejecting the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that person is in a dangerous state for there remains no more sacrifice for sin, for there was but one, which they now utterly reject, **Hebrews 10:26-29** "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

Paul calls on these Jewish Christians to call to remembrance those former days after they came to Christ and in their joy and enthusiasm for the gospel they endured great affliction and when I was in bonds you had compassion upon me at great personal costs to yourselves, **Hebrews 10:32-34** "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Therefore they should not cast away their confidence, but be patience for after having done the will of God they will receive the promise, **Hebrews 10:35-38** "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." We that have come to faith in Jesus Christ and believing He is a rewarder of those who seek Him, thereby live by faith and Paul then goes on to explain that faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, for by faith their elders, the fathers or ancients of Israel received witness or bear record, that their faith was not misplaced, but God in their midst brought matters to their fulfilment or pass, **Hebrews 11:1-3** "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Paul tells them without faith it is impossible to please God, **Hebrews 11:6** "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," and he then lists those of Israel, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, **Hebrews 11:33-35** "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:"

Having listed a great number of the saints who endured through faith and won many victories, Paul points out to these Jewish Christians they have no excuses for they are surrounded by a great cloud of witness therefore they should look unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith who for the joy set before Him endure the shame of the cross and is set down at the right hand of God, **Hebrews 12:1-2** "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." They are encouraged to consider Jesus who endured such enmity and opposition of

every kind against himself, lest they think they have it difficult with the persecution they are experiencing at the present time, because they have not had to resist with the threat of their life against sin, **Hebrews 12:3-4** *“For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.”* Paul encourages them and tells them that they have not come to Mount Zion, **Hebrews 12:18** *“For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.”* which might be touched, i.e. a tangible/physical presence and it burned with fire, it was a fearful sight, and of which Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake, **Hebrews 12:21** *“And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:”*

Paul tells them they have come unto Mount Zion the city of the living God, **Hebrews 12:22-24** *“But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel,”* and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling which speaks of better things than the blood of Abel, for Abel's blood cry's out for vengeance from the ground where it was spilt by Cain his brother, but Jesus blood says, **Luke 23:34** *“Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”* Paul encourages them to continue in brotherly love and not to forget to entertain strangers, as they may entertain angels unawares and to remember those who have the rule over them and the words they have spoken unto you and not to be carried away with strange foods as if they were still under the Law, as we have an altar at which they have no right to eat, **Hebrews 13:10-14** *“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.”* Jesus was cast aside by the Jewish leaders and suffered outside the camp or gathering of the earthly tabernacle and he bore the reproach of sinners, and so we like Him have no continuing city or dwelling place here but we look for one to come.

Prepared by Pastor Colin Wilkinson