

YOUTH SPIRITUAL COMPETITION 2013

HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

A Study of The Epistle to the Hebrews

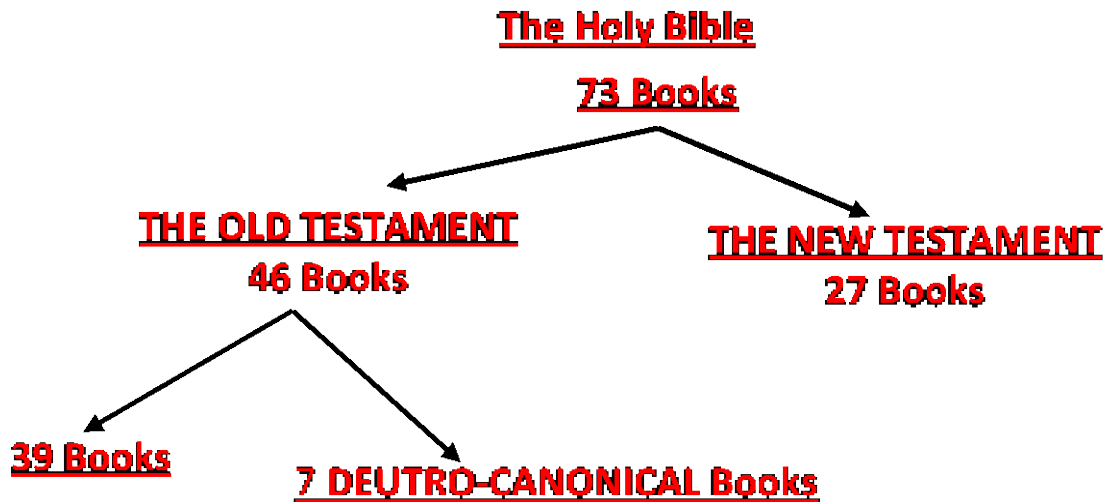


Part I

Part 1: Introduction

I. The Structure of the Holy Bible

The Holy Bible consists of 73 books. There are 46 books in the Old Testament, 39 of which are recognized by all Christians and you can find in the Holy Bible that you usually purchase, and then there are the 7 Deutro-canonical books recognized by the Coptic Orthodox Church. The New Testament consists of 27 books.

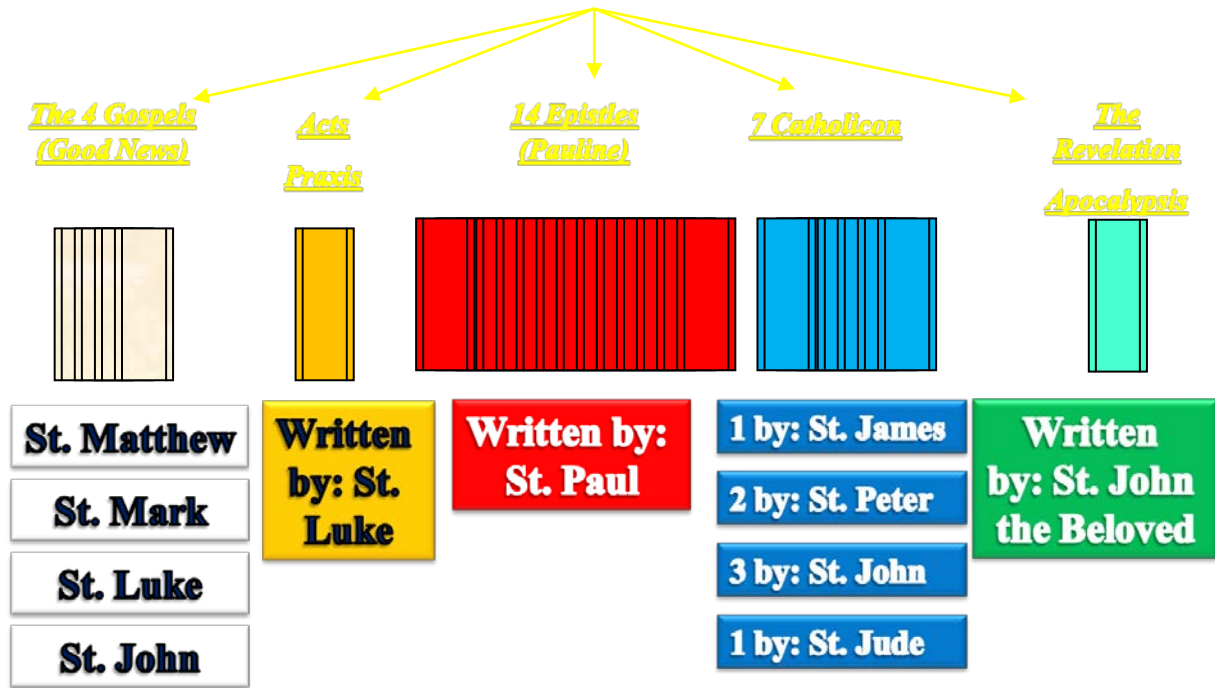


II. The Structure of the New Testament

- The New Testament is divided into
 - 4 Gospels (also known as the Good News)
 - The four Gospels were written by the saint bearing its name:
 - the Gospel according to St. Matthew,
 - the Gospel according to St. Mark,
 - the Gospel according to St. Luke,
 - and the Gospel according to St. John.
 - Acts of the Apostles (Praxis), written by St. Luke.
 - 14 Pauline Epistles, written by St. Paul.
 - 7 Catholic Epistles (Catholicon)
 - St. James (1 Epistle)
 - St. Peter (2 Epistles)
 - St. John (3 Epistles)
 - St. Jude (1 Epistle)
 - Revelation (Apocalypse), written by St. John the Theologian.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE 27 BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT



III. The Structure of the Pauline Epistles

The Pauline Epistles Can Be Organized into Several Ways

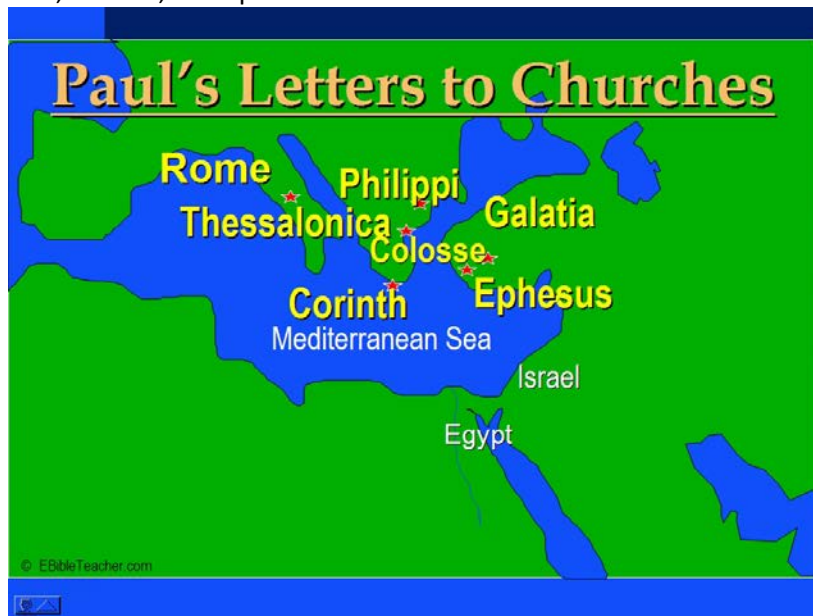
A. The 14 letters of St. Paul are divided into 3 categories: Ecclesiastical, Pastoral, and Personal.

Ecclesiastical	Pastoral	Personal
Romans 1 st Corinthians 2 nd Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians, 1 st Thessalonians 2 nd Thessalonians Hebrews	1 st Timothy 2 nd Timothy Titus	Philemon

B. Categorized

according to where the epistle was written:

1. St. Paul wrote letters to the churches in Rome, Thessalonica, Philippi, Colosse, Galatia, Corinth, and Ephesus.



2. Several Letters were written while St. Paul was in prison: Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon.

Elements of the Pauline Epistles

Most of St. Paul's letters share certain characteristics and are organized in a certain way. The following list demonstrates how the standard format St. Paul used to organized each of the 14 epistles. Some epistles, especially Hebrews, are exceptions to this format in that they do not contain every characteristic.

1. The name of the Sender
St. Paul would mention that he was the sender in the beginning of his letters.
2. The Recipients
3. The Blessing
The blessing included in the letters was usually "Grace and Peace." However, St. Paul used "Grace, Mercy, and Peace" in his pastoral letters.
4. The Thanksgiving – St. Paul mentions and lists what he is thankful for.
5. The Body of the letter.
6. The Conclusion to the letter.

The Themes of Each of the Epistles

Romans	God's righteousness
1 st Corinthians	Koinonia (fellowship)
2 nd Corinthians	Reconciliation – Apostleship
Galatians	True Gospel – the Cross – Freedom
Ephesus	The Church is the Body of Christ
Philippians	Our life in Christ
Colossians	Christ in the head of the Church
1 st Thessalonians	Holy life leads to eternal life
2 nd Thessalonians	Second coming
1 st Timothy	Pastoral care
2 nd Timothy	Overcoming the hardships in ministry – Farewell Epistle
Titus	Overseeing the Church
Philemon	Brotherhood in Christ
Hebrews	Christ is the great God

Part 2: Introduction to Hebrews

I. Authorship

St. Paul's epistle to the Hebrews is the only Pauline epistle that does not contain all of the 6 characteristics previously discussed. In fact, Hebrews is the only epistle that consists of only a body and a conclusion; St. Paul does not write who is the sender, recipient, a blessing or thanksgiving.

Despite St. Paul not mentioning the author of the epistle, we still affirm it is himself. According to St. Pantaeus, St. Athanasius, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Augustine (Council of Carthage), St. Paul is the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Additionally, the Liturgical readings in the Church include the Book of Hebrews as part of the Pauline Epistles.

Furthermore, there is evidence from the Holy Bible itself that St. Paul is the author. According to Hebrews 12:23, the author of the book was a friend of St. Timothy. It is also obvious from a study of the epistle that the author is well versed in the Old Testament Scriptures. Moreover, the author, in Hebrews 10:38, used the same Old Testament quotation found in Habakkuk 2:4, "The just shall live by faith," that St. Paul also used in two other letters of his (Rom. 1:17 and Gal. 3:11). The author also concludes Hebrews in the same fashion as St. Paul in his writings. For example, 2 Thessalonians 3:17-18 reads: "The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." Compare this to the closing found in Hebrews 13:25, "Grace be with you all. Amen."

There is further biblical evidence of St. Paul's authorship in that the author was evidently known by St. Peter. According to Galatians 2:7, St. Peter was the disciple to the circumcision (the Jews). And in fact, St. Peter's two epistles were written to the Jews who were scattered all over, the Jews of the dispersion (1Pt. 1:1; 1Pt. 3:1). St. Peter says, "Even as our brother Paul also...wrote unto you" (2Pt. 3:15). This goes to show that St. Peter was familiar with some writing of the St. Paul's that was addressed to the same dispersed Jews to which he was writing. The author of Hebrew wrote about "many things...hard to understand" (Heb. 5:11). St. Peter says the very same thing about Paul's epistle to the Jews, "Paul...has written unto you...some things hard to be understood" (2Pt. 3:15-16).

So the evidence all points toward St. Paul as the author of Hebrews.

So then the question remains, why didn't St. Paul mention his name in the epistle? Because it was mentioned about him that, "but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses..." (Acts 21:21) Thus, he did not mention his name lest they would not read the letter he sent them.

II. Date When the Epistle Was Written

It is estimated that the epistle was written between A.D. 64-67 for several reasons. First, there is no mention in the epistle of the destruction of Jerusalem or its temple, which occurred in A.D. 70. In fact, the references to the priesthood and temple indicate both still standing when this letter was written (Heb. 10:11). Second, St. Timothy had been imprisoned but was now free when St. Paul wrote the letter (Hebrews 13:23). Third, St. Clement of Rome knew of the epistle when he wrote his letter to the

Corinthians (A.D. 95) and so the epistle must have been written sometime before it had circulated to him.

III. Language

Scholars tell us that St. Paul quoted from the Greek version of the Hebrew Old Testament, known as the Septuagint, when citing the verses or prophecies of the Old Testament. (The word Septuagint is a Greek word meaning “seventy,” and its abbreviation is the Roman numeral for seventy, LXX. Tradition claims that seventy men translated the Hebrew Old Testament into the Greek.)

IV. Themes of the Epistle

A. Overview

The Book of Hebrews was written to Christians that came from a Jewish background, they were referred to as Hebrew Christians. Since they converted to Christianity, the rest of the Jewish population deprived them of the right to enter the temple and partake in the rituals. However, the Christians obtained the true heavenly temple instead of the symbolic or physical temple, and they received the heavenly high priesthood instead of the Levitical priesthood. Furthermore, they were related to the Church of the Firstborn instead of the Jewish citizenship, and the heavenly Jerusalem instead of the earthly Jerusalem. Our Lord Jesus transformed us from the shadow to the truth and instead of only a glimpse of heaven we have received heaven itself; from outward physical worship to Christ’s supreme service.

This epistle exhorts that Jesus and His way is the better way. The word “better” is used 13 times in this epistle. St. Paul uses the word “better” to teach us that our Lord Jesus Christ is superior to the angels, the prophets, Moses, Joshua and Aaron. Our Lord offers a better priesthood, sanctuary, and sacrifice for in worshiping Him we enter heaven. Expanding on this point, St. Paul concentrates on the priesthood of Christ, who intercedes with His Blood in front of His Father. Therefore, we must faithfully hold fast to Him, preserving our faith in the incarnate Son.

The 13 uses of the word “better” in the epistle:
Our Lord Jesus Christ...

- Is “so much better” (Heb. 1:4)
- Gives us “better things” (Heb, 6: 9)
- Is the “better person” (Heb. 7:7)
- Brings the “better hope” (Heb. 7:19)
- Assures the “better covenant” (Heb. 7: 22)
- Is the mediator of a “better covenant...and better promises” (Heb. 8:6)
- Purifies with “better sacrifices” (Heb. 9:23)
- Gives us heaven, a “better possession” (Heb. 10:34)
- Gives us a “better country (heaven)” (Heb. 11:16)
- Gives us a “better resurrection” (Heb. 11:35)
- Provides “better things” (Hebrews 11: 35; 11:40; 12:24)

Finally, in Hebrews, St. Paul often quoted from the Old Testament, revealing the unity of the two Testaments. Hebrews quotes from the Old Testament about 100 times, using the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew text. This epistle does more to explain the Old Testament typology than any other book in the Bible. In this way, St. Paul transformed the dogma to an experienced life.

B. Organization by Chapter

Chapters 1 through 10 can be described as exhorting a unique doctrine teaching how Christ is better and greater than anything else; whereas, chapters 11 through 13 extend more practical lessons to the people.

Chapter 1 - 2	Christ is greater than the angels
Chapter 3	Christ is greater than Moses
Chapter 4	Christ is greater than Joshua
Chapter 5 – 7	Christ is greater than Aaron
Chapter 8	Christ gives us the greatest Covenant
Chapter 9	Christ gives us the greatest sanctuary
Chapter 10	Christ gives us the greatest sacrifice
Chapter 11 - 12	Heroes of faith are listed
Chapter 13	Advice to the people, “the word of exhortation” (Heb. 13:22)

C. The Epistle of Severe Warnings

St. Paul wrote Hebrews to warn people of the danger of abandoning the gospel and of immaturity, also to offer advice or exhortation.

St. Paul advised the people of the danger of abandoning the gospel and several ways in which this could happen. Some abandon the gospel by drifting from the Word, thus neglecting it (Heb 2: 1 -4). Some doubt the Word with a hard heart (Heb 3:7 – 4:13). Some have a dullness, or become sluggish, towards the Word (Heb 5:11- 6:20). Others despise the Word out of willfulness (Heb 10:26-39). Lastly, some defy the Word and refuse to hear it (Heb 12:14-29).

St. Paul warns how some are at a spiritual standstill and in danger of regression (Heb. 5:12). Still others have even forsaken the regular worship services (Heb. 10:25) and were not making spiritual progress (Heb. 6:1). In the Christian life, if you do not go forward, you go backward; there is no such thing as standing still.

St. Paul also warns about the several ways in which immaturity can hinder the spiritual life. A person becomes immature because of dull hearing (Heb. 5:11) or because he refuses to grow (Heb. 5:12). A person becomes immature because of being unskilled in the Word (Heb. 5:13) or because he does not exercise his mental and spiritual senses (Heb. 5:14). A person needs to get the past the ABC's of doctrine (Heb. 6:1-2) and must be determined to grow in Christ (Heb. 6:3).

Along with his several warnings, St. Paul earnestly advises the people on five points (Heb 13:22): (1) to “hold fast” (Heb 3:6), (2) “to go on to perfection or maturity” (Heb 6:1), (3) “to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession” (Heb 3:1), (4) “to consider Him that endured” (Heb 12:3), and (5) St. Paul offers 13 exhortations, known as the “let us” exhortations, to encourage spiritual diligence and growth.

The 13 “Let us” exhortations:

- “Let us fear lest any of you come short of [His rest].” (Heb. 4:1)
- “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest.” (Heb. 4:11)
- “Let us hold fast our confession.” (Heb. 4:14)
- “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace” (Heb. 4:16)
- “Let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God” (Heb. 6:1)
- “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith” (Heb.10:22)
- “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering” (Heb. 10:23)
- “Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works” (Heb. 10:24)
- “Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us” (Heb. 12:1)
- “Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1)
- “Let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” (Heb. 12:28)
- “Let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.” (Heb. 13:13)
- “Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.” (Heb. 13:15)

For a more succinct version of above: “Let us”...

- Fear (Hebrews 4:1)
- Labor (Hebrews 4:11)
- Come boldly (Hebrews 4:16)
- Go on (Hebrews 6:1)
- Draw near (Hebrews 10:22)
- Hold fast (Hebrews 10:23)
- Consider one another (Hebrews 10:24)
- Lay aside every thought (Hebrews 12:1)
- Have grace (Hebrews 12:28)
- Go forth (Hebrews 13:13)
- Offer the sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13:15)

Part 3: Commentary on the Book of Hebrews

I. Chapter 1: Introduction to the Epistle

In Hebrews, St. Paul states that our Lord Jesus, the Son of God

- is the heir of all things.
- is the creator of the world.
- is the brightness of God's glory.
- is the image of the Father.
- upholds all things by His power.
- purged our sins.
- sat down on Majesty on High.

Hebrews 1: 1 – 3: God Spoke through the Prophets about Jesus Christ as the Messiah

At the very beginning of the epistle, St. Paul writes that God “at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets” (Heb 1:1). St. Paul is telling us that God revealed Himself in many different ways: through nature, conscience, law, revelation, and through the prophets and priests.

We can see through the prophecies of the Old Testament how God revealed that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of His plan for salvation.

God spoke through the prophets and told them from where Jesus would come. God spoke to Adam and told him that the Savior would come from the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15). God spoke to Abraham and told him that the Savior would come from his seed (Gen 12:3;18:18; 22:18). God spoke to Jacob and told him that the Savior would come through the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10). God spoke to David and told him that the Savior would be born of his house (2 Sam.7:13). God spoke to Micah and told him that the Savior would be born at Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). God spoke to Isaiah and told him that the Savior would be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14).

God spoke to the prophets in various ways. To Moses, God spoke in a great thundering voice in the midst of a storm (Ex. 19:19, Deut. 5:22). To Elijah, God spoke in a still small voice (1 Kings 19: 12). To Isaiah, He used a vision (Isaiah 1:1) and to Samuel in a dream (1 Sam 3:5).

God loves humanity and has not left us in the dark grasping and struggling to find the truth of life, death and the hereafter. Rather, God has spoken to mankind and revealed the truth about where we come from, why we are here, where we are going, and how we can conquer trials, evil and death.

Hebrews 1: 4 – 14: the Superiority of Christ to the Angels

St. Paul, in this portion of Hebrews, refers to 7 key verses in the Old Testament which describe how the Son of God is superior to the angels and worthy of their worship.

- The Son's position is unique (Ps. 2:7)
- The Son as the head of the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:14)
- The Angels worship the Son (Ps. 97:7)
- The Angels serve the Son (Ps. 104:4)

- The Son is anointed to rule the Kingdom (Ps. 45:7-8)
- The Son is the Creator (Ps. 102:25-27)
- The Son is enthroned at the right hand of God the Father (Ps. 110:1)

There are some important facts about angels that we should all know.

Firstly, there are seven archangels: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Souriel, Sadakiel, Sarathiel, and Ananiel.

Additionally:

- Angeles are created beings, superior to men (Ps. 104:4, Heb. 1:14, Col. 1:16).
- Angels are numerous (Psa, 68:17, Mt. 26:53, Heb. 12:22, Rev. 5:11).
- Angels are extremely superior to men in intelligence and knowledge (2 Sam. 14:20, Psa. 103:20, Psa. 104:4).
- Angels have great power (2 Kings 19:35, Mt. 28:3, 2 Pt. 2:11, Rev. 20:1-2).
- Angels observe men (Eccles. 5:6, 1 Cor. 4:9, Eph. 3:10).
- Some angels fell with Satan from their original state (2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6, Rev. 20:10).

II. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the High Priest and the Greatest Covenant (Hebrews 5 – 8)

First of all, we must examine what is the meaning of the word “priest.”

There are several qualities and qualifications to a High Priest. High Priests were to be selected from mankind (Heb 5:1) and served as representatives of men before God (Heb 5:1, 8:6, 1 Tim 2:5). It was a priest’s duty to offer both gifts and sacrifices on behalf of man (Heb 5:1) and to have a pastoral heart toward the people (Heb 5:2, 4, 5). Jesus Christ exhibits all these and is our heavenly High Priest (Heb 5:4 – 5, II Cor. 5:21, I Pt. 1:21-22).

Secondly, we should examine where the priesthood came from.

In the Old Testament, the priests could only come from the tribe of Levi and must be descendants from the line of Aaron. The priest served as a mediator between God and the people: he spoke to God on behalf of the people and spoke to the people on behalf of God.

In the New Testament, Jesus came from the tribe of Judah and He is the High Priest who is also the Sacrifice (Heb 2:17) After the Sacrifice was completed, then some people were called to become priests (Heb 5:4).

St. Athanasius of Alexandria spoke concerning this, saying:

“Truly, He did not take the nature of angels, but the nature of the seed of Abraham, therefore, it was appropriate that He resembles His brothers in everything so He may be a merciful and faithful High Priest in what concerns God, achieving reconciliation for the sins of the people. He suffered being tempted so He may aid those who are tempted. Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him.”

Thus, Jesus Christ is the High Priest and the Sacrifice, He is the Offering and the One offering (“offerer”).

Finally, Hebrews 7 mentions several ways in which our Lord Jesus Christ is the High Priest.

- Our Lord Jesus Christ is our King of Righteousness (v 2)
- He is our King of peace (v 2)
- He is without beginning and ending (v 3)
- He is indestructible (everlasting) (v 16)
- He will never die nor need to be replaced (v 23 – 24)

Typology of the Old Testament (Compare with College, or put in HS material)

1. Melchizedek as a type of our Lord Jesus Christ: Hebrews 5:10 and 7: 1 - 4

St. Ambrose stated that Melchizedek was a holy man and a priest, a symbol of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he was not an angel as some Jews claimed.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was a Priest “called by God as High Priest ‘according to the order of Melchizedek’” (Heb 5:10). Melchizedek was a priest of God the most high (cf. Gen. 14, Ps. 110:4, Heb 7:1 – 7), and he was both a king and a priest. In this dual office of king and priest, he is able to reconcile the justice of God (the business of a king) with His mercy (the business of a priest).

Melchizedek’s name even holds symbolic significance. “Melchizedek” means king of righteousness, while “King of Salem” means king of peace (Heb 7:2). Additionally, Melchizedek had the authority to receive tithes from Abram. Since tithes can only be given from the lesser person to the greater, this symbolizes that Christ is greater than Aaron and Aaron’s priesthood. Moreover, Melchizedek used bread and wine in his service, obviously symbolizing the Eucharist established in the Last Supper by our Lord.

Finally, Hebrews 7:3 describes Melchizedek as “without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.” The fact that neither a father or mother were ever mentioned in describing Melchizedek is symbolic of Christ having no father according to His humanity and no mother according to His divinity. Also, “having neither beginning of days nor end of life” mentioned about him is symbolic of Christ being everlasting and eternal.

To summarize the typology of Our Lord Jesus Christ and Melchizedek, please see the chart below:

Melchizedek	Christ
Neither father nor mother are mentioned	No father according to His humanity, and no mother according to His divinity
Neither beginning nor end of his life are mentioned	He is everlasting and eternal
King	King of kings
King of Righteousness	Righteous and Holy alone
King of Salem	King Of Peace
He offered bread and wine	The Sacrament of the Eucharist

He blessed our father Abraham, “now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better.”	Christ’s priesthood is greater than the priesthood of the Levi.
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St. John Chrysostom explained this symbolism in one of his homilies (Homilies on Genesis 35:16):

What is conveyed to us by this comment, “the king of Salem and priest of God the most high”? He was, for one thing, king of Salem, the text says. Blessed Paul, after all, said the same in drawing attention to them when writing to the believers among the Hebrews, calling to mind his name and his city or origin. At the same time he plumbed the significance of his name and employed some degree of etymology in saying, “Melchizedek, king of righteousness.” You see, in the Hebrew language the word Melchi means “kingdom” and Sedek, “righteousness.” Then, moving on to the name of the city, he says, “king of peace,” Salem, after all, meaning “peace.” On the other hand, he was a priest, possibly self-appointed, this being the way with the priests of the time, you see. So in face his peers had either accorded him the honor on account of his preeminence in age, or he had made it his business to act as a priest, like Noah, like Abel, and like Abraham when they used to offer sacrifices. In a particular manner he was to prove a type of Christ. Hence Paul too understands him in this role in the words, “with no father, with no mother, with no family history, lacking beginning of days and end of life, he yet resembles the Son of God and remains a priest forever” (Heb 7:3). How, you ask, is it possible for a person to have no father or mother and to lack beginning of days and end of life? You heard that he was a type; well, neither marvel at this nor expect everything to be found in the type. You see, he would not be a type if he were likely to contain every feature that occurs in reality. So what does the saying mean? It means this: just as Melchizedek is said to have no father or mother on account of there being no mention of his parents and to have no family history on account of there being no history for him, so too Christ, on account of his having no mother in heaven or father on earth, is said to have no family history and in face has none.

2. Aaron as a type of our Lord Jesus Christ

Hebrews 7 exhorts the need and greatness of a New Priesthood established in Jesus Christ. St. Paul examines the differences between the priesthood of the Old Testament, as exemplified by Aaron, and that of the New Testament, specifically Jesus Christ the High Priest.

Aaron	Jesus Christ
From the tribe of Levi	From the tribe of Judah
A priest	A priest, a prophet, and a king (Heb 3:1, 4:14 – 16)
Represents the priesthood of the Old Testament	Represents the priesthood of the New Testament. From the order of Melchizedek

A mediator and an intercessor. Accordingly, he bears the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate.	Atoning intercession: His intercession is the basis of our acceptance. "Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us." (Romans 8:34)
The high priest is the only one who can enter into the Holy of Holies	Our Lord Jesus Christ did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands, which is but a mere copy of the true one, but rather He entered into heaven itself that He might appear before God the father on our behalf.
The High Priest performs a reconciliation service between a sinner and God through the blood of the sacrifice that he takes during the day of atonement.	Christ offered His own Blood. "how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb 9:14)

3. The New Covenant and the Greatness of Christ's Sacrifice (Hebrews 8, 9,10)

Upon conclusion of our discussion of the priesthood, it is clear that there are many contrasts between the ministry or priesthood of the Old Covenant and that of the New Covenant. "But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises" (Heb 8:6).

Old Covenant	New Covenant
There were repeated sacrifices	There was only one sacrifice
The sacrifices were the blood of animals	Jesus' own blood was used for the sacrifice
The sacrifice was performed for Israel only	Jesus was sacrificed for all sinners
The sacrifice simply left the earthly sanctuary	The Sacrifice entered heavens and remains there
The priest came out of the sanctuary to bless the people	Christ will come again to take His people to heaven

The sevenfold ministry of our Lord Jesus on our behalf:

- 1- His incarnation (Hebrews 1:2, Hebrews 2:16-17)
- 2- His earthly ministry (Hebrews 5:7-9)
- 3- His crucifixion (Hebrews 2:9, Hebrews 7:27, Hebrews 9:28)
- 4- His resurrection (Hebrews 13:20)
- 5- His ascension (Hebrews 4:14, Hebrews 6:20)
- 6- His heavenly intercession (Hebrews 7:25, Hebrews 8:1-2, Hebrews 9:12, 24)
- 7- His second coming (Hebrews 9:28)

4. The Tabernacle as a Type of Our Lord Jesus Christ

In his discussion of the priesthood and the sacrifice, St. Paul also must make mention of the tabernacle (Heb. 8, 9).

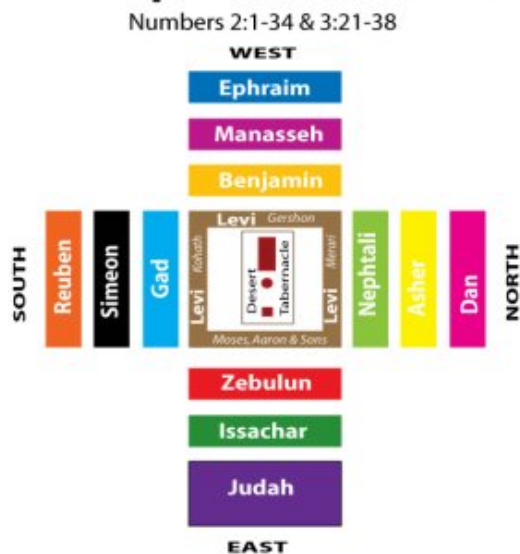
The tabernacle is known by many names: tent, dwelling, tent of meeting, tabernacle of the testimony. The Tabernacle was a moveable “tent of meeting.”

“Tabernacle” means the tent of meeting and was believed to be where the meeting between God and His people took place. God comes to dwell with His people by being in the tabernacle (Ex. 25 – 40). Therefore, the tabernacle stood in the center of Israel’s camp.

Since the tabernacle is where God dwells, it symbolizes the church and St. Mary the Theotokos.

The tabernacle is an announcement of the Lord’s glory. “Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these [rites]” (Heb 9:23).

Encampment of the Tribes



The image depicts how the tribes were arranged in the Israel camp, with the tabernacle in the center of all the tribes. It is not a mere coincidence that it is in the shape of a cross.

God Gave Exacting Instructions of How to Build the Tabernacle

The tabernacle of the Old Testament was made according to the precise divine instructions given to Moses (Heb. 8:5). The tabernacle’s description was written down in sixteen chapters in Exodus and the tabernacle was mentioned in more than fifty chapters between the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Hebrews.

The tabernacle was made exactly to the pattern and instruction given to Moses. Thus, it is written: “Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished. And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did”, “According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did all the work.” (Ex. 39:32, 42) “Thus Moses did; according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did” (Ex. 40:16).

It was important that the tabernacle be exactly like the pattern given because each and every item in the tabernacle represented something to come in the future: either a pattern type or figure. “Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb 9: 23 – 24).

The Purpose of the Tabernacle

We study the tabernacle to understand God’s pattern of how we should worship. The tabernacle shows how common people can have fellowship with a holy God.

The tabernacle was the Lord’s meeting with His people, a place of worship to the Israelites.

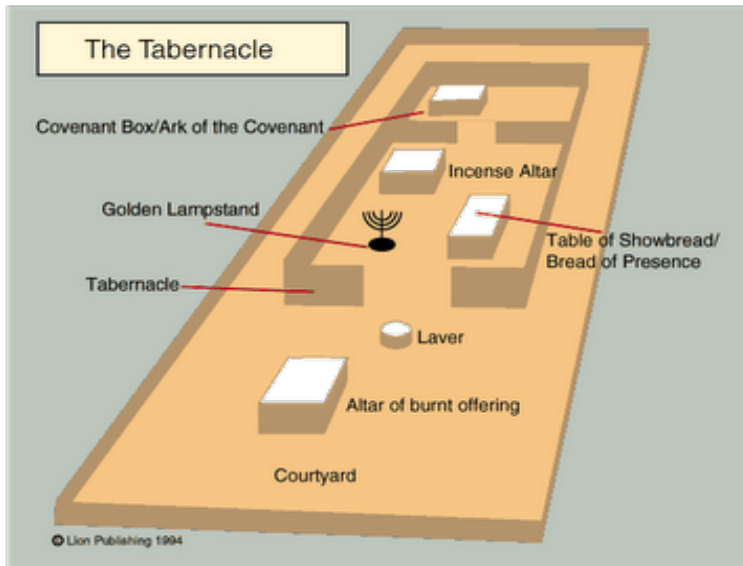
The Lord made Himself a tent amidst the tents of the Israelites; He is the One who took the initiative to make the tabernacle. The Tabernacle was located in the center of the tents of the Israeli people, symbolizing that God is the center of our lives. The Lord is dwelling among us. Moreover, our lives rotate around God. “And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel” (Ex. 25: 22).

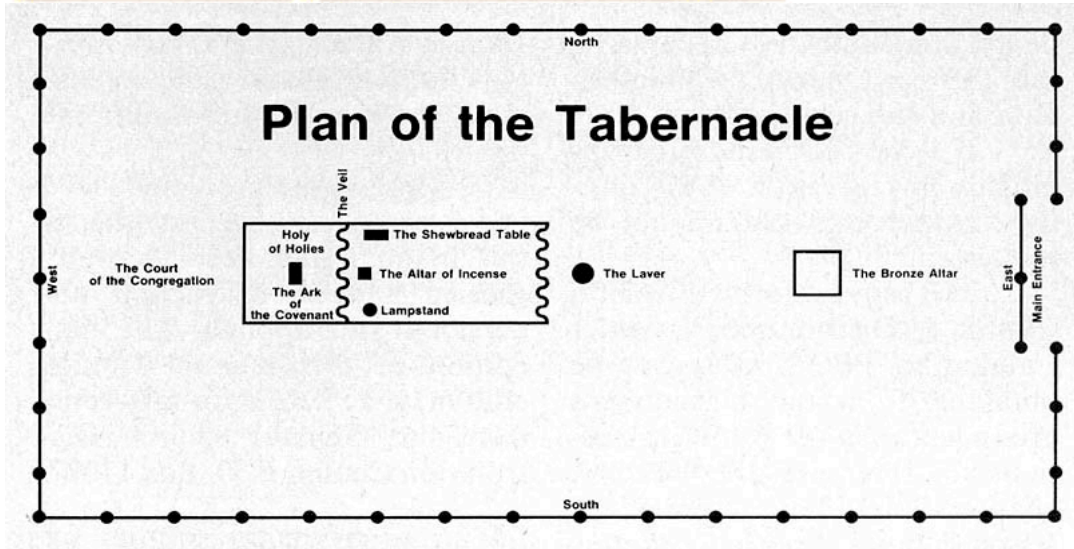
The Lord wants to be and is very close to us, not just in the days of the Old Testament but today as well. “And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (Ex. 25:8). Further, God says, “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Cor 3:16) ...“I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (2 Cor, 6:16). And of course, “And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away’” (Rev 21:3-4).

“Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them;¹and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said” (Jn. 2: 19 -22).

The Lord resembles us in everything except sin. “Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren” (Heb. 2:17).

Some images of the Tabernacle:





III. Hebrews Chapter 11: Chapter of Faith

Faith is defined as the assurance of unseen things. “For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end” (Heb 3:14).

Faith, as described by the fathers of the Church:

- If you do not believe, you will not understand. ~ St. Clement of Alexandria
- Faith is the eye that enlightens conscience. ~ St. Cyril of Jerusalem
- IN Faith the devil is disarmed. ~ St. John Chrysostom

Chapter 11’s Heroes of Faith

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| ■ God as Creator | ■ Moses |
| ■ Abel | ■ Pharaoh’s Daughter |
| ■ Cain | ■ Rahab |
| ■ Enoch | ■ Gideon |
| ■ Noah | ■ Barak |
| ■ Abraham | ■ Samson |
| ■ Isaac | ■ Jephthah |
| ■ Jacob | ■ David |
| ■ Sarah | ■ Samuel |
| ■ Esau | ■ Prophets |
| ■ Joseph | |

The decisions we make today will determine the rewards tomorrow. More than this, our decisions should be motivated by the expectation of receiving rewards. Our father Abraham obeyed God because “he looked for a city” (Heb 11:10).

The Actions and Rewards of some of the Heroes of faith:

- Abel: blood is the only way (the worthy/acceptable sacrifice)
- Enoch: faith through fellowship; he did not die
- Noah: faith through obedience; saved his family
- Abraham: faith through departure, becoming a foreigner in a strange land; miraculous birth of Isaac; willingness to sacrifice Isaac and he was convinced that God would raise him back to life
- Jacob: blessed the two sons of Joseph (his hands were in a cross)
- Joseph: by requesting his bones be taken and placed to rest in Israel
- Parents of Moses: hiding Moses against the law of Pharaoh
- Moses: by refusing to be called son of Pharaoh’s daughter; he kept the first Passover

The Sayings of the Church Fathers about the Heroes of the Faith

- Abel: Heb 11:4 – Talks through his faith. ~ St. Ephrem the Syrian
- Enoch: Heb 11:5 – Faith was the cause of Enoch’s pleasing God. ~ St. John Chrysostom

- Noah: Heb 11:7 – Faith works righteousness. ~ St. John Chrysostom
- Abraham: Heb 11: 8-10 – By faith, Abraham obeyed and left his father and family ~ St. Ephrem the Syrian. Abraham believed God could raise the dead. ~ St. Ephrem the Syrian. Abraham believed in a resurrection that had not yet happened. ~ The scholar Origen
- Sarah: Heb 11:11 – received the powers and youth that were necessary for conception and bearing. ~ St. Ephrem the Syrian. Fulfillment of faith is worth the wait. ~ St. Gregory of Nyssa
- Isaac: Heb 11:20 – Isaac is a type (of Jesus). ~ St. Clement of Alexandria
- Jacob: Heb 11: 21 – Jacob first prefigured the cross when he adored the top of the rod of Joseph (see Gen 47:31); and when he blessed Joseph’s sons with his hands crossed (Gen 48: 13 – 15). ~ Fr. John of Damascus
- Joseph: Heb 11: 22 – He then not only believed himself but led the rest also to faith, that, having exodus always in mind – for he would not have “given directions concerning his burial” unless he had been fully assured of this – they might look for their return to Canaan. See! Even righteous people had care about their sepulchers. ~ St. John Chrysostom
- Moses’ parents: Heb 11:23 – Faith’s courage
- Moses: Heb 11: 24 -26 – Moses refused the palace. ~ St. John Chrysostom
- Israel: Heb 11:29-30 – Everywhere faith goes beyond human reasoning...Faith can do all things. ~ St. John Chrysostom.
- Rahab: Heb 11:31 – She received the trinity. ~ St. Irenaeus

These great men and women (Heb. 11:31, 35) of faith "lived in the future tense" and thus were able to overcome the temptations of the world and the flesh.

IV. Hebrews Chapter 12

St Paul exhorts us to be constant and persevere. In Heb 12:1-2, he says to look to the example of the great witnesses of Christ, the martyrs, and get rid of any weight and sin that prevents us from running a strong race. (my words) As in 1 Cor 9: 24 – 27, He urges us to run a marathon of endurance.

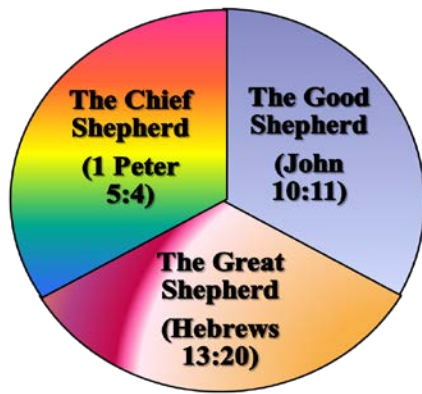
In verses 18 – 22, St. Paul talks about the Church as a spiritual place likened onto Mount Zion. It is the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, with an innumerable company of angels and a great cloud of witnesses.

V. Hebrews Chapter 13

St. Paul ends his epistle with exhortations to the Hebrews. Verses 1 – 7, 16, and 17 reminds the people to let brotherly love continue, to be hospitable to strangers, to remember the prisoners who are one with us in the Body of Christ, to keep marriage honorable, to let their conduct be without covetousness, to do good works and share (Kononia) (Heb 13:16), and to obey the spiritual fathers.

In verses 7- 15, St. Paul provides some concluding religious doctrines. He tells us that the clergy is our model of faith, to remember that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb 13:8) and thus not to follow strange doctrine such as the Kosher laws of the Old Testament.

Finally, he ends his epistle with a benediction, mentioning Christ as the Great Shepherd in verse 20.



This image illustrates the various titles given to Christ as the Shepherd.



YOUTH SPIRITUAL COMPETITION 2013

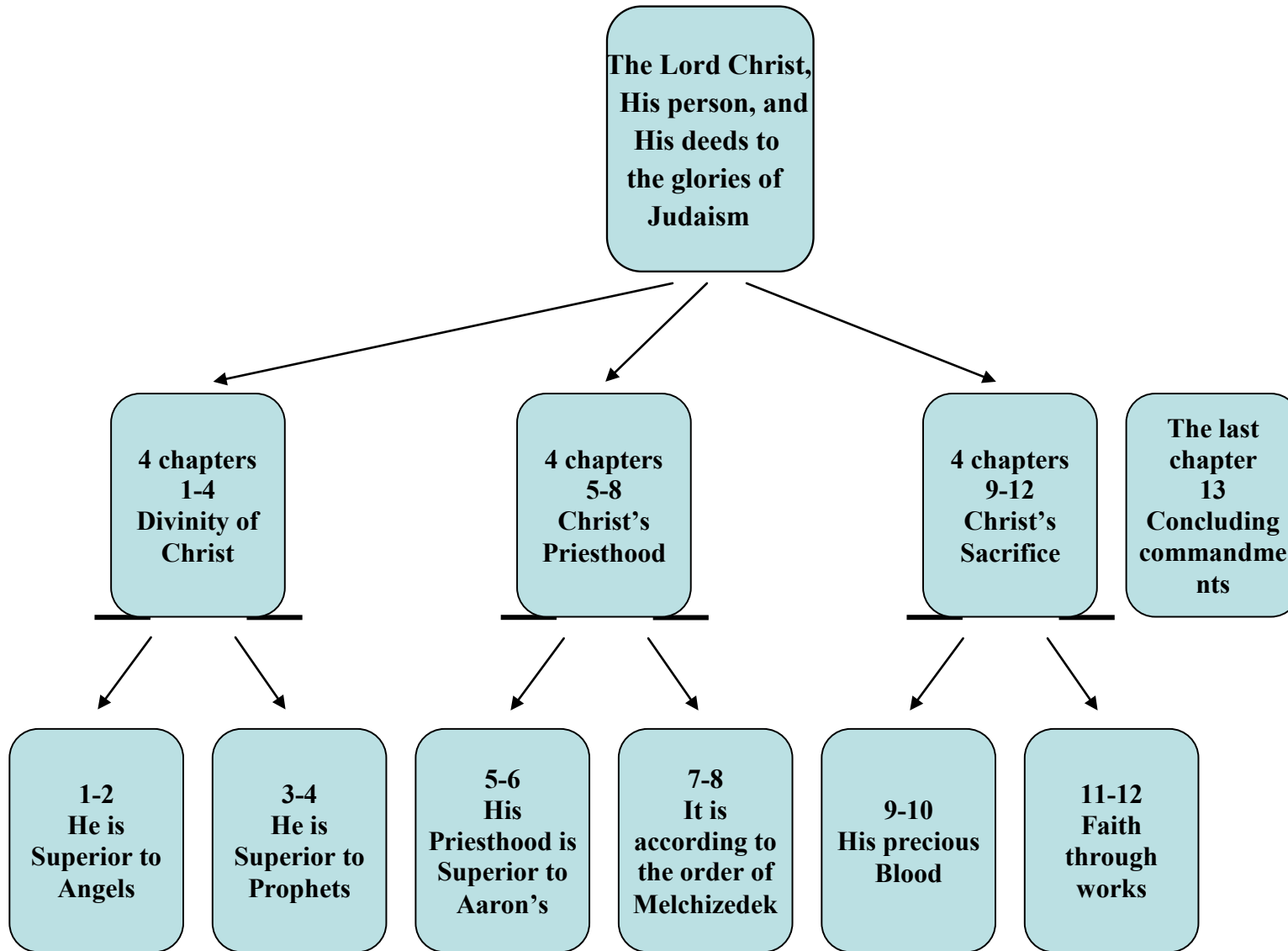
HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

A Study of The Epistle to the Hebrews



Part II

Introduction to The Epistle to the Hebrews



**In the Epistle to the Hebrews every two consecutive chapters grouped together provides a certain theme:
 The First of these two chapters presents: The Faith Doctrine of the theme.
 The Second: The manifestation of this faith doctrine.**

1. Christ superior to Angels	2. He was incarnate and became man like us and called us His Brethren
3. Christ superior to Moses	4. He leads us to Rest (Heaven) as Moses led his people.
5. Christ as the High Priest is superior to Aaron's high priesthood	6. We need to understand this superiority through the (Holy Spirit), upon which we would cease from sinning since we are served in the church by a "Heavenly Priesthood" coming from Christ Himself
7. Christ is the High Priest according to the Order of Melchizedek. A person in the Old Testament who's Genealogy is not recorded. He offered Abraham Bread and Wine.	8. He gave us a new covenant instead of the old one and the old Priesthood, where He offers us Himself through Bread and Wine.
9. Christ offered His Blood and not an animal Sacrifice	10. Having boldness (authority) to enter the Holiest (the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle), where the High Priest enters once a year to offer repentance for his sins and that of all the people. Christ entered Paradise by His Blood, which is a symbol of Christ, offering Himself as a Sacrifice in front of the Father, and hence opening Paradise to all of us afterwards.
11. The Key to Heaven is this Faith (the Faith in	12. This Faith should be striving with perseverance,

Christ as being the end and the goal of the Law and the Prophets). This Faith has been portrayed vividly in the lives of saints of the Old Testament who believed in the coming of a Savior.

resisting sin even until bloodshed.

13. Finally, the road that was opened to Heaven needs guidance and love.

- **Christ is Superior to all that is written in the Old Testament.**
- **His Blood ties the Old Covenant with the New Covenant**
- **The Epistle was written to the Hebrews, which is why St. Paul did not mention his name. He is being humble by omitting his name because he does not want to appear as a teacher over them. But rather he starts it with the word “God.” This would exhort the Jews to read it.**

- **Written also to the Jews who have fallen in despair upon their faith in Christ due to persecution that befell them. St. Paul is attempting to encourage them after they believed in Christ to endure persecution: .**

“But recall the former days in which, after your were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven” (Heb. 10:32-34).

- **It portrayed a marvelous comparison between the Old Testament with its symbols to the New Testament, which has been founded by and upon Christ. The epistle also shows how the symbols are fulfilled in the real thing that it symbolized.**
- **The word Superior is repeated 13 times in this Book**

From Old	To New
Imperfect	Perfect
Shadow	The real image
Blood of Calves and Ox	Blood of Christ
Shadow	The Truth
The great	The Superior
The Symbol	The original
Dim morning light	Bright morning light
A high priest with a weakness	The Son who has been perfected forever Heb. 7:28
Covenant of the Law	Covenant of Christ
Perishing priests	An eternal Priest “There were many priest, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.” Heb. 7:23,24
God speaks to us through prophets	God speaks to us though His Son “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;” Heb.1:1,2
An Old House	A New House (Heaven)

Chapters 1 & 2

Christ is Superior to Angels

Chapter 1

The Jews sanctified the Angels because of the Jewish tradition; The Law was handed to Moses by an Angel. *“For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward” Heb.2:2*

“This Moses whom they rejected, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge? Is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush.’” Acts: 7:35

Angels	Christ
God Spoke to the people of old in many ways among them through the Angels	God speaks to us now through His Son, who “has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He make the worlds” (Heb. 1:2).
Angels are created “Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire” Heb. 1:7	Christ is the Son of God
Angels praise and glorify the God “Let all the angels of God worship Him” Heb. 1:6	Christ is sitting on the Throne “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom” (Heb. 1:8).
Angels minister to us and help us. “Are thy not all ministering spirits send forth to minister for the those who will inherit salvation” Heb. 1:14	Christ grants us salvation through His Body and Blood. “Granted us salvation and remission of sins and eternal life to those who partake of Him” The Holy Liturgy



“Having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” Heb. 1:4

Chapter 2

- **The Lord Jesus Christ, in spite of Him being greater than the angels, He became Incarnate and made Himself less than them even though He is superior to them. *“but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angel, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone!” Heb.2:9 He died for us. He resembled us in everything except for sin. *“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Heb 2:14****
- **And He suffered in order to save us *“For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, he is able to aid those who are tempted”.* Heb.2:18**
- **Therefore, having all this plan being carried out by Christ for our sakes, we should care for our salvation as the verse says *“how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.” Heb 2:3* [the angels were not able to offer to us what Christ offered us]**

Chapters 3&4

Christ is Superior to Prophets

Chapter 3

The comparison in this Chapter is drawn between Christ and Moses, for the latter was the first prophet to lead his people the Israelites out of the land of slavery and crossed with them to the wilderness and stopped by the mountain of Moab to hand them to Joshua to the promised land. Then Christ the real commander, was capable of taking us from the bitterness of slavery to Enter His Rest (Heaven).

Note that a prophet by definition is the one who brings God’s word to the people, and also urges them to repentance. Keeping these roles in mind, Christ very-well can be called a prophet.

Moses (only a prophet)	Christ (A Prophet and Priest)
Minister to the house of God (The Tabernacle)	Christ is the Builder and owner of the house
He was a prophet only and gave the Priesthood to Aaron	Prophet and a High priest “Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.” Heb. 3:1
Did not enter the promised land “so I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest” Heb. 3:11	Christ promised us Heaven
Joshua finished Moses’ mission	Christ accomplished our salvation to the end

Chapter 4

As Moses has led the people, Christ leads us to Enter God's Rest (Heaven), so we fear lest we get rejected like the Israelites *"Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it."* Heb. 4:1

God promised the people rest with the Promised Land, but God rejected them at the end. Therefore, we ought also to be vigilant that we do not lose our eternal life, after being born in the church.

"For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses?" Heb.3:16

"And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?" Heb.3:18

Chapters 5&6

Chapter 5

Priesthood in the Old Testament was a dignified office, offered only to Aaron and His sons, later to the tribe of the Levites. But Christ's Priesthood was not according to Aaron's, i.e. was not doing the same rituals of offering animal sacrifices, as the priests of the Old Testament. Christ's priesthood was called to be according to the order of Melchizedek (Genesis 14) , i.e. offering Bread and Wine. Starting with Aaron being the first High Priest called directly by God, but Christ is superior to him because he enters with us to the Heaven and intercedes on our behalf to the Father.

Qualities of the High Priest	Qualities of Christ
Choosing the High Priest among the people “For every High priest taken form among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins” Heb 5:1	One of Christ's titles is the Son of Man
Appointed for the people and their ministry	Christ came to minister and save us (“For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve”)
Has compassion on the people and knows their weaknesses “He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also for himself is also subject to weakness.” Heb.5:2	(Christ being tempted suffering can have empathy on those who are tempted) “Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard

	because of His godly fear.” Heb. 5:7
The Priest has his own sins and offers sacrifices for himself and for the people. “Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins.” Heb. 5:3	Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice (This is He who offered Himself as an acceptable sacrifice on the cross for our salvation, His Good Father smelled it at evening on Golgotha) The Hymn of Fai Etaf Onf
Has his own sins (weakness)	Without sin
God calls him and the Priest seeks this job on his own. “And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was”.Heb.5:3	Christ also, did not glorify Himself to become High Priest but, it was He who said “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.” Heb. 5:5
The Priest dies	Christ is a Priest forever “As He also says in anther place: “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.” Heb. 5:6

Chapter 6

- **We should understand the sacrifice of Christ for us on the Cross, which He offered once for all for our salvation and we accepted it through Baptism in His name. “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come”. Heb 6:4,5**
- **For if we sinned, we crucify Christ again “if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.” Heb. 6:6 For we only have repentance and confession.**

Chapters 7&8

Chapter 7 *Christ is a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek*

It is so important to for our salvation to understand that Christ is a High Priest. Because approaching God in worship is based on priesthood. Where the congregation approaches God in his house offering their gifts through the priesthood. Or offering their repentance to God in the presence of the priest. This was all a symbol for Christ coming Offering Himself (him being the “offering”) by Himself to death in order to give us Life. “Him” offering Himself means that He is a High Priest.

The goal of this Chapter is that St. Paul is proving that the priesthood of Christ is higher in value than that of the Old Testament priesthood, which is the priesthood of Aaron (called in this Chapter the “Aronic priesthood”)

He shall do that by two arguments:

- 1 – The first argument is that Abram (Abraham) gave “tithes” to Melchizedek**
- 2 – The second one, is that Christ came from a tribe that has nothing to do with the Old Testament priesthood. Christ came from the tribe of Judah, but the Old Testament priesthood is kept in the tribe of Levi.**

Let us understand point number 1:

Let us shed some light on Melchizedek. This will explain to us here why Melchizedek is brought into the discussion by St. Paul. Melchizedek is mentioned in Genesis Ch 14:17-20

¹⁷ After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).

¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out **bread and wine**. He was priest of God Most High, ¹⁹ and he blessed Abram, saying,

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
Creator of heaven and earth.

²⁰ And praise be to God Most High,
who delivered your enemies into your hand.”

Then Abram gave him a **tenth** of everything.

The Key Transaction here is that:

Melchizedek gave Abram bread and wine, and Abram gave Melchizedek the tithe (one-tenth)

This shows that Abram revered Melchizedek. St. Paul says this means that Abram (Abraham) is less than Melchizedek because the payment of tithe goes from the less religiously to the higher religiously (similar to us as a congregation we give our tithe to the church). And since the Levites (who will be the priests of the Old Testament) will come from the children of Abram, then the Levites are less than Melchizedek. Therefore the priesthood of the Levites is less in power than that of Melchizedek. Also, Melchizedek offered Abram bread and wine, which is a very “unique” offering. This never before or after appeared in the Old Testament. And that is why we call Christ a priest forever according to the Order of Melchizedek (i.e. the system of offering of Melchizedek, i.e. bread and wine)

Let us understand Point number 2:

That Christ came from another tribe other than Levi, St. Paul is proving to the Jews that Christ’s High Priest is NOT related to Aaron’s priesthood. That the New Testament priesthood is completely novel, and it started by Christ, NOT being an “extension” to the Old Testament priesthood.

Not let us delve into the analogy between Melchizedek and Christ, using the following table

Melchizedek	Christ
<p>Offered bread and wine as a sacrifice and they are considered blessings of the earth and time. It was strange for anyone to offer a sacrifice of bread and wine, for it never happened in the Old Testament, but it was a prophecy of Christ</p>	<p>The body and blood of Christ is eternal life (Antidote for not dying and elixir of life and eternity)</p>
<p>The meaning of the name is king of peace, King of righteousness Heb. 7:2</p>	<p>Christ is the king of peace and righteousness (The Hymn of Eporo, sung at the feasts that pertain to Christ: “King of peace, grant us Your peace) The Hymn Eboro</p>
<p>“Without a father or mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the son of God, remains a priest continually” 7:3</p>	<p>Christ as the Son of God, has no parents who gave birth to Him. Has has been born, according to the Flesh, from a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit overshadowing her.</p>
<p>“but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed by the better” Heb.7:6</p>	<p>“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Eph. 1:3</p>
<p>As for priesthood, he is a priest forever “remains priest continually” 7:3</p>	<p>Christ is a priest forever “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek” 7:17</p>

- Christ is the priest according to the order of Melchizedek and not Aaron because he was the symbol of the blessing of the new covenant.
- “Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?” Heb.7:11

What did the Priests according to Aaron’s order offer? (The Law)	What did Christ the Priest according to the order of Melchizedek offer? (New Covenant)
Offered the Law, which was orders and fleshly commandments.	Offered an eternal life
“Who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life”. Heb. 7:16	
Old Testament commandments are difficult to save	Now we have hope for salvation through Christ’s commandments
“For on the one hand there is annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitable ness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God”.” Heb. 7:8,19	
The High Priests had sins and offered sacrifices for themselves first and then for the people. “Also there were many priests, because they wee prevented by death from continuing” Heb. 7:23 “Who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the people’s for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself” Heb. 7:27	Without sin, offered Himself for our sake

Subject to weakness	Without Sin
“The law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints The Son who has been perfected forever: Heb. 7:27	

Chapter 8

- **After The Lord led the Israelites out of Egypt and instructed Moses on the Tabernacle, He instituted a Priesthood to minister to them, established a covenant, and gave them the Law on the Tablets, but the people did not keep the covenant with God.**
- **Then came Christ, the superior High priest, and gave us a New eternal covenant, not as the old one. He is the Minister and Priest to the real house (Heaven) established by God, not by humans, and granted us better promises. He is the Redeemer of sins and trespasses, for the Old Testament priesthood which was based on rituals with animal sacrifices was not able to renew in the internal sinful nature of mankind.**

Chapters 9 &10

Chapter 9

A. Comparison between the Two Covenants: The Old and the New

B. Confirming the heavenly Covenant provided by Christ as the New Covenant

A Covenant or a Testament means a “contract” or an enforceable action or way of interaction between two persons. In the case between God and man, it focuses on the way of the forgiveness of sins. It requires also a place to execute the covenant, or live the covenant, and agents who will carry the covenant out.

In the Old Testament, the place is the Tabernacle, and the agents are the priests of the Old Testament. And the repentance (forgiveness of sins) is limited and is done by offering animal sacrifices.

In the New Testament, the place is the Church, and the agent is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, followed by the priests whom He ordained. These are the Apostles, who ordained the Bishops, and priests after them, and keeps going till the second coming.

The repentance is full, because it has been done by the Blood of Christ, and is propagated in the Church by Baptism and Chrismation to be done once. And if sin comes again, then by Repentance and Confession.

The Tabernacle

The place of worship in the Old Testament. It has the items for carrying out the Covenant between God and Man.

It has the sanctuary and the outer court.

The sanctuary is divided into: The Most Holy and the Holy parts.

- ❖ The Most Holy has the Ark of Covenant containing: the Urn of Manna, Aaron's rod, and the Ten Commandments Tablets.**

- ❖ The Holy Part has the Lampstand, the Altar of Incense, and the Table of Showbread.**

The Outercourt has the Bronze Altar for offering Sacrifices, and the Laver for washings with water.

A.

Old Testament	New Testament
<p>The Holy is ministered by many Priests everyday, while the Most Holy is entered by the High Priest Once a Year only.</p>	<p>The most Holy points to Heaven and it being entered only by the High Priest once a year is symbolic of Christ who entered ONCE and for all by His own Blood on the day of His Crucifixion.</p>
<p>Items Found In The Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle</p>	
<p><u>Golden Censer</u></p>	<p>It symbolizes...</p>
<p>Arch of Covenant symbolizing the divine ember, overlaid with gold from all sides and made of Acacia wood</p>	<p>Emmanuel, God is with us or even better in us through Communion</p>
<p><u>The Ark has</u></p>	<p>Symbolizing...</p>
<p>The Pot of Manna which has the manna that came down from God so the people won't die</p>	<p>Communion</p>
<p>The Rod of Aaron</p>	<p>Christ is the Good Shepard</p>
<p>The 2 Tablets with God's commandments</p>	<p>Christ is the Word of God</p>
<p>Above the Ark is the Cherubim (two angels) overshadowing the mercy seat</p>	<p>A sign of our unity with the heavenly through Christ</p>
<p><u>Sacrifices</u></p>	
<p>Sacrifices of the blood of Oxen and Calves sprinkled on the sides "Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy place once for all, having obtained eternal</p>	<p>Christ offered His Blood You, Christ, are the Priest and you are the Sacrifice, You are the Offerer and the offering</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">redemption” Heb. 9:12 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Heb. 9:14</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Purifying the flesh “For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh” Heb. 9:13</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The consciences and the inner depth of the soul “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Heb. 9:14</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The Blood of animals</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Blood of the Son of God</p>

B. What does a Testament mean in a civil sense: There was a Roman law

If the Testator lives then the testament has no power (it can be withdrawn or changed)

God (The testator) and the testament (The Law)

If the testator dies, then the testament is in force (No one can change it)

On The Cross (Christ died), then the testament (covenant) is sealed and confirmed it for us to enjoy Heaven

Chapter 10: Animal sacrifices are limited

Covers the idea of limitedness of animal sacrifices, because they were just symbols of the real sacrifice that erases the sin, that is our Lord Jesus Christ.

- 1. The weakness of the animal sacrifices**
- 2. The power of the Ultimate sacrifice, our Lord Jesus Christ: Done once, and opens Heaven permanently.**
- 3. Entering the Most Holy can only happen by Blood. The High Priest had to have Blood of animals to sprinkle inside when he enters the Most Holy place once a year. He enters 3 times: once with incense to fill the place with incense , then a second time with the blood of animal that was killed for the priest's sins, and a third time, with the blood of an animal killed for the whole congregation's sins.**
- 4. Through perseverance and faith in The Blood of Christ we can in turn enter the Kingdom of Heaven that has been opened by Christ.**

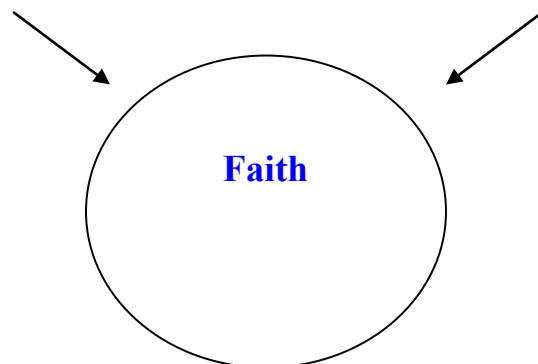
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Chapter 11: Definition and saints who showed faith

It is logical here in the epistle that St. Paul mentions FAITH, for it is what is needed not in order to move from the OLD to the NEW. He proves that by mentioning people of the Old Testament who believed in the coming of a New Covenant. They believed in God so they did things that were out of the ordinary.

1. What is ...

Who are the Men of...



What is FAITH?

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of thing not seen.” Heb. 11:1

Men of faith	Sign of their Faith	The Verse	Spiritual lessons
Abel	Offered with faith a sacrifice, better than Cain's (Even though he died, he speaks). Even though he was killed, through his faith he is alive and speaks with his blood from all the earth	"By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks". Heb. 11:4	We offer for our faith our lives a living sacrifice to Christ.
Enoch	All died in the Old Testament, but God took him and he did not die like the others because of his faith in God (overcame the power of death) Rarely was it said about anyone that pleased God "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" Rom. 3:23 Faith that overcame with its power the power of death because it became equal in its power the God's love	"By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him" for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God" Heb. 11:5	In the midst of a deceitful and evil world we can shine among all
Noah	He built the Arch and all mocked him and he did not	"By faith Noah obeyed when he was called to go out to the	Noah and his household believed in God (8 people) believed and

	<p>see anything yet his faith told him that if God promised He will fulfill and so Noah believed in God and forgot the world, built the Arch and God saved him.</p>	<p>place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.” Heb. 11:7</p>	<p>God saved them despite the whole world “But whoever keeps His word truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him” 2Pet.2:5</p>
<p>Abraham</p>	<p>God called him to leave his household (they were pagan worshipers except for Abraham) and so he left to the wilderness leaving his household and did not ask God to where He is taking him or what would happen to him, but he followed God.</p>	<p>“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out not knowing where he was going. For he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God”. Heb. 11:8</p>	<p>Abraham’s faith allowed him to leave everything dear to him: his hometown, neighbors, and family. Faith is submitting yourself without conditions <i>to whom will take over to the unknown way and a place unknown!</i> ? Without a promise or covenant given, he had obedience without question or explanation. So Abraham fulfilled the definition of faith, faith in things not seen because of the faith in the things that are seen. He did not hope for anything except the face of God who called him.</p>
<p>Sarah</p>	<p>In the conception of Isaac past the age of childbearing.</p>	<p>“By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child</p>	<p>Sarah’s womb was dead, but God brought it back to life. As well as anything you think is dead in you,</p>

		<p>when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude-innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.” Heb. 11:11,12</p>	<p>God uses it in your life, God uses your weakness and raises it for St. Moses the black the adulterer became father of monks.</p>
Abraham	<p>Offered Isaac to death while remembering that God had promised him that through Isaac he would have a seed, so Abraham believed even if Isaac died that God would raise him because he promised him the seed is through Isaac.</p>	<p>Heb 11:17-19 (17) By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten <i>son</i>, (18) Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: (19) Accounting that God <i>was</i> able to raise <i>him</i> up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.</p>	<p>The one who endures tribulations will be crowned at the end. Let us persevere with what God gives us, even if it seems hard, for in it is our purification, sanctification, character building, and proof to God that we love Him.</p>

<p>Isaac</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <p>Eldership is a Blessing</p> </div> <p>ESAU being the Older, lost the blessing JACOB being the Younger, stole the blessing. It was the firm belief of JACOB in obtaining the Eldership blessing. A symbol that the later will be blessed more than the earlier. Christ will be source and seal of blessings to all the prophets who preceded Him</p>	<p>“ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.” Heb. 11:20</p>	<p>Let us run after the blessings given to us by our elders: the priests, our parents, ... For the older generation bestows prayers and love to the younger one.</p>
<p>Jacob</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>JOSEPH presented his children to Jacob (Genesis 48)</p> <p>Ephraim hand of Jacob) (on the left hand of Jacob) The younger</p> <p>Manasseh (on the right hand of Jacob) The Older</p> <p>JACOB</p> <p>But Jacob CROSSED his hands while blessing them. So he gave the blessing to the younger with his right hand. This hand-crossing was a symbol to the blessings that will come to us by the Cross of Christ.</p> </div>	<p>“By faith Jacob, when he was dying blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.” Heb. 11:21</p>	<p>Through the cross is the blessing and power It is the sign when choosing the work.</p>

Joseph	Believed that the people will leave Egypt to the Promised land so he instructed them to take his bones with them.	“By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave them instructions concerning his bones”. Heb. 11:22	Despite that Joseph and his children lived in the land of Egypt he instructed that his bones be taken to the promised land, teaching us that when living on earth and see through faith the heaven from the earth.
Moses	Refused to be called the son of Pharaoh Kept the Passover And crossed the sea	Heb 11:24-29 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook	We also ought to focus on our new calling as being Christians, not caring if we are children of wealthy families, or having friends who can open doors in society for us. Moses relied on God and his heart was with his people

		<p>Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.</p> <p>By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry <i>land</i>: which the Egyptians trying to do were drowned.</p>	
Joshua	The walls of Jericho	<p>“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days”. Heb. 11:30</p>	<p>Encircling the wall seven times did not make sense in the eyes of the unbelievers.</p>
Rahab	<p>She was a sinful woman, but believed the two Jewish men who came to spy the city of Jericho telling them that for sure they will be victorious. She hid them and took a promise from them that they will spare her family. But put it in practice by hanging the “scarlet ribbon” from her window.</p>	<p>Heb 11:31 (31) By faith the harlot Rahab <u>perished not</u> with them that believed not, when she had</p>	<p>This shows us that our past sins can be forgiven if we believe in the Blood of Christ, and act in a manner worthy of the Communion (the scarlet ribbon)</p>

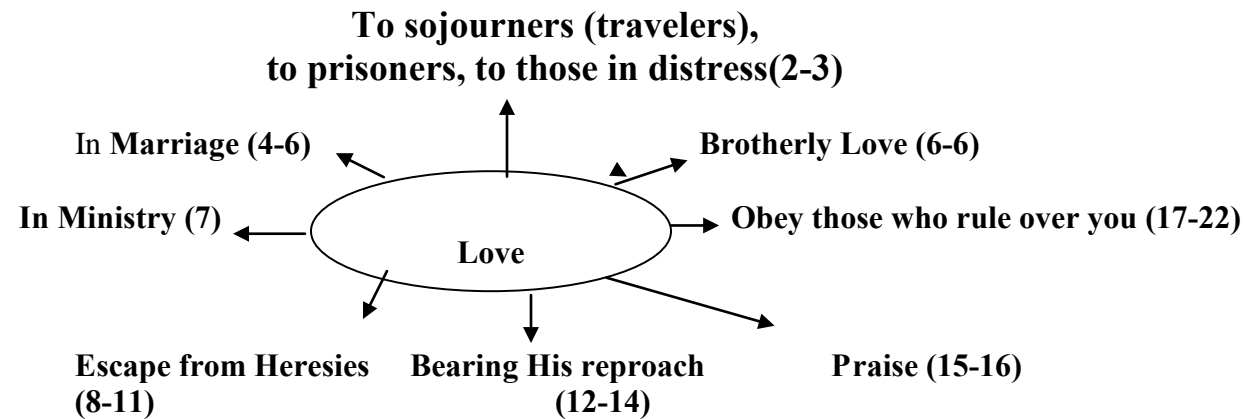
	So the Israelites army saw the scarlet ribbon (red in color, like the blood) and spared all Rahab's household . This Reminds us of the Passover Lamb in Exodus	received the spies with peace.	
Gideon Barak Samson Jephthah David Samuel	Defeated Midianites Defeated the Canaanites Defeated the Philistines Defeated the Ammonites Philistines, The Moabites , and the Ammonites The prophet of the country		When the Lord is for us, who can be of the devils against us!!

Chapter 12: Enduring Faith Through Perseverance

- 1. The Saints who are in heaven help us through their prayers for us during our struggles. The saints are mentioned here by St. Paul to show us two things: First, we are not alone in our struggles, and that there are others (being the saints) who went through them but they were able to overcome. Second, that the saints are alive, and that heaven is real, and it is the destiny of those who live it on earth in the church, and they attain it when they depart.**
- 2. Our goal in the struggle is becoming Christ-like; “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”. Heb. 12:2**
- 3. We must Strive against sin even if it reaches shedding our blood resisting it “ You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin”. Heb 12:4**
- 4. Our eyes must be on heaven “For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and tempest” Heb. 12:18**

Chapter 13 *Concluding commandments*

Here is a simple chart where Hebrews 13 is reminding us to love all; God, those who want to guide, and all the people



The conclusion of the Epistle 23-25

3 points:

1. I love to see you;
2. Send greetings to those who are entrusted with teaching you;
3. those who are here in Italy send you the salutation

Heb 13:23-25

(23) Know ye that *our* brother Timothy is 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.**
(25) Grace *be* with you all. Amen. <Written to the Hebrews from Italy, by Timothy.>

