

Hebrews Chapter 10:1-18 is a very clear theological narrative that is pretty much self explanatory in the context of the letter, so we will look at vs 19-25 with more detail and some comments.

Hebrews 10:19-25

Our purpose is to look at one passage as an example of the particular newness of the New Covenant as compared to the Old Covenant and the rich blessings that the New Covenant affords us, realizing that all spiritual blessings for the New Testament believer are found in our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as the apostle Paul declares,

“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,” Ephesians 1:3, NAS95.

Also let me note that when I speak of the Old Covenant I do not mean all the Old Testament Scripture. It is not all part of Old Covenant Law. That is why Old Testament Scripture as revelation can apply to us, but the Old Covenant does not.

Heb. 10:19-25“Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that .promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Hebrews 10:19-25, NAS95.

This heart of this passage is the idea of the New and Living way.

All of the instruction in Hebrews that has preceded this statement in this letter was to show:

1. The superiority of Christ’s sacrifice over all other sacrifices
2. The superiority of Christ’s priesthood over all other priesthood’s

3. The superiority of the New Covenant, in total, over the Old Covenant.

This instruction also comes with warnings that have been stated and more that will be stated about the absolute necessity of adhering to the teaching and the inherent lifestyle that must accompany the teaching of Scripture in relation to Christ our New Covenant, His sacrifice and His priestly work. This epistle is a warning that certain beliefs and behavior show a defection from the true gospel and that certain denials of Scriptural truth and living, deny the new birth and amount to nothing but apostasy. A true apostate HAS NEVER BEEN A TRUE BELIEVER as Paul told the elders at Ephesus:

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them and John writes, 1Jo 2:19* "They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us."

So, we will begin with some insight pertaining to the newness of the New Covenant, which cannot be exhaustive in the context of this conference, but which can demonstrate what the New Covenant has provided for the people of God.

Circumcision, for example, is not replaced by baptism as a sign to others of belonging to God. Baptism of believers is a unique ordinance of the NT church. Although adultery is still a sin, within the community of Christ we no longer stone adulterers or homosexuals to death, yet God decrees that those who habitually live these lifestyles are condemned:

"Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Corinthians 6:9,10,

If they are not redeemed by Christ they will be cast into the lake of fire.

Jesus takes the law concerning adultery and adds another dimension to it. He says: "but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Matthew 5:28, NAS95.

Therefore in this example, as well as many others, Jesus' teaching is even more demanding than the Siniatic Law because Christ's words do not just demand an external obedience to a clearly written moral code, they go directly to the heart of the matter of where sin is rooted:

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders." Matthew 15:19, NAS95.

Christ demands an ethical, a moral response, a heart response because His law is written on the heart by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The ultimate commands of Jesus are love/God - love/man and this is only done because of the work of the Holy Spirit. This love is produced as the fruit of the Holy Spirit therefore we are to walk in the Spirit, we are led by the Spirit - we are caused by the Spirit to be what we should be, not to the exclusion of obedience but because we are driven to obey by the transforming work of the Holy Spirit and the renewing of our minds (heart, total being) as we look to Christ in His word and in Him see who and what we are.

Yet, it is true that the heart has been known to be the cause of sin all through the days of the Old Testament period before and after the Siniatic Covenant was given.

Ge 6:5* Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Ge 8:21* The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.

Pr 4:23* Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.

Pr 6:14* Who with perversity in his heart continually devises evil, Who spreads strife.

Pr 22:15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.

Jer 17:9* "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?"

Jesus fulfills all the requirements of the Old Covenant and then as our New Covenant He interprets the Old Covenant in light of Himself to bring out its truest and complete meaning. And that is what we need to do as Tom Wells said many years ago,"We need to interpret the Old through the Lens of the new. We must give a logical priority to the New Testament Scriptures for understanding the old."

Why is that? Because Christ is the priority for God's New Covenant people.

The purpose of scripture is to glorify God and scripture's priority is the revelation of Jesus Christ. That is the bottom line of our ministry statement of faith.

He did not come to abolish the law or the prophets but to **fulfill** them and then to incarnate the substance and depth of what the Old Covenant always, as it was revealed part by part to the patriarchs, was meant to be. All the types and shadows and things that were, but not then seen as clearly as God would have them to be, in His time, and for His purpose and for His glory, were revealed when Christ came. This is clear in Matthew 22:

37* And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'

38* "This is the great and foremost commandment.

39* "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

40* "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

These two commandments were the basis for all the Torah of the Old Covenant no matter how it was expressed. All the Siniactic/Old Covenant moral/ethical instruction and laws that carried punishments if broken hung on these two commandments.

Therefore we are to follow Christ's lead and interpret properly what the Old Covenant scripture says in light of Him and about Him and the New Covenant in the course of redemptive history.

The Old Covenant, **as a legal document**, as it was given to Israel, is of no meaning to us as far as practicing our faith, but we need to know what it meant to Israel and especially Old covenant believers, as far as how it related to their understanding of the nature, the character and the attributes of God and how He would be glorified through the ceremonial, civil and moral codes, **which could never be separated from each other**. He gave them for His pleasure, for His purpose and for the praise of His glory because they pointed to Christ. The Old Covenant was not a covenant of grace, it was a covenant of works but it had a gracious purpose.

It was meant to bring them to helplessness under its burden so they could see that salvation came from God by grace and not works.

2 Cor.3:7* But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was,

8* how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory?

9* For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory.**10*** For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it.**11*** For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.

So, what is the same in the New Covenant? Or what continuity exists?

The continuity is that the old pointed to what is fulfilled in the new in Christ. Christ's salvation was revealed in the Old Covenant to those who were chosen by God for salvation.

Do you recall this scene from Luke 24:

24* "Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see."**25*** And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

26* "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"**27*** Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

Jeremiah's prophecy that God will remember sins no more had been foreshadowed in the Old Covenant and found its fulfillment in the new.

"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."” Jeremiah 31:31-34, NAS95.

Now, what is different, new or what discontinuity is there?

Some examples of newness include: the unprecedented power to transform hearts; the actual forgiveness of sins, in contrast to a constant reminding of sin under the Old Covenant sacrificial system; the merging of Israel and Judah representing the true Israel of the New Covenant, Jews and Gentiles as one new

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people and an eschatological dimension/the final fulfillment of all things, in which the New Covenant is seen as the final covenant to end all covenants.

One frequently cited argument in favor of strong continuity between the covenants is that since there was no fault with the old covenant, a totally new covenant was therefore not needed. But the fact that Jeremiah didn't mention a fault with the old covenant doesn't mean that fault did not exist, as the writer of Hebrews points out when he quotes the Jeremiah 31 passage in Heb. 8:8-12.

In 8:7 he writes, "For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second" (NASB).

The clear teaching from Scripture is that the first covenant was not faultless. But how was it faulty? In what way was it not enough?

John Owen, the great puritan preacher and scholar expounds upon this idea by writing: ". . . when once a covenant is made and established, if it will serve unto and effect all that he who makes it doth design, and exhibit all the good which he intends to communicate, there is no reason why another covenant should be made.... Could the first covenant have perfected and consecrated the church, could it have communicated all the grace and mercy that God intended to indulge unto the children of men, the wise and holy author of it would have had no thought about the introduction of another...

F.F. Bruce, one of the most capable 20th century NT scholars writes concerning this passage: "Nothing like this was envisaged under the Sinaitic covenant, says our author; on the contrary, the sacrificial ritual associated with that covenant made provision for the repeated remembrance of sins. The announcement of a new covenant implies in itself that the previous one was defective."

Bruce continues by pointing out something else new in the New Covenant. "It may be said that the reason Christ is surety as well as mediator of the new covenant is that He died to ensure its validity and efficacy. The first covenant had a mediator, but no surety is mentioned in connection with it."

Lets define surety - A surety — is defined as something that gives assurance, or one who takes responsibility for another — this surety is a strong point of difference between the covenants, given that the surety is Christ Himself. The new covenant is therefore new to the degree that Christ's sacrifice is a "better covenant" and "better promise" (Heb. 8:6) than the old. The enormous gulf between the excellence of Christ as surety of a new covenant and the "weaknesses and uselessness" (Heb. 7:18) of the old covenant demands that the new covenant be recognized as something far greater than just the grand finale of the old, no matter how great that grand finale might be claimed to be.

Now, let's appreciate a part of the New Covenant blessing, part of what the newness of the new has for us as we repeat out text

"Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Hebrews 10:19-22, NAS95.

First, we, not the high priest of the temple in Jerusalem or the high priest during the wilderness wanderings, but we, the redeemed of the Lord, not one who by human lineage like the Aaronic or Levitical priest holds a ceremonial position but we who have a direct lineage in the Holy One of God our Savior, our Lord, in Him by an unchangeable and eternal decree, from before the foundation of the world, we, have the confidence to enter the holy place; not with the blood of a sacrificial lamb but we enter with confidence because of the blood of the lamb of God who takes away our sins. It does not just cover them temporarily and symbolically but Christ's blood actually and particularly and definitely takes away the sin of those who believe in Christ and are the adopted sons of God by His specific calling and election - by the grace of God.

We have confidence, boldness, literally - freedom of speech, to enter God's presence and to be in holy conversation with the God of all creation, Who in His

First Baptist Evans 2006 Pastors Conference Samal Island, Davao City Mindanao Philippines 2009 wisdom and for His glory saw fit to include us, if we are the redeemed of Christ, in his eternal plan to be those who can enter into His presence and call Him Abba, Father, God, King, Savior, and Lord. This is a privilege of the New Covenant. This is the dominant note all through the Epistle (3:6; 4:16; 10:19,35). They were tempted to give up Christ, to be quitters. Boldness (courage) is the need of the hour. Into the holy place that is the heavenly sanctuary where Jesus is. This is the better sanctuary. By the blood of Jesus this is the better sacrifice.

Not that those who were the redeemed under the Old Covenant could not pray or commune with God, but we are ushered into His presence in a different way, directly to heaven, because Christ, risen in His glory is at the throne of God and we are in Him and He represents us before God as our advocate and as the first born from among the dead.

And with this freedom of speech comes the responsibility to come humbly and with submission and with awe and with amazement that God would allow such wicked people as we are to be able to know Him and to love Him and to commune with Him because of His magnificent and amazing grace because we love Him only because He first loved us. And as we are in his presence not only do we worship and adore him, but we are able to seek His truth and wisdom and counsel because He has told us to do so.

This is all possible because He has inaugurated, consecrated for us the New Covenant people, a new and a living way.

The new and the living way, the new and the living approach to the sanctuary of God is Christ our Lord, who is our New Covenant, the Living Torah, the Inscribed Word and He as the New Covenant is the fulfilling of Jeremiah's prophecy.

The new, literally - freshly killed, or newly made in relation to sacrifice, meaning that it is always effective, although accomplished and applied, once and for all who will believe at the cross of Calvary. This is not the Catholic teaching of the ongoing sacrifice of Christ, the ongoing suffering of Christ for humanity.

The new way, the new approach is not a ceremony based on the dead carcass of an animal and its sprinkled blood on an altar, but a new way, even though it was ordained from before the beginning of the world. A new way because it was the blood of the Son of God, who was the son of man who became a living and willing sacrifice for those who would be His people.

It is a living way because He is not dead. He rose again on the third day.

A living way because as the veil He is not a piece of linen made from thread that some say was six times doubled and was purple and blue and scarlet and probably was a type of Christ. No, He is the living way, because of His nature and because of His flesh, his humanity, we might gain access to the throne of grace.

And because He lives, we have direct access to heaven and the throne of grace. He is a living way because the law kills, but Christ, by grace, gives new life. The law can only instruct but Christ can construct, He builds his church made of His New Covenant people. He begins a work that He will finish. He is the author and the finisher - the completer of our faith. As He fulfilled all of the requirements of the Law on behalf of the Jews (no time for discussion but remember the nations were *NEVER* under the Siniactic Law..they were a Theocratic nation under God and His law in all of its component parts) and therefore proved to be a perfect man , so he could also provide what was needed for the nations, including averting the wrath of God on any sinners: in Him are all of God's promises to His people fulfilled and completed, and as we are in Him, those things are already accomplished for us, whether we have experienced them or not, because we will, with absolute certainty partake in all the unconditional spiritual blessings that God has for us in Christ, either in this world or in the glory of the resurrection as He works in us to do of His good will and of His pleasure for His glory.

This way Christ himself has consecrated, He has dedicated for us, finished and opened unto us that we might walk therein, and reach home to God; nothing could obstruct or hinder us in it because He has perfected the way.

And He is our high priest. Not only high in the hierarchy of priests but more literally great in stature. He is the great one, the *megas* –(Greek) over the house of God as God’s son.

So then beloved, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.

This is the first of three imperatives in our text that are to be evident in our lives because of what He has accomplished and because of who we are in Him.

The first, let us Draw near to God is what we are instructed to do.

We are to engage in spiritual activity with God, not activity for God, because we have this access to him.

Then we are given four things that make it possible to draw near. Remember the access is already provided, but we have a duty, a responsibility to come in a certain manner before the throne of grace.

First, We need a sincere heart, a heart that is honest and true. One that is not pretending, even as Isaiah wrote,

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:.. Isa 29:13*

We come with a heart ready to receive whatever mercy, or sustaining grace or discipline the Lord will grant as He works to will and to do of His good pleasure in our lives.

Second, we come with full assurance of faith, the most certain confidence.

Full assurance that Christ is who He is and is the keeper of all He has unconditionally promised to his people. Full assurance of faith knows that when we come to God by Christ we shall have audience and acceptance. Without faith it is impossible to please God; and the stronger our faith is the more glory we give to God.

Third, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience.

We come knowing what Christ has done for us by His blood. We have no sin that has not been atoned for. If we are coming to repent, forgiveness will be granted. If we are coming to seek his will, He will show it to us.

Fourth, our bodies washed with pure water.

As we know what Christ has accomplished for us, we do not need a ritual priestly cleansing but even as Jesus told His disciples, you have been washed by the Word, Our sprinkled conscience causes us to remember that sin is atoned for, our washed bodies are the evidence of our regeneration and the outward living of the inward change that has been worked in us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

The second imperative is let us Let us hold fast the confession of our hope or our faith, without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

We are not to let our faith, our hope in all that Christ has provided to get away from us. Our hope should not lean away from Christ's promises but rather should be unwavering, firm and unmoved. It is a confession of hope, not despair regardless of the circumstance or the influences around us to move away from Christ and His word.

The promises of God in Christ in the New Covenant are better promises and He is faithful to keep them.

The third imperative is let us consider one another.

We are to fix our eyes upon one another, we are to observe one another and as is necessary, to provoke one another to good works. I am, in a good way, to stimulate you, to contend with you, to get in your face and as a result sharpen you to work for Christ. We are to consider one another for the sake of Christ and all He has provided for us. We are to help to point out our mutual weaknesses when we are not demonstrating the love of Christ and the good works for which we are ordained to do. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

And in this final exhortation comes a strong warning.

We are not to forsake gathering together as believers. Just as we are not to lean away from the profession of our faith, we are not to desert or be a traitor to the cause of Christ. We are a called out people of God. Called out to assemble with others for the sake of encouragement in the grace that we have in common as God's elect.

There is something terribly wrong with believers who those who act like mobile monastics and spiritual Lone Rangers. Christ does not call us to a Burger King have it your own way of life. We are called to a mutually benefiting life as the adopted sons of God and we do benefit from gathering, praying, worshipping, learning and ministering together unto the glory of God, and even more so as the coming of the Lord grows nearer and nearer. We benefit from this whether we meet on Sunday or any other day.

So beloved, let us be grateful that we are partakers of the new and living way. Let us rejoice that God by His grace has saved us and sanctified us and that He sustains us and shelters us. Let us appreciate in a new way the New Covenant and what it means to be God's New Covenant people.

Christ is the focus of our lives because He is our New Covenant.

God has kept his promise to the seed of Abraham. They are bound up in the Promised One—Jesus Christ. In Christ, God has made good on *all* his promises. "For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us" (2 Cor. 1:20).

Christ is the agent, purpose, and goal of creation—in whom, through whom, and for whom all things were created. God created the heavens and the earth with the express purpose of bringing all things to their ultimate goal through the suffering and death of Christ and His entering into His glory. For Jew and Gentile alike as one new covenant people Jesus is the New and the Living way. Thus the theology of the New Covenant declares that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the key to

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He is the living way, the new way, He is our living inscription, the Living Torah. Therefore our understanding of the theology of the New Covenant is of absolute importance.

God, before the foundation of the world, purposed to manifest his glory in an unfolding way. This eternal purpose would be accomplished in and through Christ Jesus our Lord (see Eph. 3:8-11). This is the heart of what is called the New Covenant and the Theology of the New Covenant.

Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:7)

And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29).

God has kept his promise to the seed of Abraham. They are bound up in the Promised One—Jesus Christ. In Christ, God has made good on *all* his promises. "For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us" (2 Cor. 1:20).

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