

Through the Bible - Hebrews - Part 4

by Zac Poonen

The New Covenant offers forgiveness and forgetfulness of our past sins, and enables us to know God personally and live according to His will.

Duration: 55:45

Scripture: Hebrews 8:12, Hebrews 9:3-4, Hebrews 10:10, Hebrews 10:19-20, Hebrews 13:6, Hebrews 13:8, Hebrews 13:17

Topics: "Sanctification", "Spiritual Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of striving against sin, just as Jesus did. He encourages the listeners to have an attitude of being willing to shed their blood rather than commit sin. The preacher also discusses the discipline of God and how it is for our good, even though it may not feel pleasant at the time. He urges the listeners to pursue peace with others and holiness, and warns against losing one's spiritual inheritance for temporary earthly gain. The sermon concludes with a reminder to be satisfied with what God provides and to not be envious of others, as God promises to never fail or forsake us.

Transcript

Let's turn to God's Word, the book of Hebrews again. We finished in our last session in Hebrews chapter 8, where we saw in the concluding verses of Hebrews 8, we saw in verses 10 to 12 the terms of the New Covenant. And let me just repeat them once again.

Let me start from the bottom with verse 12. The first thing about the New Covenant is, God says, I will not remember your sins anymore. In the Old Testament, there was a constant remembrance of sin.

We read that in chapter 7, they were always remembering sin. In chapter 9, rather, we read about it. But in the New Covenant, there is no remembrance of sin.

It's very important, if you've entered the New Covenant, one thing that you must accept is that God does not remember your past life against you. You may have been brought up in, I mean, you may have lived a very wicked life, but God sees you just like someone who was brought up in a very godly family, all his life he has lived godly. Sometimes people who have lived a very wicked life in the past and got converted, they feel that, well, I'm not as lucky as those other people who lived a very good life from childhood because they had godly parents.

Okay? That may be. But now that you're forgiven, God's put you in the same level. His past is not remembered, your past is not remembered.

What does it matter? What does it matter if he got 30% and you got zero? Those marks are wiped out. Your past record of the marks you got in old examinations is all wiped out. So there's no question of whether he got 30% or you got zero or somebody else got 50%.

All the marks are wiped out. We must not look back in the past. If you come into the New Covenant, you start in verse 12, the Lord says, I will not remember their sins anymore.

Secondly, the Lord says in verse 10, I will put my laws, verse 11, before that, all shall know me from the least to the greatest. Every person, and starting with the least, to the greatest. Now normally in the world we say greatest to least, right? But in the Bible, everything is the opposite of the world.

So we start with the least to the greatest. That means the least believer can know the Lord personally. You don't have to go to a prophet to find out God's will.

All shall know me personally. To know God personally as your friend, as your father, you can go to him and you don't have somebody else to teach you about God. Somebody may teach you about the Bible, that's another thing.

But to know God, you don't need a secretary or anyone. You go straight to Jesus. You don't have to go through another brother to know God.

All shall know me. So please remember, this is your privilege under the New Covenant. Every one of you can know God personally as a friend and as a father through Jesus, without the help of a single human being, personally.

To study the Bible, you may need the help of a teacher. But to know God, you don't need anybody's help. Nobody will teach his neighbor saying, know the Lord.

Thirdly, verse 10, God has promised to write his laws in our heart and in our mind. In the Old Testament, he wrote it on tablets of stone outside and says, you look at that and try to keep it. And they couldn't keep it.

Thou shalt, thou shalt, thou shalt not, thou shalt not and so on. They couldn't keep it. Now the Lord says, I will write it inside so that you automatically keep it.

You desire to keep it and you have the ability to keep it. There are two things. I will write it on your mind, means I'll give you the desire.

I will write it on your heart, means I'll give you the ability. You see, we need two things. First of all, I must have a desire to do God's will.

Second, I need the ability to do God's will. We read that in Philippians 2, verse 13, God works in us to will and to do his good pleasure. Same thing here.

It's written in other words, I will write my laws, I'll put my laws into their mind, that is to give them a desire to do God's will. And I will write it upon their hearts, which means I'll give them the power to do God's will. And if God gives me the desire to do his will and the power to do his will, I'm OK.

And that's his responsibility. Difference from the old covenant is, old covenant said thou shalt, thou shalt, thou shalt not. And the new covenant, God says, I will, I will, I will.

And when you read that and you still think that it is dependent on you, you're mistaken. It is dependent on us in the sense that we have to submit. Think of that rock in Mount Sinai, where God wrote the commandments, that rock had to submit.

When God wrote, rock said, OK, write and wrote. That is what our calling is. When God wants to do something, we submit.

Like Mary, she said, behold, the handmaid of the Lord, whatever you said, O angel, let it take place in me. She submitted. But God was the one who produced that baby in her womb.

Even if she tried for a million years, she could not have produced a baby in her womb. But at the same time, God would not have produced that baby in her womb if she did not submit. So that's the perfect example.

Mary submitted and God, the Holy Spirit, produced the baby. You submit and God, the Holy Spirit, produces the nature of Christ within you. In Mary, it was the body in which Jesus came.

In us, it is the nature of Jesus. So our part is not to produce it. Whenever you think of trying to make yourself holy, just think of Mary determining to have a baby.

How much determination did Mary need to produce a baby? She could never have produced it. The Holy Spirit had to do that. The New Covenant begins with that story.

The Holy Spirit did it, Mary submitted. Same thing is the New Covenant for you. The Holy Spirit will write, that is the finger of God, the finger of God is the Holy Spirit, will write his laws in your heart and in your mind, giving you the desire and the ability which you got to submit.

If you don't submit, it'll be just like Mary not submitting. What would have happened in Nazareth if the angel came to Mary and Mary said, sorry, I'm not willing for that. Do you think Jesus would not have been born? The angel would have said, okay Mary, you missed the privilege.

I'll have to look for another girl. And he finds another girl and says, okay, you're going to be the mother of Jesus. And she says, praise God.

So if you miss it, God will just give that privilege to somebody else. Don't miss it. Don't miss the privilege of the New Covenant.

We go now to chapter 9. And basically the theme of chapter 9 is the better sacrifice that God has provided for us. In the Old Testament it says, verse 8 of chapter 9, the Holy Spirit showed that the way into the most holy place was not yet opened. We saw in chapter 8, the last verse of chapter 8 says, the Old Covenant is becoming obsolete and is ready to disappear.

God is finished with the Old Covenant. Now there's a New Covenant. In the Old Covenant, God showed through the Holy Spirit, here's a thick veil.

You cannot enter into God's presence because there's sin in your life. When Jesus shed his blood, all our sin was removed. Then we could go into God's presence.

The veil has been torn. So we see from that, that it's the Holy Spirit alone who can lead us into the most holy place. And then you read this word, perfect.

I told you the other day that there's a perfection we can have and a perfection we cannot have. Here is the perfection we can have. Hebrews 9, 9. The Old Testament could not make a worshipper perfect in his conscience.

Perfect like Christ, that is in the future when he comes again. Perfect in our conscience, everybody who is in the New Covenant can experience that perfection. We press on to the second perfection with this perfection.

Perfect conscience up to perfect likeness to Christ, which is in the future. So when we speak about perfection, don't get afraid. The Bible speaks about it.

But it speaks about being perfect in our conscience. If you don't distinguish between things that the Bible distinguishes, you'll get confused. OK, he goes on to say in verse 14, how our conscience can be perfect.

If the blood of bulls and goats was enough for the cleansing of the flesh of man externally in the Old Covenant, verse 14, how much more will the blood of Jesus Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself to God. Now notice a simple, a little statement here. Let me ask you a question.

How did he offered himself to God without blemish? OK, we all agree. Jesus lived his entire earthly life for thirty three and a half years without even a single mistake, without a single sin, tempted in so many ways, no sin at all. What was the secret of his life? How did he do it? This verse gives us the answer.

Read it. Through the Holy Spirit. That little expression, through the eternal spirit.

It's through the Holy Spirit's power that Jesus remained without blemish. That means he lived as a man. He lived as a man in the power of the Holy Spirit and that power, by that power he did not sin.

And that's the same Holy Spirit he's given us. And if you use the Holy Spirit's power, you can also overcome sin. That person got electricity in his house and he can have lights.

You got electricity in the house, but until you put on the switch, you won't get the lights. He put on the switch. Jesus used that power.

You also use that power. You can have light instead of darkness in your life. Through the Spirit, he offered himself without blemish to God.

We also through the Spirit can offer ourselves pure to God. And if Jesus' blood, and therefore it says Jesus' blood can cleanse your conscience from dead works. Notice the expression again, dead works.

Works that appear holy, that appear righteous, but which cannot make you acceptable to God. To serve the living God. If you want to serve the living God, you got to get rid of all dead works from your life.

All works that appear good before people, but which are done without joy, without faith, with a wrong motive for some personal gain, without any zeal, without any fire. These are all dead works. Get rid of them.

Our works for God must be done with faith, with joy, with fire, for God's honor and not man's honor. Not to ease my conscience, but to please God. And get rid of every other work in my life which is a dead work.

Then only can I serve God, it says in verse 14. Further, verse 27 is a very important verse. It says that it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this comes the judgment.

Now, there's a beautiful truth we can all learn from this verse. You want to hear it? It's very simple, if you meditate on this verse, you learn something. What is that? When does God judge a man? The answer is there.

After he dies. When do you judge a man? Long before he dies. You see the difference between you and God? When you meditate on scripture, you learn something like that.

Why can't we all be a little more like God and say, well, he hasn't died yet, maybe he'll improve tomorrow, maybe he'll improve next week. God always has that hope. Okay, this fellow is bad today, but maybe by next week or next year or five years from now, he'll be better.

We don't give that fellow even one day, leave alone five years. God Almighty waits till a man dies, then judges. Let's follow his example, and we'll save ourselves a lot of unnecessary sin.

But it's true that once a man dies, there's no more escape, there's only judgment for him. And now we go to chapter 10. Chapter 10, it says here about the law being a shadow of the good things to come, which could never make perfect.

Notice again in verse 1, the last part, verse perfect. What was the fault with the old covenant? In one sentence, it could not make people perfect. What is the mark of people under the old covenant today? They are afraid of the word perfection.

What is the mark of the new covenant? It can make people perfect in their conscience, and help them to press on to perfection in their life, till one day they become like Jesus. That is the new covenant. And if you are serious about the new covenant, you will never again be afraid of the word perfection.

You will long to be perfect. If you have no longing to be perfect, I'd say you're still back under the old covenant, verse 1. They could never become perfect, even in their conscience. And then, they could never become like Christ one day either.

Please remember these two perfections. Perfect in our conscience, and perfect like Christ. One in the future, one right now.

But which the old covenant could not help them to have. Okay? If they were perfect in their conscience, they would not have kept on offering sacrifices for sins. And then, let's move on to chapter 5. I like to quote this verse to people who have suffered under preachers who always tell them to give their offerings.

I say, I want to show you a verse in the Bible which says God doesn't want your offerings. That's verse 5. Sacrifice an offering thou has not desired. Do you believe that? What does God desire? A body.

You've heard me say many times in the Old Testament, the emphasis was on give your tithe. In the New Testament, the emphasis is on give your body. There, there was such a strong emphasis.

You go to a church and the people are emphasizing have you paid your tithe? Have you paid your tithe? Have you paid your tithe? That's an old covenant church. In the new covenant, the emphasis is have you given your body? Have you given your eyes? Have you given your tongue? Have you given your hands? Have you presented your body as a living sacrifice? Romans 12, 1. Where do I get that from? Hebrews 10, 5. Offering he does not desire, but he desires your body. That is the new covenant equivalent of the Old Testament tithe.

Just like Jesus Christ dying on the cross is the equivalent of the Old Testament lamb which was sacrificed on the Passover day. Everything had an equivalent. That going through the Red Sea, the New Testament, it is baptism.

The Old Testament tithe, the new covenant is giving our body. Here it is. God doesn't want an offering.

He wants your body first. Does that mean we are not to give our money to God? If you don't feel happy to give money to God, you don't have to give anything to God. Give your body.

But most people who give their body will usually want to give a lot of other things as well. But that's voluntary. Give what you want happily.

But the most important thing God requires from you is a body. When Jesus came into the world, verse 5, Jesus did not come primarily to pay his tithes. He did not come to give offerings.

Instead, he gave his body. And he is the mediator of a new covenant for us. Teaching us not God, what God wants primarily from us is not our offerings, but our body.

What are the offerings we can give to God? Money. Service. Lord, I distributed 1,000 tracts today.

Lord, I have served in some part of North India for 10 years. These are all offerings to God. Lord, I prayed for 5 hours yesterday.

I fasted 3 days. These are offerings. But Lord, I still lust with my eyes.

I still get angry with my tongue. God says, forget your offerings. I don't want you to go to North India for 10 years.

And I don't want your tithes. And I don't want your fasting. I don't want your prayer.

I don't want any of your offerings. I want your eyes. I want your tongue.

I want parts of your body. Give me your body. Don't substitute offerings for your body.

People who substitute offerings and don't give their body are back in the old covenant. In the new covenant, what God wants is your body. This is a wonderful book.

Hebrews. Why am I taking more time on Hebrews than any other book of the New Testament? Or the whole Bible for that matter. My personal conviction is it's one of the most important books in the Bible.

If you want to live in the new covenant, I would say study Hebrews. And that's why I have given far more importance to this book than any other. Sacrifice an offering you didn't desire, but your body.

And what must I do with this body? Lord, Jesus is saying, when I came into the world, that is when he came through the from the womb of Mary, he never had a body in heaven, but now God, the Father gave him a body. A body thou hast prepared for me. What shall I do with this body? Go to North India, pay tithes, pray for five hours, fast.

What shall I do with this body? Very simple. Verse seven. I have come to do your will.

Whatever it is, O God, in this body, I've come to do your will. This is what Jesus came for. And this is what we have to do with our body.

When you present your body to God, don't present your body to go here or go there or this ministry or that ministry or anything. Say, Lord, you gave me a body from my mother's womb. Every part of it, eyes, tongue, hands, passions, desires, it's all yours to do your will.

What are my eyes for? To do God's will. What's my tongue? To speak God's will. My passions, my strength, my energy, must be to do God's will.

One passion in life. What is the will of God? The will of God is your sanctification. Okay? That's first part.

What's the will of God for my ministry? Lord, I want to know your will. I don't want to rush here and rush there and do something for God. I want to do the will of God in this body.

That's what Jesus taught us to pray. Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. What do you think the angels are doing in heaven? They're not running around here and they're trying to do like they say something for God.

I don't want to do something for God. I want to do God's will. Jesus didn't come to earth and from the age of 12 start running around doing something for God.

He said, what is your will? And the father said, work as a carpenter for the next 18 years. Okay. I make 18 years.

He worked as a carpenter. That was the will of God. And one day when the father saw he was faithful in his earthly job.

Okay. Now you go. Now you preach.

Do you think God may tell you to be a carpenter? He said, no, impossible. God will only tell me to preach. Who said that? That's the problem.

A lot of people cannot hear that God may tell them to do something quite different because their understanding of spirituality is only doing full-time work. Jesus did not come to do full-time work. He came to do the father's will.

When the father's will was carpentry, he did carpentry. When the father's will was full-time work, it was full-time work. You must dedicate yourself to do the will of the father, not to do this job or that job.

I can't join the Indian army and say, I want to be posted in this place. No. If I join the army, I leave it to them to decide where to post me.

They can post me on the battlefield. They can post me in the home department behind the scenes of the battle. That's up to them.

I cannot dictate. Neither can we in the Lord's army. Lo, I come to do your will, O God.

And the second time is repeated, verse 8. You don't desire offerings or sacrifices, but, verse 9, I come to do thy will, O God. And in this way, verse 9, he took away that first covenant and established the second covenant. The first covenant was a lot of activity, activity, activity.

If you go into the tabernacle, it's all activity, activity, activity. But in the new covenant, carpentry. For so many years.

Helping his mother at home for so many years. It was all the will of God. And preaching when the time came.

To do the will of God in his life. Don't think that carpentry is less God's will and helping your mother at home is less God's will than preaching. That's old covenant idea.

In the new covenant, whatever God wants you to do at this particular time, that's God's will. That is what, that is the holiest thing you can do. And a lot of people have gone out into the ministry before God called them and now they are frustrated.

They are running here and there. They may go here and make a mistake. After five years they go somewhere else and they get frustrated there ten years and then they go somewhere else.

And I come across people who are so old and have just made a mess of their life because they didn't seek the will of God. They went around trying to do something for God. Please don't make that mistake.

Follow Jesus. He's the pattern. Of course, there are people at the other extreme who feel that even if God calls them for full-time work they say no, carpentry is better.

That's the other extreme. There are always these extremes in Christendom. That even if God calls them they will not go because they are making good money in their business.

So, let's avoid both these extremes. And then it repeats some of the terms of the covenant again in verse 16 and 17 which we considered earlier. I will put my laws upon their heart.

I will write them in their hearts and their minds and I will not remember their sins anymore. This is so important. That's why it's repeated a second time in verse 16 and 17.

And then it says since brethren I believe this passage verse 19 to 25 is one of the most important passages in the whole book of Hebrews. We could say it's the central passage of the book. It speaks about a new and living way into the most holy place.

We have now confidence brethren to enter the most holy place first of all by the blood of Jesus and second by a new and living way which he consecrated by the veil that is his flesh. The veil was torn symbolizing that his flesh was torn and there's a way for us now to go into the most holy place a new and living fresh way and part of the meaning of that is that it's always fresh. It's never stale.

It's always new.

Like in Revelation we read about a new song that means every time they sing the same song it's like it's singing it for the first time fresh that's the way we should sing you may sing that for the hundredth time but it's fresh again a new song the same way a new and living way means even though I'm taking up the cross and following Jesus today it's exciting today it's new it's fresh this is the way of the cross this new and living way the way of death death to the flesh the way of rending the veil the way that we are called to follow Jesus death to my own will offering my body to do God's will that the will of the flesh will never be done in this body lo I come O Lord this body to do your will and if we keep doing that we go through this new and living way that Jesus opened we don't have

to render veil today the veil is already rent but to go through that way which he inaugurated for us you see it's like a minister cutting open a ribbon and inaugurating a new road of course Jesus didn't do it that easily he had to pay a price for 33 years to inaugurate this road but the road is now inaugurated for us we don't have to make the road no no no no the road is already made we have to only walk it Jesus has opened this way of the cross this highway of holiness as it says in Isaiah 35 the way of the cross and we have to walk it and if we walk it we get into the most holy place now don't get taken up with the road see when you are travelling supposing I am travelling from here to Bangalore by road and I get so taken up with the road I say boy what a beautiful road this is what

nice potholes and I get stuck in the road admiring the road I will never reach Bangalore and that's what happened to some people who have heard the message of the cross of putting the flesh to death and you see them 20 years later they are still admiring this road oh this putting the flesh to death this is the way brother and they have never reached the destination the destination is the most holy place we are not to get taken up with the cross it's the resurrection we are after we are seeking to fellowship with God and this happens to be the way I want to reach a destination and that's what it says through the new and living way we get into the most holy place there are some people who are not taken up with the way at all they never get into the most holy place that's one extreme the

other extreme is people who are always talking about death to the flesh death to the flesh the way of the cross the way of the cross the way of the cross and you look at their life they are so long faced and gloomy and miserable and you say I don't want this life at all you are not a recommendation to anybody because you are taken up with the way of the cross you are not taken up with the fellowship of the father in the most holy place I don't want the way of the cross except as it leads me to the father I don't want to be taken up with the way I want to be taken up with the father it's not looking onto the way have you ever seen a runner looking down and running he's always looking at there in front where I have to go and these people who look down and run will always come last and I

want to give that word of warning to anybody sitting here who has been gripped by the message of the cross and you think you are holy you are not holy if you are gripped with Jesus you are holy so that's a warning because I have seen people taken up with that the Lord has made a way for us he's a high priest and therefore let us draw near it says with a sincere heart notice the emphasis on sincerity frequently with faith with a heart sprinkled clean our bodies washed with pure water means that there's no sin which I committed with my body which has not been cleansed which I have not set right if I have harmed somebody I go and apologize if I have cheated somebody I set it right that's how my body is washed with pure water I hold fast to the confession of my hope I don't shake and I

consider other brothers around me in the most holy place I'm not selfish I think about other people how I can stir them up to love and I don't live by myself verse 25 I'm fellowship with other people as often as

possible until Jesus comes again take that passage from 19 to 25 and meditate on it it's precious very very very important and he says instead of going in there if we go on sinning willfully then there's no more sacrifice for sin see a way indicates that we got to keep moving later on he speaks about running the race people who backslide are people who are not moving forward you know an aircraft in the sky it's moving as long as it's moving it stays in the sky do you know what will happen to an airplane if it decides to stop turns off its engine in the sky down that's what will

happen an aircraft has to keep moving in order to keep flying when it stops moving it drops to the ground so in the Christian life also if we don't keep moving we backslide and so he warns us he says in the old testament people who lived under the old covenant they were punished without mercy verse 28 do you think our punishment will be less when God has given us much greater calling and we treat the blood of Jesus as an unclean thing it takes in lightly it's very serious it's a terrifying thing verse 31 to fall into the hands of the living God and then he goes on to say that there's a great need for you to be willing to suffer verse 33 to 34 people may take away your property they were persecuted in those days and he says okay never mind don't get occupied with these earthly things you

may lose them and I believe in days of persecution if it comes to this country we may lose some earthly things we may lose honor we may not be able to get jobs because we are Christians seeking to be upright we may not get promotion people may turn against us they may break down our church buildings okay when you live in the most holy place these things you can take joyfully it says you took joyfully verse 34 middle the seizure of your property your property was seized by fundamentalist religious people okay praise the Lord I'm living in the most holy place I'm not going to fight for these things because I've got a better possession in heaven and he says instead of going this way verse 38 if you shrink back the Lord says you'll have no pleasure the Lord will have no pleasure in such a

person there are only two ways verse 38 you either live by faith or you shrink back if you live by faith you're making progress the opposite of that not living by faith is you shrink back every backsliding is first of all a failure of faith that's what we learned from verse 38 all backsliding is first of all a failure of faith that's what we read verse 38 then we go on to chapter 11 where he speaks a little more about faith and he says this faith is not something new even old testament people lived by faith how do you think Abel offered a sacrifice to God verse 4 by faith and he says faith is sort of believing those invisible things which we know are sure we are sure that's true the definition of faith in verse 1 the conviction of things that I have not seen I haven't seen it but I'm

convinced the assurance of things I'm hoping for I haven't seen it but I'm sure that's faith and Abel how did Enoch live for 300 years he walked with God here he tells us in verse 5 he walked by faith he couldn't see but he walked by faith for 300 years he walked by faith in an unseen God pleasing God when everybody else was enjoying themselves and God tested him for 300 years and said Enoch you deserve to be in heaven and he took him up and he says without this type of faith verse 6 whatever else you may have it is impossible to please God you may do a lot of work for him you may sacrifice a lot for him but if you can't trust God trusting in the invisible blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed you cannot please God if you want to please God when you come to God you

must first of all believe that he exists up there and that he is a rewarder of all who seek him wholeheartedly I want to ask you when you are in trouble who is the first person you turn to I hope it's God we can ask people for help there's nothing wrong in that but the first person I must turn to is God I've often thought if the prime minister of India was my father anytime I have some problem I will ring him up and say dad I

have a little bit of a problem can you help me and he says sure what's it about tell me and I tell him and he says don't worry son I'll take care of that thank you dad I put the phone down and I'm at rest do you believe that God almighty is more powerful than the prime minister of India do you believe that God is your father is he the first person you turn to when

you're sick when you have a problem when some impossible situation comes before you which even the prime minister cannot solve can God do something about it sure why don't you talk to him why don't you ask him why don't you go to him first before you go to anybody else let's develop that habit he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him we must develop this as a way of life when I have a problem I turn to God first because I believe he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him how did Noah live verse 7 by faith and by faith it says he condemned the world verse 7 the way his way of life was a condemnation to the world and that's how it must be with us when people saw Noah spending all his savings for making a ship saying judgment is going to come you got to get inside the ship

spending all his savings not keeping anything aside saving it all using it all for building the ship that was a condemnation of the world because people in the old days and better houses and bigger houses and go on travels and tours and enjoy themselves and drink wine and eat good food and here Noah was denying himself all those things he didn't go for any holidays and he didn't spend money on fancy food or clothes he was spending it all on the ark that was a condemnation to the world and today when a Christian spends all his time and energy building the church and that's the most important thing in his life and he denies himself and he gives his time and his money and everything for the building of the church the people in the world say you're crazy what are you doing spending money like

that time like that to give the gospel to publish literature to go here to travel there and you have no interest in enjoying yourself in the world I'm sorry I don't have time to enjoy myself in the world this church is the only thing that lasts when Jesus comes again now if you don't live like that you don't have the faith of Noah your way of life what you spend your time energy money for determines whether you have the your faith by faith Abraham when God called him he did not leave without God calling him and don't ever leave without God calling you but when God called him verse 8 he obeyed immediately when Peter was called he obeyed immediately when Abraham was called he left his relatives he left his home and said I'm going you asked him where are you going he said where I'm going but

I know who is leading me that's enough and he was led and he lived like a stranger verse 9 in a foreign land dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob because he was looking for a city whose foundations are up in heaven and by faith he and Sarah received the ability to conceive here we see the faith of parents faith of husband and wife together you're a blessed man if you get a wife like Sarah who has faith along with you she had faith he had faith husband and wife joined faith living for God and they died in faith saw the fantastic blessing that would come through his translation ministry and his missionary work not only in India but the number of people around the world that would be challenged by his life he never saw it lot of godly missionaries never saw in their lifetime the challenge

that would come Jim Elliot died out there in South America without seeing how many people were blessed would be blessed through his life in the future and you may die without seeing all that God can accomplish through your life but if you are faithful and you live by faith you'd have lived in a good way and when you die your blessing will go on for generations after you die they didn't receive the promises but they lived in such a way that they proved that they were not living for something on earth they were desiring were 16 a better country in heaven he was willing by faith to offer up Isaac he offered up Isaac in faith Lord I don't

know how you're going to fulfill the promises through this son if you want me to kill him but that's your business I'll do it I'll do what you say faith

makes us do some things which the world cannot understand when Elijah wanted fire from heaven on the altar what did he tell them to do pour 12 buckets of water pour water to get a fire he should have told them to put a few matchsticks there you know like today when people want to do a miracle they do all types of tricks that was no tricks there he said I'll show you this is a fire from heaven pour water God will bring the fire I'll kill Isaac and God will bring seed through Isaac I don't know how that's faith that's how Abraham lived he said well maybe God will raise him from the dead verse 19 bring him back to life and still fulfill his promise what faith Abraham had he had faith in the resurrection he said well amazing by faith Isaac blessed Jacob and he saw about things to come and

Jacob blessed his children by faith we can bless our children do you know that you can bless your children concerning their future faith because you taught them the ways of God you say now I have faith that you'll obey these ways and it's going to go well with you what a blessing we can give as parents to our children like Joseph like Jacob and like Isaac gave to their children we read that Jacob did this leaning upon a staff meaning that he was a broken man he couldn't stand on his leg properly because God had broken him and the wonderful thing in Hebrews chapter 11 in the midst of all these great things that people accomplished you see a man walking with a stick that was a great miracle but God broke him that's another type of miracle God does when he breaks a man by faith Joseph men

made mention of the future that we go back to Canaan we won't stay in Egypt and by faith Moses took three decisions verse 23 24 and 25 number one verse 23 sorry verse 24 verse 23 was Moses parents took a decision to take care of their child it's another example of faith of the parents verse 24 to 26 Moses took three decisions by faith one verse 24 he refused the honor of this world I don't want to be known as Pharaoh's daughter son number two he refused the pleasures of sin verse 25 number three he refused the wealth of this world there are three things Moses rejected the world's honor the world's pleasures and the world's wealth and if you are a man of faith there are three things you will reject the world's honor the world's pleasures and the world's wealth and Moses took that decision

because his parents brought him up properly that's the decision you need to take and instead of that he chose the reproach of Christ better than all these things and that's what we must choose as well and goes on to say about the many other wonderful things that happened through faith the splitting of the Red Sea verse 29 the breaking down of the walls of Jericho and then it says about Rahab the harlot how she had faith that God would protect her and so she welcomed God's people even though she risked her life Rahab risked her life to protect those spies sometimes we have to risk our life to protect the people of God and there we can follow in Rahab's footsteps and what more shall I say verse 32 Gideon Barak Samson Jephthah David Samuel the prophets by faith they conquered kingdoms shut

the mouths of lions quench the power of fire escape the edge of the sword put armies to flight women verse 35 received back their dead by resurrection in Elijah's time in Elisha's time and then that's one type of faith I mean that's one type of result of faith and then there were other people who lived by faith who did not get these things others were tortured verse 35 and they did not accept their release because they wanted a better resurrection some experienced mockings and scourgings and chains and imprisonment some were stoned some were sawn into tradition says that was Isaiah they were tempted verse 37 they were put to death they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins destitute afflicted ill-treated men of whom this world was not worthy they were too good for this world they

wandered in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground so you see faith does not always mean that we shut the mouths of lions sometimes it means we are killed some people think that faith always means we call down thunder and break the walls of Jericho and split the Red Sea that is faith to endure when a lion is coming to eat me up and I say I still believe in Jesus Christ that's also faith when they are ready to chop off my head and I say I will not deny Jesus Jesus is my Lord that's also faith so both are mentioned together some people think faith means you'll do you'll see some miracle no faith that may be like that if that's God's will but it also may mean that I endure till the end whatever the cost without giving up that's also faith and leave it to God to decide which

it is to be in your case Shadrach Meshach and Abednego went into the fire and came out untouched the early Christians were burnt in the fire and they got burnt up Daniel went into the lion's den and came out by faith the early Christians were thrown to the lions and the lions ate them up who had more faith both had faith one to endure till the end and the other to come out they left it to God to decide whether the lion should eat me up or the lion should spare me they left it to God to decide whether the fire should burn me up or whether it should be spared leave it to God to decide whether you should be beheaded or you should escape James was beheaded Peter escaped so God's will is different but all of them this group and the other group verse 39 they all got approval through faith but

now God has provided something better you see that word better keeps coming in Hebrews for us what is that now our faith is not looking on to Abel or Moses or Enoch or Noah or any of these people our faith is verse 2 of chapter 12 looking on to Jesus he's the author and finisher of our faith we look on to him and run this race we don't stand still the race of faith is something in which you can't stand still you look at Jesus time is short you have to run if you fall down get up and run there are many people who have fallen down in a race and got up and run and still got the prize don't get discouraged if you fall down somewhere in the Christian life just get up and run and look at Jesus who endured the cross and ran till the end of his life and when many enemies oppose you verse 3

consider him how many enemies opposed him you have not yet resisted verse 4 to the point of shedding blood like he did you know how much Jesus resisted to the point of shedding blood in striving against sin now verse 4 teaches us that Jesus also strove against sin it wasn't easy for him how much did he strive against sin with this attitude I would rather shed my blood verse 4 than commit sin that means I would rather die than commit sin if you have that attitude you'll be an overcomer you come to a situation where you have to tell a lie and you say I would rather die than tell a lie boy you'll be an overcomer you come to some situation where you can cheat a little bit and make a little more money and you say well I would rather die than cheat a little any sin you're tempted to lust

somewhere you're attracted by some woman to sin and you say I'd rather die than commit that sin that is the secret of overcoming then he goes on to speak about discipline you see we look unto Jesus as our example and we look unto our father who disciplines us verses 4 to 11 God disciplines us and all discipline is for our good we don't feel happy about it now but later on it will work for our good it says in verse 14 pursue peace with all men and sanctification there are two things we must pursue in life peace with all human beings and holiness otherwise we'll never see the Lord don't be like Esau verse 16 who for a little bit of earthly profit lost his spiritual birthright he's saying for some small earthly gain don't lose your eternal inheritance you know afterwards how much he prayed

he couldn't get it at the judgment seat of Christ many people will pray with tears but they can't get back the life they wasted on earth verse 18 onwards he speaks about Mount Zion compared to Mount Sinai he says

that now we have come to the church and not to the mountain to be afraid and one last one thing I want to mention in verse 24 the last thing here verse 24 the blood of Jesus and the blood of Abel the blood of Abel cried for judgment the blood of Jesus cried for mercy when somebody harms you like Cain harmed Abel you will either pray for judgment on that person or you'll pray for mercy that depends on whether you're under the Old Covenant or the New Covenant if you follow the Old Covenant somebody harms you like Abel's blood it'll cry out for judgment Lord judge that man Lord

judge that man like the Old Testament sounds if you follow Jesus your blood will cry out for mercy Lord forgive him for he doesn't know what he's doing verse 25 to 29 says about this kingdom that God is building the church the only thing that will remain forever everything will be shaken people who have put their confidence in money in Jesus name I prophesy their confidence will be shaken according to verse 25 to 29 you put your confidence in real estate property anything on this earth it'll all be shaken some of who people are finding their security in buying up a lot of land and earthly property brother forget it don't put your confidence there you can have property but don't put your confidence there let your confidence be in God everything else will be shaken let's serve God with

thankfulness because he's a consuming fire and then some closing exhortations in chapter 13 love the brothers verse one show hospitality anyone who comes to your house remember those who are suffering prisoners who are ill-treated suffer with them encourage them visit them keep your marriage perfectly pure verse 4 don't ever sin sexually because God will judge them be satisfied verse 5 with what you have don't run after money because God has said I will never fail you nor forsake you that is a promise is like a bank like a bank account what he's saying is what is your bank account let me give you a bank account the best bank account you can have God's promise I will never fail you nor forsake you how many rupees is that I will never fail you nor forsake you isn't that enough the Lord said

the Holy Spirit says don't be satisfied with what God gives you don't look at that other brother or sister who's got more than you and say oh I wish I had all that you think that'll bring happiness you think a better house more clothes a car or any of these things will bring happiness no no be satisfied with what you have I will never fail you nor forsake you that's enough we can boldly say in every situation the Lord's my helper I will not be afraid that any man what can any man do unto me no fear of any man or any circumstances and advice to listen to your elders were seven and verse 17 obey your leaders remember those who led you value them submit to them because they have to give an account for your life one day to God do you know that leaders have to give an account verse 17 to God

for everybody under their charge respect them we're seven it says look at their life look at the life of these leaders follow their example verse 8 because the same Jesus Christ who led them yesterday today can lead you he's the same what he did for that brother he can do for you that's the meaning of Jesus Christ the same yesterday today and forever in the context of verse 7 what he did for that godly brother he can do for you don't be occupied with strange doctrines verse 9 that plenty of them today see whether these doctrines have helped the man who is preaching to live a good life otherwise don't follow it let us go outside the camp with Jesus bearing his reproach as long as we live in this world we have to bear reproach let us offer a sacrifice of praise to God always having a spirit

of praise in our life and then he says finally may the God of peace verse 20 who brought up Jesus from the dead equip you in every good thing to do his will working in you what is pleasing in his sight to him be glory forever and ever let's pray Heavenly Father we thank you for this wonderful new covenant in which we can live help us to live bringing glory and honor to you in this earth living in all the riches of the new

covenant we pray in Jesus name.

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