

The Unsearchable Riches of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews

(Chapters 1-2) Jesus Christ – Much More Superior than the Angels

- I. The general introduction of the Son of God (Heb. 1:1-4)
 - A. Through (or in) Whom God speaks directly to us today – our Prophet
 - B. Appointed by God as Heir of all things
 - C. Through Whom God made the worlds <the universe> (1:2b; 10-13)
 1. Indicating that Jesus Christ is God Himself
 2. Who upholds all things by the word of His power
 3. Whose years will not fail – His eternal nature
 - D. He is the radiance of God's glory and the express image of His nature

- II. As the firstborn Son of God as man (1:6; 2:9)
 - A. Made a little lower than the angels in His incarnation
 1. Putting on human nature – the seed of Abraham (2:16)
 - a. In all things made like His brethren (2:14a,17)
 - b. Being tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin (2:18; 4:15)
 - c. Going through all sufferings (2:9, 10b, 18)
 - i. Tasted death on the cross for everyone (2:9b)
 - ii. Destroying (bring to naught – of none effect) the devil, who had the power of death (2:14; 2 Tim. 1:10)
 2. Accomplishing the purification of sins (Heb. 1:3b; 2:17; 9:26)
 3. Made perfect <in His human nature> to become the Captain <Author, Leader> of our salvation (2:10; 7:28b)
 - a. To sanctify the sons of God

- b. Not ashamed to call us brethren (2:11-13, 17)
- c. To lead them into glory
- 4. Begotten by God through the resurrection from the dead (1:8b; Acts 13:33-34; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5)
 - a. As the Firstborn from among the dead in His humanity (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5)
 - b. Ascended to the throne on high (Heb. 1:3b, 8-9, 13; 2:9)
 - i. Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty
 - a) His throne and His kingdom will remain forever (Heb. 1:8-9)
 - b) His scepter is a scepter of righteousness
 - c) He loves righteousness and hates lawlessness
 - d) God has anointed Him above His companions
 - ii. Crowned with glory and honor
 - iii. Made Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36; Rev. 1:5; 17:14; 19:16)
 - iv. Worshipped by all the angels (Heb. 1:6-7, 14)
 - a) Who are His ministering spirits (1:7)
 - b) Rendering service on account of those who will inherit salvation
 - c) The believers becoming the many brethren (2:11-18; John 20:17; 1 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 8:29)
- B. In order to become a merciful and faithful High Priest (Heb. 2:17-18)
 - 1. To make propitiation for the sins of the people
 - 2. To help His brethren who are tempted
- C. Warning for us (2:1-4)
- D. Encouragement for us (2:17-18)

(Chapters 3-4:13) Jesus Christ – the Apostle and High Priest of Our Confession

- I. As the Apostle – superior to Moses (Heb. 3:1-6)
 - A. Faithful to the Father who appointed Him as Moses was faithful in all God’s house (Deut. 18:15) – being a type of Christ
 - B. As Son – being counted worthy of more glory and honor than Moses, who was only a servant
 1. Builder of the true tabernacle, the church – the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God – in the New Testament age (Heb. 3:4; 8:2; 9:11; 11:10, 16; 12:22-29)
 2. Being the Master and Owner of His own house (3:6; Eph. 1:22-23)
 - a. Whose house we are (1 Tim. 3:15)
 - b. If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end
- II. Jesus Christ – our real Joshua (Heb. 4:8)
 - A. Leading us into His true rest
 1. Christ – our real good land – our true Sabbath rest – in this age
 2. The millennial kingdom – our Sabbath rest in the coming age
 3. The New Jerusalem – our eternal Sabbath rest in the new heaven and new earth
 - B. The practical way to enter into His rest <partaking of Christ> (Heb. 3:14)
 1. Hearing and obeying His voice (His speaking) through the Holy Spirit “today” (Heb. 3:7, 15; 4:7)
 2. Not hardening our hearts – not being rebellious
 - a. Provoking God to anger by testing Him (Ps. 78:17-21)
 - b. Having an evil heart of unbelief (Heb. 3:12)

- i. Departing from the living God
 - ii. Through the deceitfulness of sin
 - iii. Disqualified to enter into the rest (Heb. 3:19)
 - c. Going astray (Ps. 103:7)
 - i. Just seeing His works
 - ii. Not knowing His ways
 - d. Resulting in spiritual death (Heb. 3:17)
- 3. Holding steadfastly the beginning of our confidence to the end (Heb. 3:14b)
- 4. Mixing the living word with faith (Heb. 4:2-3a)
 - a. The word of God is living, powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12-13)
 - i. Dividing soul from spirit
 - ii. Exposing the thoughts and intents of the heart
 - iii. Nothing is hidden from Him to Whom we must give account
 - b. Faith – the substantiation of things hoped for (Heb. 11:1)
- 5. Ceasing from our own works (Heb. 4:3-10)
- 6. Be DILIGENT to enter that rest (Heb. 4:11)

(Chapters 4:14-5:11) Jesus Christ our High Priest

- I. Jesus Christ – our High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 2:17-18; 4:14-16)
 - A. Who had passed through the heavens
 - 1. Sitting down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:3b)
 - 2. To appear in the presence of God for us (Heb. 9:24)

3. Who can sympathize with our weakness (Heb. 4:15)
 - a. In all points tempted as we are
 - b. Yet without sin
4. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace
 - a. To obtain mercy
 - b. To find grace to help in time of need
- B. Appointed and called by God to be a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:1-11)
 1. As God's Son begotten through resurrection from the dead
 2. Learned obedience in His human life through the things which He suffered
 3. Being made perfect as a man to become the author of eternal salvation

(Chapters 5:11-6:20) An Insertion of a Serious Warning with Encouragement

- I. The danger of not growing and progressing in life and truth (Heb. 5:11-14)
 - A. Remaining as spiritual babes
 1. Partaking only of milk and not solid food
 2. Unskillful in the word of righteousness
 - B. Solid food is for those who are spiritually mature
 1. Who habitually exercise to use their spiritual senses
 2. To discern both good and evil
- II. An encouragement to go on to perfection (Heb. 6:1-6)
 - A. Leaving the word of the beginning concerning Christ
 - B. Not laying AGAIN the foundation
 1. Of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God

2. Of the teachings of baptisms (Gr. βαπτισμός) and of laying on of hands
3. Of resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment
- C. For it is impossible to lay again the foundation that has already been laid (1 Cor. 3:11; Heb. 6:4-6)
- D. There will be a judgment if we do not go on to perfection or maturity (Heb. 6:7-8)
- E. A word of encouragement to hold on to the full assurance of hope to the end (Heb. 6:9-19)
 1. The patience and endurance of Abraham – obtaining the promise at the end
 2. The immutability of God’s counsel – it is impossible for God to lie
 - a. God’s promise to Abraham
 - b. Confirmed by His oath
 3. Jesus Christ – being a sure and steadfast anchor of our soul
 - a. The forerunner who has entered into the heavenly holy of holies before God’s presence for us
 - b. Having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek

(Chapter 7) The Greatness of Melchizedek

- I. “King of Righteousness” and “King of Salem (Peace)”, the priest of the Most High God
- II. Made like the Son of God –
 - A. Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life – remains a priest continually
 - B. Greater than Abraham, whom He blessed
 - C. Greater than the priesthood according to the order of Aaron

- III. Not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life
 - A. Annulling the former commandment
 - 1. Because of its weakness and being unprofitable – making nothing perfect
 - 2. Because it is not able to bring us to God
 - B. Bringing in a better hope, through which we draw near to God
- IV. Made priest with an oath by God
 - A. Becoming a surety (guarantee) of a better covenant
 - B. Having an unchangeable priesthood because He continues forever
 - 1. Able to save us to the uttermost
 - 2. He always lives to make intercession for us
- V. A High Priest that is fitting for us
 - A. Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (without sin), and has become higher than the heavens
 - B. Only needed to offer up Himself once for all
 - C. As the Son, He has been perfected forever

(Chapters 8-10) The Main Point and Focus of the Book of Hebrews

- I. We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens (Heb. 8:1-6)
 - A. Obtaining a better ministry (service)
 - 1. Being a Minister of the heavenly sanctuary (holy of holies) and the true tabernacle
 - a. Which the Lord erected
 - b. And not man (Acts 7:47-50; Is. 66:1; Heb. 8:2; 9:11, 24)
 - 2. Being the reality of all the offerings and sacrifices
 - B. Being the Mediator of a new covenant

- II. The earthly tabernacle and the gifts and sacrifices offered according to the law in the old covenant age are only the copy and shadow of the true heavenly things (Heb. 8:4-5; 10:1; Col. 2:16-17)
 - A. The Spirit indicating that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest (Heb. 9:8)
 - B. And those gifts and sacrifices according to the law could not make anyone perfect (Heb. 9:9)
 - C. However, they are necessary to describe to us the real heavenly good things
- III. The comparison between the Old and the New Covenant (Heb. 8:7-13; 9:1-28; 10:1-18; 2 Cor. 3:1-18)
 - A. The Old Covenant was based on the law and works – the New Covenant on grace and faith
 - B. The Old Covenant was inscribed on tables of stone – the New Covenant on the tablets of our heart, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God (2 Cor. 3:3)
 - C. One was outward – the other inward (2 Cor. 3:7-8)
 - D. One is of the letter which kills – the other of the Spirit which gives life (2 Cor. 3:6)
 - E. One is the ministry of death – the other the ministry of life
 - F. One brings condemnation – the other transformation from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:9, 18)
 - G. The Old Covenant used the blood of animals – the New Covenant is by the precious blood of Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:11-22)
 - H. In the Old Covenant no one could enter into the Holy of Holies except the high priest once a year – in the New Covenant all could enter in anytime by the blood of Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:8-9; 10:19-22)
 - I. In the New Covenant all shall know the Lord, and the Lord shall remember their sins no more
 - J. The Old Covenant is obsolete and ready to vanish away – the New Covenant will abide forever

- IV. In the New Covenant, Christ is the unique sinless and perfect offering
 - A. Unlike the priests in the Old Covenant who repeatedly offered animal sacrifices, which can never take away sins
 - B. He only needed to offer up Himself “once for all” and forever (Heb. 10:10-18)
 - 1. By this one offering He has perfected those who are being sanctified (10:10, 14)
 - 2. He is sitting at the right hand of God today (1:13)
 - 3. Waiting till His enemies are made His footstool (1:13)
 - C. With Christ as such a perfect offering, there is no longer a need for Old Covenant offerings for sin (10:18)
- V. A call to enter into the holiest with boldness (10:19-25)
 - A. By the blood of Jesus
 - B. With a pure heart in full assurance of faith
 - C. Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience
 - D. Our bodies washed with pure water
 - E. Holding fast the confession of our hope without wavering
 - F. Stirring up the love and good works in one another
 - G. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together
- VI. A warning (10:26-31)
- VII. A word of encouragement (10:32-39)

(Chapters 11-12:2) Jesus, the Author and Finisher of Our Faith

- I. The definition of the living faith (Heb. 11:1-3)
- II. A great cloud of witnesses concerning the faith (11:4-39; 12:1-2)

(Chapter 12:3-29) The Lord's Chastening and Achieving the Heavenly Jerusalem

- I. Considering Jesus Christ (Heb. 12:3-4)
 - A. Who endured all kinds of sufferings
 - B. That our souls will not become weary and discouraged
- II. Not to despise the chastening of the Lord (12:5-11)
 - A. All chastening comes from the love of the Lord
 - B. Helping us to be subject to the Father of spirits and live
 - C. That we may partake of His holiness
 - D. And yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness
- III. An encouraging word (10:12-14)
- IV. A warning (12:15-17)
 - A. Not to fall short of the grace of God
 - B. Not to give ground for any root of bitterness to spring up in our hearts
 - C. Not to sell our birthright
- V. We have come to the true Mount Zion, the city of the living God, and the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22-24)
 - A. To an innumerable company of angels
 - B. To the festal gathering (to keep the feasts)
 - C. To the church of the firstborn
 - D. To God, the Judge of all
 - E. To the spirits of just men made perfect
 - F. To Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant
 - G. To the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than the blood of Abel
 - H. An unshakeable kingdom
- VI. Another warning (12:25-29)

(Chapter 13) Conclusion

- I. Practical exhortations on how to serve God in a well pleasing manner
 - A. Let (pure) brotherly love continue – in contrast to our natural biased love
 1. Being hospitable
 2. Being sympathetic with those who are suffering or are mistreated
 3. Being pure and honorable in the marriage life – adulterers and fornicators God will judge
 - B. Be free from covetousness, which is idolatry <Col. 3:5> (vv. 5-6)
 1. Be content
 2. Trust in the Lord
 - C. Be mindful of those leading the church (vv. 7-9, 17, 24)
 1. Those who have spoken the word of God (1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Tim. 5:19-20)
 - a. With discernment
 - b. Elders are not infallible
 2. Considering the issue (outcome) of their conduct
 - a. The word “considering” means to investigate or to observe accurately
 - b. Imitate their faith (and not just their outward behavior)
 - c. Be submissive and obedient, but not without discretion (v. 17)
 - i. Under normal circumstances
 - ii. As shepherds they are supposed to watch over the souls (spiritual condition) of the saints, not to rule over them
 - iii. They are accountable at the judgment day

3. Remember only Jesus Christ never changes (v. 8; 1:10-12)
 - a. Leading ones may change and fall
 - b. Carrying people away with various and strange doctrines (Eph. 4:14)
 - c. Our hearts must be established by grace
 - i. Not by any religious or Jewish practices such as food or washings, etc.
 - ii. Which have no spiritual profit
- D. Admonishing the Hebrew believers to leave the religious camp of Judaism
 1. The altar in the new covenant is the cross of the Lord Jesus
 - a. Jesus Christ is the reality of all the offerings
 - i. Sanctifying the people with His own precious blood
 - ii. Suffered reproach and death outside the Jewish establishment
 - b. The believers are partakers of Christ (the Lord's table)
 - c. The necessity of following Him
 - i. Outside the religious camp (of Judaism or dead religion)
 - ii. Bearing His reproach (partaking of His sufferings)
 - d. We have no continuing city
 - i. Must leave anything that becomes an establishment
 - ii. We seek always the one to come
- E. Continue to practice the truth of the real worship
 1. To offer Christ as the reality of all the offerings
 - a. The spiritual sacrifices as required by God in Leviticus 1-7

- b. Which are the fruit (Hebr. “calves”) of our lips (Hos. 14:2)
- c. The meaning of the word “continually”
 - i. Does not mean all the time or anytime and everywhere
 - ii. It means we should not quit our offering of spiritual sacrifices
 - iii. We should continue to practice it according to the Holy Scriptures
- 2. Other sacrifices that are well pleasing to God but not required for the worship (v. 16)
 - a. Such as doing good works and sharing our material goods
 - b. Presenting our bodies for the services in the church life (Rom. 12)
 - c. Preaching the gospel to unbelievers (Rom. 15:16)
 - d. Monetary support for those who are truly serving according to the will of God (Phil. 4:17-18)
- F. To continue to pray for the apostles
 - 1. That they will have a good conscience
 - 2. To be honorable in all things
 - 3. To be restored to the saints for fellowship and spiritual supplies
- G. Final benediction (vv. 20-25)

Explanation for the verses in Hebrews 6, which is very much misunderstood by Christians

Heb. 6:4 – For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,

Heb. 6:5 – and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

Heb. 6:6 – if they fall (or slip, err), to renew them again to repentance, crucifying again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

Note 1. The book of Hebrews especially emphasizes “eternal salvation” (5:9), “eternal redemption” (9:12), “eternal Spirit” (9:14), “eternal inheritance” (9:15) and “eternal judgment” (6:2). Since the salvation, redemption, the Spirit and the inheritance we have received are all eternal, this proves that we can never lose our salvation, redemption, the Holy Spirit in us and our inheritance. Therefore, we cannot interpret the verses above in Hebrew chapter 6 to mean that the believer described there, if he falls (slips or errs), will lose his salvation. That portion simply means that if he falls as a born again Christian, he should just rise up, apply the blood of the Lord for his forgiveness and cleansing, and go on to maturity. It is impossible to “lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works...” (6:1). It also impossible for a believer to crucify Jesus Christ again for himself and put Him again to open shame. Jesus Christ only needed to die once for all to perfect us.

However, if we do not want to go on to maturity but just want to stay with the elementary doctrines of Christ, then there will be a severe judgment for us at the return of the Lord.