

And This Will We Do, If God Permits

An Expository Journey through the **Epistle to the Hebrews**

Chapter 1: Introduction

5: Introduction: Part 5

WAOY Friday 01/02/09

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our journey through the **Epistle of Hebrews**, and I want to continue with some introductory information about this great **Epistle to the Hebrews**.

Now, one of the most important theological points that the writer of **Hebrews** gives to us in this Epistle is that all believers, through Jesus Christ, have direct access to God, and therefore, we may approach the Throne of God with boldness.

Please read with me in **Hebrews 4:16**:

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

Our hope is not in Man or in human wisdom, or in money, or in earthly possessions. Our hope is in the very Presence of God as it is manifested in, by, and through the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, the main focus of the Old Covenant temple worship was the statement that Man could not come to God, and this separation was symbolized by the veil that was in the Temple. It separated the people from God. So all through the **Epistle to the Hebrews** the writer teaches that believers now have a Perfect Sacrifice that was offered by a Sinless High Priest. It is offered by a Priest whose Ministry is infinitely superior to anything that the Levitical priests could provide.

But, in spite of the fact that **Hebrews** is indeed filled with very important Doctrinal teachings, teachings that we absolutely need, and teachings which, for the most part, are simply not taught anymore, this Epistle is much more than an academic study in Christian Theology. Hebrews is very practical in its application to everyday life. For example, Chapter 13 teaches how we can escape the slavery of money and covetousness, and how marriages can be strengthened by trusting in the Promise that Christ will never leave us nor forsake us.

And almost more than any other New Testament writer, the man who wrote Hebrews will not allow his readers to sink into apathy. He peppers this Epistle with stirring warnings and frightening consequences to those who *know* the Truth and yet do not *obey* the Truth. For example:

- In **Hebrews 2:1-4**, we are warned against drifting away from the things we have heard.
- In **Hebrews 3:7-14**, we are warned about the horrible consequences of disbelieving the Voice of God.
- In **Hebrews 5:11- 6:20**, we are warned against a lazy walk and an apathetic approach to the things of God.
- In **Hebrews 10:26-39**, we are warned against despising the knowledge of the truth.
- In **Hebrews 12:15-17**, we are warned against presuming upon the Grace of God.
- And in **Hebrews 12:25-29**, we are warned against departing from Him who speaks from Heaven.

One of the most important things that the **Epistle to the Hebrews** does, along with every other New Testament Book, is give us a full exposition or explanation of what the Old Testament actually means. You see, something that has almost been forgotten is the fact that one of the most important purposes of the New Testament Books is that, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles and other writers of the 27 New Testament Books were given the supernatural ability to correctly and fully interpret what the Old Testament was actually talking about.

In other words, if you seek to fully understand the **Psalms** or **Isaiah** or **Deuteronomy** or **Leviticus** or **Micah** or **1st** and **2nd Samuel**, or *any* of the 39 Old Testament Books, you must read these inspired Books with at least a “working knowledge” of what the New Testament writers *taught* that the Old Testament writers *meant* by what they *said*. Let me give you some examples of what I am talking about.

For example, let’s read a passage from the prophet Joel. Let’s read **Joel 2:28-32**:

28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

30 And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Now when we read this passage today we immediately understand that Joel is talking about Jesus and the birth of the Church in that Upper Room prayer meeting as Peter describes for us in **The Acts 2**. But, the *only* reason that we know that this is what Joel meant is because Peter told us. Read with me **The Acts 2:14-24**:

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

We must remember, dear friends, that the prophet Joel received his prophecy from God the Holy Ghost eight hundred years before Jesus was born. And for eight hundred years nobody had a clue what Joel was talking about until Peter explained what Joel meant in this passage here in **The Acts**. Well, how did Peter know that this is what Joel was talking about? Because he, along with the other Apostles, had just been endowed with Power from on High in that prayer meeting, and God had equipped Peter to be able to give to the world the full, final, and completed understanding of all that God had revealed to the Prophets in the 39 Old Covenant Books.

And without that full explanation that is found only in the New Testament writings, nobody to this day would have a clue what God was actually saying in the Old Testament. And the **Epistle to the Hebrews** is especially gifted to give us understanding of Old Testament passages that puzzled men for centuries.

For example:

- **Hebrews 1:1-2:4** gives us the correct and full exposition of what David wrote six hundred years earlier in various **Psalms**, and what the prophet Samuel said in **2 Samuel 7**, and what Moses said in **Deuteronomy 32**. And before the writer of **Hebrews** gave us this Revelation, nobody fully comprehended what those Old Testament writers meant by what they said.
- In **Hebrews 2:5-18**, the writer of **Hebrews**, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, gives us the full and correct exposition of what David wrote in **Psalms 8:4-6**.
- In **Hebrews 3:1-4:13**, the writer of **Hebrews** was moved along by the Holy Ghost to fully explain what the psalmist said in **Psalms 95:7-11**.

- In **Hebrews 4:14-7:28**, the writer of **Hebrews** gives us a full comprehension of what **Psalms 110:4** actually means.
- In **Hebrews 8:1-10:18**, the writer of **Hebrews** received from God the correct and complete understanding of what the prophet Jeremiah wrote in **Jeremiah 31:31-34**, some five hundred years before Jesus was born.

And on and on it goes. **Habakkuk 2:3&4**, **Proverbs 3:11&12**, and **Exodus** Chapters 19 and 20 were all mysterious, and men were unable to fully grasp their meaning until God enabled the writer of **Hebrews** to write this Epistle. And this is so important for us to know today, that if anyone, for any reason, gives another interpretation of these Old Testament verses that differs in any way from the explanation given by the New Testament writers, then we know that that interpretation is false.

And this carries over into some very serious and important subjects. For example, God commanded Moses to sacrifice animals. God told Moses how and when and which animals, and gave him all the details on how to offer animal sacrifices to God. Moses never lived on single day after that when he didn't have to sacrifice animals in order to be pleasing to God. All of God's people had to offer animal sacrifices... or else they would be severely judged by God.

And yet Christianity teaches that we can go directly to God through Jesus Christ *without* any animal sacrifice, and this is so true that today if anyone *does* sacrifice an animal, we know that that animal sacrifice insults God. Why would it insult Him? Because it denigrates all that Jesus did for us on the Cross.

Now, my question is this. Where does it say that we no longer have to sacrifice animals? The New Testament tells us that, specifically in the Epistles. Now we must agree, dear friends, that the Old Testament through Moses *commands* animal sacrifice and yet nobody in the New Testament does it. Why is that? It is because the New Testament, specifically this very **Epistle to the Hebrews**, teaches us that Jesus' death on the Cross as the sinless Lamb of God was a Sacrifice that was far *superior* to any animal sacrificed by any Levitical Priest. And the very moment that Jesus was offered to God as the Supreme Sacrifice, animal sacrifices became an abomination to God and the

Levitical Priesthood was dissolved in Heaven, forever, and replaced by the *superior* and *eternal* Priesthood of Jesus that is after Melchisedec.

But here is the \$64,000 question. What gave the writer of **Hebrews** the authority to disregard a direct command from God to Moses to sacrifice animals? It is the fact that the Old Testament writings were always pointing to Jesus all along, yet nobody put the pieces together until God revealed the meaning and the purpose of the Old Testament by and through the New Testament.

So we are in for quite a time as we journey verse by verse through this magnificent **Epistle to the Hebrews**, and I pray that God will be glorified and that we all will be strengthened in our walk with God as we walk through **Hebrews** together.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Hebrews**. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. *Soli Deo Gloria*. For the Glory of God alone.