

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

- 20. Jesus said that His way was straight, but here we are told to make straight paths for our feet.
- 21. A few angels comprise witnesses to our Christian life.
- 22. God may be called Father, for He is the Father of spirits.
- 23. Sanctification is essential to see the Lord.
- 24. The blood of Jesus is a blood of sprinkling that speaks better than that of Abel.
- 25. Weariness is generally thought of as fleshly, but we are exhorted to not grow weary, fainting in our souls.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWELVE

This chapter brings to a grand climax the final appeal to approach God with a true heart in a fully assured faith which began in 10:19. It was continued through Chapter Eleven, which shows God's approval on men whose faith was expressed in obedience, caused them to endure trials and enabled them to win victories.

Chapter Twelve opens with the well-known figure of the athletic games by which the relation of the Christian to the heroes of the faith is explained. It proceeds with an explanation of the purpose of chastisement, and appeals to the Christian to pursue peace and purity, without which no man shall see the Lord.

The climax of the appeal to approach God is given in the contrast between Israel's fearful experience at Sinai and the Christian's joyous relationship to God under the new covenant which began at Mount Zion.

The chapter closes with a final warning to those who have received the kingdom that cannot be shaken; to heed and serve Him, "for our God is a consuming fire."

IV. *Final exhortation regarding duties pertaining to the Truth.*
13:1-25.

A. *Social duties.* 13:1-7.

Text

13:1-7

1 Let love of the brethren continue. 2 Forget not to show love unto strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. 3 Remembering them that are in bonds, as bound with them; them that are ill-treated, as being yourselves also in

the body. 4 Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. 5 Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. 6 So that with good courage we say,

The Lord is my Helper; I will not fear:
What shall man do unto me?

7 Remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the Word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith.

Paraphrase

1 Let that brotherly love, for which I commended you, continue to be exercised by you to all the disciples of Christ, whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

2 Do not neglect to entertain strangers, though unacquainted with them, for thereby some have had the happiness to entertain angels, without knowing they entertained angels.

3 By your prayers and good offices assist them who are in bonds for their religion, as equally liable to be bound for that good cause; and them who suffer any kind of evil, as being yourselves also in the body, subject to adversity.

4. In opposition to the notions of the Essenes, let marriage be esteemed an honourable state among all ranks, and let adultery be avoided. For fornicators and adulterers, though not punished by men, God will severely punish, as invaders of their neighbour's dearest rights.

5 However poor ye may be, show no immoderate love of money in your dealings; being contented with what things ye have. In every difficulty rely on God. For, when he ordered Joshua to conduct the Israelites, He Himself said, (Josh. 1:5), 'As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee, I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.'

6 So that when afflicted, but especially when persecuted, taking courage, we may say with the Psalmist, (Psal. 118:6. LXX.), The Lord is my Helper, and I will not be afraid of any evil that man can do to me in opposition to Him.

7 Remember your teachers who have preached to you the Word of God; of whose conversation attentively considering the

ending, imitate their faith in the doctrines, and precepts, and promises of the Gospel, that when ye end your conversation, ye may be supported as they were.

Comment

Let love of the brethren continue

This sounds as though brotherly love characterized them,

- a. This is true. See Heb. 6:10-11.
- b. They must have been strong on the "social gospel" and weak in other ways.
1. In 5:11 they were dull of hearing, were in need of teaching.
2. The many exhortations to lay hold, press on, etc., are indications of a special need.

This virtue characterized the early Hebrew church. See Acts 2:44-47; 12:5-12:15:22, 25.

forget not to show love unto strangers

What does "love" mean if strangers are to receive it?

- a. This was a command for Jews in the Old Testament. Lev. 19:34.
1. The Hebrews would therefore understand what was meant.
2. This just reminds them to not neglect it.
- b. It probably meant the exercise of love which all owe to all men. II Pet. 1:7.

There is no honor to us if we love only those that love us. See Matt. 5:43-46.

- a. The church will grow when strangers, visitors, now Christians, are warmed with the friendly helpfulness of Christians.
- b. The world needs love, for there is so much of bitterness and strife in the world.

for thereby some have entertained angels unawares

Instances of it are found in the visit to Abraham and Lot.

- a. Calvin and Milligan agree to this.
- b. See Gen. 18:2-10; 19:1-3.

Our guests may often be messengers sent to us from God for our special benefit.

remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them that are illtreated, as being yourselves also in the body

The people had been in bonds themselves at one time. See 10:32-34.

- a. These people at that time had remembered one another. 10:34.
- b. The possibility of them forgetting others in bonds must have been a possibility now that their days were easier.
- c. Perhaps these people were the strangers, for to their own countrymen they had been so helpful in the past.
Ill treatment was often displayed in that day.
- a. Romans were known for their cruelty to their children and to their slaves.
 1. All slaves were slain if the master were slain by a slave.
 2. A story is reported of a master who killed a slave so that a guest could see the spectacle of a dying man.
 3. Another Roman fed his fish with the mutilated body of a slave.
- b. The early church received severe persecutions.
 1. The Jews were cruel, as seen by Stephen's treatment.
 2. The Romans were severe, as seen by Nero and others.
"As being yourselves also in the body," suggests identifying one's self with them as the Golden Rule suggests. Luke 6:31.

Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

- "Let marriage be had in honor among all" suggests that is a state that should be revered.
- a. God instituted marriage by providing Eve for Adam.
 - b. The conduct of married people to each other is suggested often in the New Testament.
 1. Eph. 5:22-28: Subjection of the wife is in order.
 2. I Cor. 7:1-5: A clean marriage state.
 3. I Pet. 3:1-7: The wife is to be honored.
 - c. Celibacy is advocated by some as though marriage is not honorable.
 1. If it is to be honored by all, it is honorable for all.
 2. Fornication is a disregard for marriage, and adultery is a defilement of marriage.
God will judge those guilty of defiling the honorable marriage relationship with fornication and adultery.
 - a. It was a sin that brought capital punishment in the Old Testament. See Lev. 20:10.
 - b. The New Testament indicates that people guilty of this will be in hell. I Cor. 6:9; Rev. 2:22.

Be ye free from the love of money

It is "a root of all kinds of evil" when it is loved. I Tim. 6:10.

- a. It causes people to lie, steal, cheat, commit murder.
- b. It causes people to hope for the death of those leaving money to them as an inheritance.
- c. It corrupted the temple in Jerusalem. John 2:14; Matt. 21:12.
- d. It kept the rich young ruler from Jesus.
This section has an alternate translation.
 - a. "Let your conversation be without covetousness."
 - b. Let your mind be free.
The passage in all translations teaches us to avoid a covetous life.
- a. Men with money are sometimes possessed of it.
- b. Money only seems to bring contentment.

content with such things as ye have

Paul gave us an example of this in his own life.

- a. In Phil. 4:12 he said he knew how to be abased.
- b. Paul gave up everything for Christ.
It is not a destruction of ambition or legal endeavor as seen by other passages. See Rom. 12:11: "In diligence not slothful." Also Eph. 4:28; II Thess. 3:11. We are not to be like animals reaching across a fence for grass no greener than we deserve.

for Himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee

Deut. 31:6 is probably the source of this quotation.

- a. Similar expressions are found in Josh. 1:5; I Chr. 28:20.
- b. This, says Milligan, became a proverbial saying among the Hebrews because of its consolation.
This is a sentiment expressed by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. Matt. 6:25-30.

neither will I in any wise forsake thee

This was conditional, however, for those who would not forsake God.

- a. Israel found God forsaking them in the day of provocation.
- b. We have no right to expect God to reward us for unfaithfulness. Jesus promised to be with us even unto the end of the world if we preach the Gospel. Matt. 28:18-20.

so that with good courage we say, The Lord is my Helper

We may speak confidently that the Lord is our Helper.

- a. The word "we" appears often in this book.
- b. We do not need to understand that Paul had an assistant author.
- c. Anyone who has faith can make the statement.
"The Lord is my helper" is an expression of faith. Ps. 118:6 is quoted, but observe that in the original Psalm it is translated, "The Lord is on my side."
- a. Milligan says this was one of the collection of hymns that was sung at the close of the feast of tabernacles.
- b. Paul expressed the same thought: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. 8:31.

I will not fear: what shall man do unto me?

This verse does not suggest that man will never do man bodily harm.

- a. David knew differently.
- b. Paul knew differently; so did these brethren, for they had been afflicted.

The idea is, "What can man do that God cannot undo?"

- a. Man can bring pain, but God will give us a body that knows no pain.
- b. Man can kill, but God can make alive.

remember them that had the rule over you

This very likely refers to such men as Stephen, James, the brother of John, and other faithful preachers.

- a. These men had preached the gospel to the Hebrews.
- b. Actually it means "those leading you."

Newell suggests that the Greek word means "to go before," which suggests it was their work, not an office.

- a. There were no bosses in the early church, such as Popes, etc.
- b. These men were leaders because of work.

men that spake unto you the Word of God

Paul once was spoken of as the chief speaker, Acts 14:12, and the same Greek word appears here.

There were others who spoke. Acts 14:12

The elders also were responsible to speak. I Tim. 5:17; Acts 20:28-31.

and considering the issue of their life

In Greek, "the manner of their life."

- a. Blessed is a people who have a leader whose good life is worthy of consideration.
- b. These leaders had been unmoved in their hours of trial.
- c. Their lives were like Abraham of old — lived in faith. Something was to be learned from their leaders.

imitate their faith

Faith — can it be imitated?

- a. It is all that should be imitated.
 - b. Imitate faith, not mannerisms.
 - c. Imitate their method with God.
 - d. Imitate their reliance, confidence in God.
- In all other respects we must imitate God. Eph. 5:1: Imitation of God as beloved children.

Study Questions

2765. Characterize the 13th chapter.
2766. What may we assume characterized the Hebrew brethren by v. 1?
2767. Does Hebrews 6:10-11 verify this?
2768. Did they major on the "social gospel" and fall short in other respects? Cf. 5:11.
2769. What verses in Acts show that the Hebrews loved one another?
2770. What did the Jerusalem church require of Paul at the Jerusalem Conference?
2771. What is meant by "show love unto strangers"? Is it possible?
2772. Were the Hebrews consistent in their love?
2773. Who would "strangers" be?
2774. How would the Jews know who was meant? Cf. Lev. 19:34.
2775. Compare II Pet. 1:7, as it includes "all men."
2776. Is there any honor in loving those who love us? Cf. Matt. 5:43-46.
2777. Explain "have entertained angels unawares."
2778. Who could be included in the word "some"?
2779. Compare Gen. 18:2-10; 19:1-3.
2780. Who could be referred to as being "in bonds"?

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2781. Had the Hebrews ever been in bonds?
2782. What is meant by, "as bound with them"?
2783. What would such identification do?
2784. Was cruelty, ill treatment, common in that day?
2785. What does the author teach concerning marriage?
2786. How do we know marriage is to be revered?
2787. What is meant by the word "honor"?
2788. Give other verses of scripture that speak of married conduct. Cf. Eph. 5:22-27; I Cor. 7:1-5.
2789. Does celibacy teach that marriage is honorable for all?
2790. Were the apostles married?
2791. What is meant by, "God will judge"?
2792. How serious a sin was adultery in the Old Testament?
2793. What is the difference between fornication and adultery?
2794. Is it serious today? I Cor. 6:9; Rev. 2:22.
2795. How could Jesus allow remarriage in the case of adultery?
2796. If adulterers are not killed under our law, is it less serious with God now?
2797. Why are we exhorted to be free of the "love of money"?
2798. Show instances of corrupted people in the New Testament.
2799. What does love of money cause today?
2800. If it causes murder, jealousy, envy, thefts, kidnapping, etc., is it not a very dangerous sin?
2801. How is this verse translated by some?
2802. Is the meaning the same?
2803. Does contentment destroy ambition?
2804. What is our attitude to be toward our possessions or lack of them?
2805. Compare Paul in this regard. Phil. 4:12.
2806. Is this verse against ambition? Cf. Rom. 12:11; Eph. 4:28; II Thess. 3:11.
2807. Where is this verse quoted?
2808. Did Jesus express this sentiment?
2809. What consolation does he give for those in need?
2810. Did God place any condition on it?
2811. Did He ever forsake the Hebrews?
2812. Did Jesus promise to be with us? Cf. Matt. 28:18-20.
2813. Does verse 6 suggest a double authorship?
2814. How is the Lord our Helper?

2815. What may be the source of the expression, "The Lord is on my side"?
2816. Does this verse suggest that God will not allow man to suffer ill treatment?
2817. Can God undo everything that man does to the body?
2818. What is implied by "remember"?
2819. Who had the rule over them?
2820. Who are the rulers referred to in verse 7?
2821. What seemed to constitute the rule?
2822. Were they leaders, or bosses?
2823. Who might they have seen?
2824. Who spoke the word in the early church?
2825. Besides remembering, what were they to consider?
2826. Define "issue of their life."
2827. What does he recommend to imitate?
2828. How can you imitate faith?

B. Doctrine and worship. 13:8-16.

Text

13:8-16

8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and forever. 9 Be not carried away by divers and strange teachings; for it is good that the heart be established by grace; not by meats, wherein they that occupied themselves were not profited. 10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat that serve the tabernacle. 11 For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned without the camp. 12 Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate. 13 Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. 14 For we have not here an abiding city, but we seek after the city which is to come. 15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to His name. 16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Paraphrase

8 Jesus Christ, yesterday and today, is the same powerful, gracious, and faithful Saviour, and will continue to be so forever.

9 Be not tossed about with discordant and foreign doctrines,

taught by unauthorized teachers, concerning the efficacy of the Levitical sacrifices: For it is good that your courage in suffering and death be established on God's free pardon of sin through the sacrifice of Christ, and not on the Levitical sacrifices made of animals designed for meats, by which they have not been profited in respect of pardon who continually offer them.

10 That ye must not seek the pardon of sin through the sacrifices of animals appointed for meat, ye may know by this, that we have a sacrifice for sin of which they have no right to eat, who, to obtain pardon, worship in the tabernacle with the sacrifices of eatable animals appointed for sin-offerings.

11 This was showed figuratively in the law: For of those animals whose blood is brought as a sin-offering into the holy places by the high-priest, the bodies are burnt without the camp as things unclean, of which neither the priests nor the people were allowed to eat.

12 Therefore Jesus also, who was typified by these sin-offerings, that He might be known to sanctify the people of God with His own blood presented before the throne of God in heaven as a sin-offering, suffered without the gate of Jerusalem, as the bodies of the sin-offerings were burnt without the camp.

13 Well then, let us go forth, after His example, from the city of our habitation to the place of our punishment, bearing the reproach laid on Him; the reproach of being malefactors.

14 The leaving our habitation, kindred, and friends, need not distress us; for we have not here an abiding city, but we earnestly seek one to come; namely, the city of the living God, of which I spake to you, Chap. 12:22.

15 And though persecuted by our unbelieving brethren, through Him, as our High-priest, let us offer up the sacrifice of praise continually to God for His goodness in our redemption, namely the fruit of our lips, by confessing openly our hope of pardon through Christ, to the glory of God's perfections.

16 But, at the same time, to do good works, and to communicate of your substance to the poor, do not forget; for with such sacrifices God is especially delighted. See Phil. 4:18.

Comment

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and forever

Jesus Christ is the same, for there is no need for him to change.

- a. He is the same in His love and His saving power.
- b. The Christ that sits at God's right hand is as immutable as the Father Who promised Abraham.
Yesterday He came from the Father to do the will of God and finished it. Today He serves as Priest before God on man's behalf.
- a. He has not changed in His attitude toward sin.
- b. He hates evil and loves man as always.
- c. Some try to define the time element, when today began, but this is beside the point.
"Yea and forever" refers to the ages.
- a. This is for the eternity to come.
- b. Change with us is constant, but our Lord is wonderfully perfect.
- c. Perfection cannot change for the better.

Be not carried away by divers and strange teachings

The Christian has Christ Who is unchanging truth; therefore, He should avoid all other teachings.

- a. Those who have latter day revelations always conflict with other latter day teachers as well as with the scripture.
- b. God's revealed Word is able to furnish us completely, so what more can a strange teaching do? See II Tim. 3:15-17.
If we are anchored in Christ we will not be carried like a ship into a sea of false doctrine, with waves of error. Paul warns about winds of doctrines. Eph. 4:14.

for it is good that the heart be established by grace

The heart of man by the grace of God may be established.

- a. This is in contrast to the worldly ones who are drifting, shifting, to one pleasure, doctrine, etc.
- b. Strange doctrines, foreign to the truth, will never establish one.
This verse suggests the anchoring of the soul, as seen in Chapter Six.

not by meats, wherein they that occupied themselves were not profited.

This refers to the meats used in sacrifices, which no longer is a method for atonement.

- a. Christ was the perfect Sacrifice, made once and for all, so no other sacrifice is needed.

- b. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, says Paul in Rom. 14:17. Only one sacrifice profits the sinner, and that is Christ's.

We have an altar

What is our altar? Several opinions are listed here.

- a. Some say that this is a general statement, and no particular thing is meant. It is only imagery.
- b. Christ is the altar, some say.
- c. Others suggest the Lord's table.
- d. Some say the heavenly place where Christ offers the virtue of His own blood.
- e. The cross on which Christ was crucified is suggested.
- f. It signifies the divine nature of Christ on which the human nature is supposed to have been offered.
- g. One suggests it refers to the one in the old tabernacle. Christ is in no place called an altar, neither is the cross.
- a. The altar was the place where the victim was placed, so what could be referred to but the cross?
- b. It is the cross where blood was shed for the remission of our sins.
- c. Very likely he does not refer to the Christian at all. The author is referring to an Old Testament altar, for the next expression has no meaning otherwise.

whereof they have no right to eat that which serve the tabernacle.

If the altar was the Lord's table, this would be a good proof for closed communion. This is an allusion to the Old Testament custom.

- a. Those who served the tabernacle could eat of the sacrifices.
- b. The exception was on the Day of Atonement. The bodies which gave the blood carried into the Holy of holies were burned without the camp. See Lev. 6:26, 30; 4:7, 18, 21; 16:15, 27, 28.

These animals were not eaten for meat as were others.

For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin are burned without the camp.

Other animals were consumed for food. See I Cor. 9:13; I Cor. 10:18. The great sacrifice on the Day of Atonement was burned outside the camp. Leviticus 16:27.

Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered without the gate

Jesus was not offered in the temple at Jerusalem, but outside the city wall.

- a. His blood was taken into the heavenly sanctuary, so He fits the type completely except for the burning.
- b. The burning had nothing to do with the atonement, for it is the blood that atones.

Those who retain the old sacrifice in preference to this of Christ lose the sanctification in Christ's blood.

Let us therefore go forth unto Him

Going is our responsibility; the sacrifice awaits. We must leave the tabernacle to follow Jesus Christ.

- a. If no atonement is in the blood of bulls and goats, why stay in the shadow of the tabernacle?
- b. Out on the hill of Calvary is the place for the sinner to go.

without the camp.

The types of Hebrews are those of the tabernacle, and this alludes to the sacrifice without the camp.

Newell says "it refers to all those religious developments by whatever name called. It reveals where Christ is and His followers are, as to this world and its religions."

Christ went out of the city of Jerusalem to be sacrificed. This is nearer the truth than Newell's idea.

bearing His reproach

The Christian is not promised an easy time, but reproach should be expected.

- a. It is prophesied, II Tim. 3:12, by Paul.
- b. Jesus said it would come to His disciples. John 16:2.

The first Christian martyr suffered for the reproach of Christ outside the city.

for we have not here an abiding city

If we stay in Jerusalem, it will be dissolved like all the world. II Pet. 3:8-13; Matt. 24. We must turn our eyes from our cities, for they are only temporary.

Something Paul had in mind, the destruction of Jerusalem, which came about nine years afterward.

but we seek after the city which is to come

Revelation speaks of that city. Rev. 21.

Peter speaks of it in II Pet. 3:8-13.

The author has previously spoken of it in 11:10 and 16.

Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually

Instead of frequent sacrifices like the Jew, let us offer our sacrifice through Jesus Christ.

- a. We need no order of priests who blasphemously undertake to do that work for men which Christ has done.
- b. This sacrifice is praise to God, not a begging for a forgiveness. Peter comments on the Christian's sacrifice, I Pet. 2:5. "Continually" is a good word. The kingdom of Christ has no sacred days or season, no special sanctuaries, for God is approached always through Christ. "Sacrifice of praise" most men feel alludes to the Levitical term for thank-offering. See Lev. 7:12, 15.

*that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to His name
Whose name?*

- a. We praise God continually, so a confession is surely in order.
- b. Many verses suggest confessing Christ, so likely His name is meant here. Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10.

In a world pressing on to judgment, glorying in men, let us rejoice, praise God, for who would want to neglect so great a salvation?

But to do good and to communicate forget not

Doing good, helping others, will come naturally with a life of continual praise. See Rom. 12:13; Gal. 6:6; Heb. 6:10; Ps. 50:23. Jesus set the proper example before us, for he went about doing good. Acts 10:38.

This is an essential factor in salvation. Matt. 25:34-46.

for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

There are three reasons why it is pleasing:

- a. God works in harmony with God's nature.
- b. It indicates a good state of mind.
- c. It is beneficial to others.

If we wish to sacrifice to God, we must pray to God and serve our fellow man.

Study Questions

2829. How can Jesus be considered the same always?
2830. Has He changed in character?
2831. Has His work changed?
2832. What are the three time elements named?
2833. Why is the author declaring this great truth?
2834. Were the changing Hebrews being challenged to follow the unchanging Christ?
2835. If perfection were changed, what would be its condition?
2836. If Christ is Truth, what results when people follow other teachers?
2837. What is meant by "carried away"?
2838. What is meant by "divers"?
2839. Why do people go to strange doctrines?
2840. Are such warnings few in the Word of God?
2841. What will keep a person from drifting into strange doctrines?
2842. What is meant by "established"?
2843. In what should we be established?
2844. How can grace do it?
2845. What is it that is to be established?
2846. Could the establishing idea be similar to the anchoring referred to in Chapter Six?
2847. What does the author say that cannot establish us?
2848. What is meant by meats?
2849. If Christ's sacrifice is sufficient, is there further need for sacrifices?
2850. What is meant by "occupied themselves"?
2851. Who may be referred to by the expression, "occupied themselves"?
2852. State some explanations for the expression, "we have an altar."
2853. What is our altar? Who is meant by "our"?
2854. Could he be pointing out the weakness of the Jewish altar rather than suggesting a Christian altar?
2855. Give weaknesses of each.
2856. Who could eat what?
2857. What tabernacle is referred to?
2858. Could the priests eat the sacrifices?
2859. When could they not eat?

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2860. Could he be saying, "They who serve earthly tabernacles have no right to the Christian's altar"?
2861. What was done with animals sacrificed on the Day of Atonement that differed from sacrifices on other days?
2862. What is meant by, "without the camp"?
2863. Do we have any clue for this request?
2864. Is our sacrifice eaten?
2865. Show the similarities between the Old Testament sin offering and our sin offering.
2866. What is meant by, "suffered without the gate"?
2867. Where was Jesus offered?
2868. Where was His blood taken?
2869. Give scriptures that teach that His blood was considered to be taken into heaven.
2870. Does the burning of the Old Testament type serve as a type of Christ?
2871. Did the burning have anything to do with the sacrifice?
2872. Where does he exhort the Christians to go?
2873. Can we have the merit if we do not go?
2874. Do we go to the tabernacle or to the hill of Calvary?
2875. What camp is referred to?
2876. Explain "bearing His reproach."
2877. Can we ever bear reproaches?
2878. Did Jesus prophesy reproaches for His followers?
2879. What city is referred to?
2880. Do you think he refers specifically to the city of Jerusalem?
2881. Was he prophesying the destruction of Jerusalem?
2882. Is he speaking of Jews here as in 13:7 when he says we have an altar?
2883. What will happen to any city of the world according to II Peter?
2884. How soon was Jerusalem destroyed after this text?
2885. Identify the city to come. What do we know about it?
2886. Who is meant by the expression "by Him"?
2887. How can we offer up sacrifices?
2888. Do we need an earthly priest?
2889. What kind of a sacrifice are we to offer?
2890. Is this to be periodic?
2891. Is this room for complaint in this sacrifice?
2892. For what should we praise God?

2893. Could it allude to the Levitical thank offering? Lev. 7:12, 15
2894. What is to be the fruit of our lives?
2895. Whose Name is to be confessed?
2896. What part does confession have in the praise?
2897. Should we consider confession of faith as a step of salvation never to be taken again?
2898. Will we have time to glory in men if we are praising God as we should?
2899. Who is our great example in doing good?
2900. Will this be natural for us if we are Christ-like?
2901. Compare other verses, such as Rom. 12:13; Gal. 6:6; Heb. 6:10.
2902. Is it essential to salvation? See Matt. 25:34-46.
2903. What do you understand by "communicate"?
2904. What does he conclude about this kind of service?
2905. Has he stated that service is twofold — one to God and one to others?

C. Obedience to elders. 13:17.

Text
13:17

17 Obey them that have rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief; for this were unprofitable for you.

Paraphrase

17 Follow the directions of your spiritual guides, and submit yourselves to their admonitions, for they watch over your behaviour for the good of your souls, as those who must give account to God. Obey them, therefore, that they may do this with joy, as having promoted your salvation, and not with mourning on account of your forwardness; for that would be unprofitable for you, ending in your condemnation.

Comment

Obey them that have the rule over you

Beyond any question, this is spiritual rule, for "watch over souls" suggests this.

- a. Rulers no doubt refers to rulers in the church for it is unlikely that Christian magistrates existed in government.

- b. Good elders, no doubt, are meant, for elders are to rule. Acts 20:28-31; I Tim. 5:17; I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14-15; I Pet. 5:1-4.

Verse 7 indicates former rulers had passed on, and now present rulers are to be obeyed. If elders are qualified, the members will be glad to obey.

and submit to them

Submission rather than resistance, rebellion, and strife is enjoined.

- a. A church can't go forward with elders going in one direction and the membership trying to go another.
- b. Of course not every elder is qualified to rule.
Many problems arise when churches carelessly elect unqualified leaders and then refuse to follow, or follow carelessly.

for they watch in behalf of your souls

This pictures the ideal ruler. Paul told the Ephesian elders what to expect of false teachers who would seek to destroy the flock. Acts 20:29. The care of souls is a sacred trust.

as they shall give account

This makes it serious.

- a. James 3:1: "Be not many of you teachers" is a serious warning.
- b. Ezek. 3:18-21 suggests the watchman must give account.

that they may do this with joy

It is a joy to be a leader of a devoted church.

- a. See III John 4. John expressed it, "There is no greater joy."
- b. Paul urges the Thessalonians to be faithful, for they were his joy. I Thess. 2:19-20.
There should be no joy in our heart if we stand in the way of joy in the heart of a righteous elder.

and not with grief

Grief, sorrow, heartache should not be brought on by Christian people into the lives of men who have the care of souls. If the Jerusalem church had different sentiments about the efficacy of the Levitical sacrifices, no doubt much grief was had or would be experienced.

for this were unprofitable for you

This rather suggests that evil would come upon trouble-makers.

- a. Note that strife, contention, etc., are named among the fruits of the flesh. Gal. 5:17-21.
- b. Division is condemned in I Cor. 1:10.

It would no doubt be more unfortunate for the trouble-maker than the troubled one. No reward from God is in store for the troubler.

Study Questions

2906. What rulers are referred to in this verse? How do you know?
2907. If elders are of the right kind, should we not expect to obey them?
2908. Whose fault is it if rulers do not watch after souls?
2909. What verses teach us that elders are to rule?
2910. What would be the opposite of "submit"?
2911. Why should we submit to them?
2912. Would unqualified men watch over souls?
2913. Should elders take their work lightly? Cf. Ezek. 3:18-21.
2914. Is there joy for the faithful shepherd?
2915. How did John feel about it? III John 4.
2916. Did Paul have joy in his concern?
2917. Is much of the grief in a church brought on by believers who are not wholly consecrated?
2918. Are trouble-makers in the church condemned by scripture?
2919. Are there trouble-makers who do right? Is the Christian to keep silent under all circumstances?

D. *Request for prayers.* 13:18-19.

Text 13:18-19

18 Pray for us: for we are persuaded that we have a good conscience, desiring to live honorably in all things. 19 And I exhort you the more exceedingly to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Paraphrase

18 Pray for me: For, though ye may dislike my doctrine set forth in this letter, I am certain, in teaching it, I have maintained a good conscience, having delivered it to you faithfully; willing in all things to behave suitably to my character as an inspired teacher.

19 And I the more earnestly beseech you to pray for me, that through the help of God I may be restored to you the sooner.

Comment

Pray for us: for we

Who is "us"?

- a. Many apostles and evangelists were known by the Hebrews, and they should pray for them.
- b. With four commentaries before me, no one suggests who might be included, except Milligan who suggests the above. A request for prayer is common with Paul. Eph. 6:18-19; I Thess. 5:25; II Thess. 3:1; Rom. 15:30; II Cor. 1:11; Philemon 22.

are persuaded that we have a good conscience, desiring to live honorably in all good things

The integrity of his own conscience is used to move them to feel an interest in him.

"Persuaded," Calvin feels, suggests modesty.

The author's desire to live righteously in all things called for their help.

And I exhort you the more exceedingly to do this

This is an urgent request by one who knew they knew his needs. The faith the man had in prayer here shows that he felt God was able to act providentially on behalf of man.

that I may be restored to you the sooner

This suggests that troubles, persecution, or perhaps imprisonment detained him. Timothy's difficulty, verse 23, may be the factor that kept the author from being in their midst.

Was Paul ever a part of the Hebrew brethren?

- a. This verse suggesting "restoration" challenges Pauline authorship for me.
- b. Paul generally is associated with Antioch and Gentiles.

Study Questions

2920. "Pray for us" refers to whom?
 2921. How does this knock the authorship anonymous theory?
 2922. Is it possible to live honorably in all evil things?
 2923. How may we live righteously or honorably?
 2924. How does the restoration of the author affect Pauline authorship?
 2925. Was Paul ever a part of the fellowship of the Hebrew brethren?
 E. Prayer for them. 13:20-21.

Text

13:20-21

20 Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus, 21 make you perfect in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Paraphrase

20 Now may God the Author of all happiness, who to save mankind brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus the great Shepherd of the sheep, may He, through the blessings procured by the blood whereby the new covenant, which is never to be changed, was ratified.

21 Prepare you for every good work, to do what He has commanded, producing in you every disposition acceptable in His sight, through the doctrine and assistance of Jesus Christ, to Whom be ascribed the glory of our salvation, forever and ever. Amen.

*Comment**Now the God of peace*

Isaiah 9:6 speaks of Christ as "Prince of Peace." All peace comes from God through Jesus Christ.

This expression comes only from Paul. See Phil. 4:9; I Cor. 14:33; Rom. 16:20; Rom. 15:33; II Cor. 13:11; I Thess. 5:23.

Who brought again from the dead

This is true of God, even though Jesus said He would raise

Himself up. John 10:18. The resurrection of Jesus was a bodily resurrection, for no proof can be given of any other kind. See Rom. 6:4; Acts 13:30.

the great shepherd of the sheep

We have a great shepherd. Are we great sheep?

This title is given for two reasons.

- a. Ezekiel 34:23 prophesies him as such.
- b. Jesus claimed this title. John 10:11.
Other shepherds who lay down their life for their sheep cannot be brought back alive to the sheep.

with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus

The word "with" here is a problem.

- a. It is translated "by," "in," and "through."
- b. Calvin prefers "in," saying, "Christ so arose from the dead that his death was not yet abolished, but that it retains its efficacy forever, as though he had said, 'God raised up His Own Son,' but in such a way that the blood He shed once for all in His death is efficacious after His resurrection . . ." Commentators question whether this phrase goes with what appears before or after. The Lord is the great Shepherd by shedding His blood and yet being alive now to act.

make you perfect in every good thing

This is a benedictive prayer. God seeks to make us perfect in good things, and Christ is a perfect example. If we follow the great Shepherd, we will be led to perfection.

to do His will

Perfection cannot be attained in any other will. No work is acceptable unless it is in harmony with the will of God.

working in us

"Us is also translated "you."

Eph. 3:20 shows God able to work surprises in us.

God has no hands but our hands to do His work today, and through us He can accomplish His will.

that which is well pleasing in His sight

Phil. 2:13 is a good commentary here on God's part.

Rom. 12:2 suggests our part.

through Jesus Christ

Two senses are possible here:

- a. Working through Jesus Christ.
 - b. Well-pleasing through Jesus Christ.
- Nothing is acceptable unto God except that it be through Christ.

to Whom be the glory for ever and ever, Amen.

There is no room for bragging in the church, for all power is of God.

Grammatically, says Milligan, glory goes to God here; but doctrinally, it may refer to both God and Christ, as seen by Rom. 16:27 and II Pet. 3:18.

Study Questions.

2926. What is "exhortation"?
2927. Who is the Great Shepherd of verse 20?
2928. Name some verses that identify God as a God of peace.
2929. Is the sacrifice of Christ an attempt of God to bring peace to men?
2930. Is Jesus ever spoken of as a "shepherd"?
2931. Whose blood is spoken of in verse 20?
2932. What is meant by, "eternal covenant"?
2933. Does Paul expect perfection on the part of the Hebrews?
2934. Do we have an example of perfection?
2935. Through what person is perfection accomplished?
2936. Is perfection possible if we disregard Christ's commands?
2937. How does God work in us?
2938. What is required to live pleasing in His sight?
2939. Who is to receive glory in this verse?

F. *Exhortation.* 13:22.

Text

13:22

22 But I exhort you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation: for I have written unto you in few words.

Paraphrase

22 Now, fearing ye may be prejudiced against me, I beseech you, brethren, take in good part the instructions I have given you concerning the law and the Levitical institutions, and judge

candidly of them; the rather, because I have written to you but briefly concerning these subjects, considering their importance.

Comment

but I exhort you

Exhortation is not doctrine. They now have had doctrine; their need is to act. This book is doctrinal, but it is exhortation, for it holds up the greatness of God and His plan of salvation.

brethren, bear with the word of exhortation

Men are inclined to be slothful, so they should bear with stimulation. This great book of exhortation should keep them from shrinking back, from depending upon anything but Christ for salvation.

"Bear," translated "suffer," means to receive with feeling of kindness and forbearance.

for I have written unto you in few words

This book is quite lengthy, but for the scope of subject matter it is short. The length is about 10,000 words, but how brief in comparison with the "ten thousand things of the law." Hosea 8:12.

Study Questions

2940. How often does the author use the word "exhort" in Hebrews?
2941. Explain verse 22 when he says he has written in "few words"?
2942. What does his reference to Timothy do to the theory of authorship by Paul?
2943. Does it imply that Timothy's release may affect his own release?

G. *Information concerning Timothy* 13:23, 24.

Text

13:23, 24

23 Know ye that our brother Timothy hath been set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

Paraphrase

23 Know that my much respected brother Timothy is sent away by me into Macedonia, with whom, if he come back soon, I will pay you a visit: For I have ordered him to return to this place.

24 In my name, wish health to all your spiritual guides, and to all the Christians in Judea. The Christians of Italy, in token of their communion with you, wish you health.

Comment

Know ye that our brother Timothy hath been set at liberty

“Know ye” or “ye know” is a problem of language here.

- a. Calvin prefers the latter, feeling that Paul was informing them of Timothy’s liberty.
- b. Evidently he was not where the author was.
“Set at liberty” may suggest freedom from prison or sent away on an errand, says Milligan.
- a. In Phil. 2:19-24 we see Paul sending him on an errand.
- b. Timothy was never pictured in prison by Paul’s writings.

with whom if he come shortly I will see you

This verse definitely encourages the theory of Pauline authorship, although Paul’s freedom discourages it unless he had been set free. Calvin says if this Timothy was the renowned champion of Paul it is very probable that either Luke or Clement was the author of the epistle.

H. *Salutation*. 13:24.

Salute all them that have the rule over you and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

What is “salute”?

- a. Just as though he had said, “Give my kindest regards.”
- b. Christianity rejoins common and proper courtesies.
Were they to salute the rulers, or was Paul (the author) saluting them?
- a. They were to salute their leaders for Paul.
- b. Why didn’t Paul salute them directly if this be the case?
- c. Calvin thinks he has singled out the rulers as a mark of honor to conciliate them.

All of Italy suggests that the author was there, and those who hold to Pauline authorship say that this proves it.

- a. Observe, the footnote says, "the brethren of Italy."
- b. Some hold that he was elsewhere and meant the brethren from Italy.

Study Questions

2944. What is meant by the word "salute" in verse 24?
2945. Why didn't Paul salute the rulers?
2946. Does verse 24 indicate where the author was?
2947. What does Paul mean by, "Grace be with you"?
2948. How can grace be with us?

I. *Benediction.* 13:25.

Text

13:25

25 Grace be with you all. Amen.

Paraphrase

25 May the favour of God, and the assistance of His Spirit, be with you all. And in testimony of my sincerity in this wish, and in all the doctrines delivered in this letter, I say Amen.

Comment

Grace be with you all, Amen

This is a conclusion that is like Paul's, if not his.

- a. Compare these verses: Rom. 16:24; I Cor. 16:23; II Cor. 13:14; Gal. 6:18; Eph. 6:24; Phil. 4:23; Col. 4:18; I Thess. 5:28; II Thess. 3:18; I Tim. 6:21; II Tim. 4:22; Titus 3:15; Philemon 25.

Grace is a special favor; ill will is absent, and the author is free from all that is evil.

Multiple Choice Over Chapter Thirteen

1. We are told to not forget to show love to:
 1. The minister.
 2. Our friends.
 3. Strangers.

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

2. We are told to obey:
 1. Those that we love.
 2. Those whom we choose since we are free in Christ.
 3. Those who have the rule over us.
3. Marriage is:
 1. Not recommended for Christians.
 2. Honourable.
 3. A defiling thing.
4. One thing that we should let continue is:
 1. Brotherly love.
 2. Our conscience to our guide.
 3. The government.
5. Jesus sanctified the people:
 1. With His own blood.
 2. By His transfiguration.
 3. By His baptism.
6. Jesus Christ is:
 1. The same yesterday, today, and forever.
 2. No doubt growing, for on earth He increased in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man.
 3. Not to be expected soon.
7. We are warned to be not carried away with:
 1. Emotions.
 2. Strange doctrines.
 3. On a rocket ship.
 4. With everything we hear.
8. Let brotherly love:
 1. Be natural.
 2. Continue.
 3. Be practised only with brothers in Christ.
 4. Be shown toward those who love us.
9. The writer of the Hebrew letter states that Jesus was sacrificed:
 1. Without the camp or gate.
 2. Within the camp or gate.
 3. In the eternal city.
10. The experience of Timothy at the writing of this epistle was:
 1. He was set at liberty.
 2. About to be put to death.
 3. Was imprisoned.

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

11. Them that have the rule over you:
 1. Rebuke.
 2. Chasten.
 3. Obey.
12. The author states that he has written to them:
 1. In thirteen chapters.
 2. At great length.
 3. In few words.
13. Since a greeting from Italy is sent, we may assume:
 1. The book was written there.
 2. The Pope was anxious to include Hebrews.
 3. The author was a Roman.
14. The author says that he and those with him have:
 1. A good conscience.
 2. A right to demand an offering from them.
 3. A long ministry ahead.
15. The sacrifice suggested for us to make is the:
 1. Firstborn in our family.
 2. Our money.
 3. Our pride.
 4. The fruit of lips.
16. The chapter states that the heart be established by grace.
 1. Not by meats.
 2. For God gives faith.
 3. So we may be graceful.
17. The author states that:
 1. We have an altar.
 2. We have no need of an altar.
 3. The church is the altar.
18. The Great Shepherd of the sheep was:
 1. Brought forth as David, the shepherd boy.
 2. Brought forth from the dead.
 3. Nehemiah, who shepherded the Israelites back from Babylon.
 4. Moses, who shepherded the Israelites from Egypt.
19. The author believed in prayer, for he said pray for us that:
 1. I may go to Spain to preach.
 2. You may learn how to commune with God.
 3. I may be restored to you the sooner.
20. In showing love to strangers, some have:
 1. Gotten themselves into complications.

HELPS FROM HEBREWS

2. Had much money given to them.
3. Entertained angels unawares.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Book of Hebrews was directed toward those who were in danger of forsaking Christ for Judaism. It begins with the thought of the final revelation of God through His Son, Who is presented in His office as High Priest. His faithfulness, appointment, and ministry as High Priest are explained with constant appeal to be faithful to Him.

Chapter Thirteen is given over to the conclusion, summarizing various points and giving one more strong appeal to leave Judaism and take a firm stand with Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep. While urging Christians to leave Judaism, the opening verses of the chapter remind of virtues that were to continue. They had God's approval under the old covenant as well as under the new. The following are mentioned: (1) Brotherly love; (2) hospitality to strangers; (3) concern for the oppressed; (4) marriage as an institution to be held in honor; (5) trust in God as opposed to love of money.

The admonition to forsake Judaism and take a firm stand with Christ, begins with the appeal to remember those leaders who had spoken the word to them, as well as the ones watching over their souls. They were to imitate the faith of those who put their trust in Jesus Christ, Who is the same for all eternity. Consequently they are warned against being carried away with strange teachings about foods, etc., such as characterized much of Judaism. The plea is made to go out of the camp of Judaism to Christ who suffered outside the gate. Through Him make a sacrifice of praise to God. Submit to your leaders who watch over your souls.

The chapter closes with a request for prayer that the writer be restored to them, followed by the wonderful benediction which sums up the theme of the book about the great Shepherd of the sheep and the blood of the eternal covenant. The writer appeals for understanding as to the purpose of the brief epistle. He mentions Timothy and the hope of seeing them.

The closing word of greeting mentions their leaders (for the third time in the brief chapter) as well as all the saints. Those of Italy joined in the greetings.

A prayer closes the book: "Grace be with you all."