

LESSON 37
“Jesus Christ: The Author and Finisher Of Our Faith”
Hebrews

OVERVIEW:

Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten of the Father. The Melchizedek Priesthood is part of the fullness of the gospel. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the new covenant between God and his children. Those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ will inherit a place in the kingdom of God. God will keep his promises. Whom the Lord loves he chastens. This epistle is Paul’s testimony of Jesus Christ. Paul refers to the Old Testament to convince the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. Some scholars believe that Luke may have helped Paul to write this epistle.

Introduction

“Sent from: Paul, in Italy and probably at Rome.

Sent to: ‘The Hebrews,’ possibly those who helped Paul in the Judean imprisonment.

Date: Possibly A. D. 62.

Purpose: To warn Jewish Christians against falling from the faith and to reconvince them that Christ and his gospel are above the law of Moses.

Main themes: Christ's authority and mission; faithfulness and first principles; Melchizedek priesthood; Christ's atonement; faith and endurance.

Background: Reason for Writing

“...Who were these Jews who first read this letter? The answer must come from the letter itself, since no information on the circumstances of writing is in Acts or early Christian sources... Like the Corinthians, the Hebrews had to go back and relearn the ‘first principles’ at a time when their gospel growth should have been advanced (Heb. 5:12-14). They were ‘dull of hearing’ (Heb. 5:11), which shows that Paul had particular information that worried him. What were their problems? One was living the gospel, a problem common to most branches of the Church in the letters. But the long arguments of reconversion center around Jewish ritual. The Hebrews overstressed the Levitical priesthood that operated the temple and the daily sacrifices that were superseded by Christ's great sacrifice. Chapters 7 through 10 are written for Jews who did not believe that Christ's coming outdated temple sacrifice. After the third journey Paul returned to Jerusalem and shared in temple sacrifice to show that he respected his Hebrew heritage (Acts 20). But it was another thing to believe that sacrifices were part of Christ's gospel, the Jewish heresy that this book combats.” (Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 195 - 196.)

Bruce R. McConkie said: “Paul is at his theological best in Hebrews... as an inspired theologian, Paul takes the revelations of the past, the dead letter of the ancient law, and ties it into the living Christianity of the present. He shows how the gospel grew out of the preparatory law which prevailed in Israel and which in fact had as its purpose the preparing of the way before the coming of that Prophet who led Israel of old and was the Author of both covenants... In Hebrews we learn that Jesus was made a little lower than Elohim; that he has precedence over the angels; that he took upon himself mortality to bring salvation to man. In Hebrews our understanding is refreshed with the knowledge that salvation is available through his intercession; that he sacrificed himself for the sins of the world; that by his blood the saints are sanctified. In it we are taught that the Mosaic ordinances prefigured his ministry; that his gospel was offered to ancient Israel; that he is the Mediator of the new covenant. There is no other Biblical source for detailed knowledge of the Holy Priesthood; of Christ's status as the great High Priest and the Apostle of our profession; of the oath which God swore that his Son would be a priest forever

after the order of Melchizedek. **And nowhere else in the Bible do we find the oath and covenant of the priesthood set forth; or that through this priesthood the gospel is administered; or that it is the power whereby eternal life is gained.**" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 3: 133-135.)

None of the books in the New Testament, the Gospels included, are more Christ centered than Paul's epistle to the Hebrews...As Christ was a living, moving, breathing revelation of his Father, so all who would be saved must be the same. This principle of similitude, or oneness, is the key that unlocks the book of Hebrews. Joseph F. McConkie, *Studies in Scriptures*, 6:192)

SCRIPTURES:

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE HEBREWS CHAPTER 1

The Son is in the express image of the person of the Father—Christ is the Only Begotten Son and thus above the angels.

1 **GOD**, who ^aat sundry times (in many locations and various ways) and in divers manners spake in time past unto the ^bfathers by the ^cprophets, (Elder William Grant Bangerter said at General Conference: **"One of the principal purposes of this general conference of the Church is to announce again that God has raised up a prophet by whom he declares his will to the peoples of this world.** This means that not only is the prophet sent to those who accept his words, such as the members of the Church, but also he is speaking in the name of God to all the inhabitants of the earth. He says, as did an ancient prophet, 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken' (Isa. 1:2). He has been sent especially to you who do not believe in God or in prophets. Wouldn't you like to know what he is saying? He says that in these last days God has restored the ancient gospel in its fulness and wishes to make a new covenant with all people. He says that Jesus Christ will shortly come again to the earth to save and judge the world and that we should all get ready. Now whether you believe it or not, this is earthshaking news." ("The Voice of the Lord Is unto All People," *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 9))

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* ^aSon, whom he hath ^bappointed ^cheir of all things, by whom also he ^dmade the ^eworlds; (Christ is the God of the Old Testament. Christ is better than the prophets of old. Bruce R. McConkie said: **"We are blessed with the knowledge that ours is not the only inhabited earth. Rather, Christ acting under the direction of the Father is the Creator of worlds without number.** Moses was permitted to see many of these earths, to learn that they are inhabited by the spirit children of the Father, and to receive the revelation that it is the Lord's work and glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of the inhabitants of all these earths. (Moses 1:27-41; D. & C. 76:22-24; John 1:1-5; Heb. 1:1-4; *Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, pp. 72-74.)" (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 212.))

3 **Who being the brightness of his** ^aglory, and the express image of his ^bperson, (Joseph Smith wrote in the John Wentworth letter written in 1842: **I was enwrapped in a heavenly vision and saw two glorious personages who exactly resembled each other in features, and likeness, surrounded with a brilliant light which eclipsed the sun at noon-day.** Christ, who is the image of man, is also the express image of his Father's person. So says Paul. For in him, Christ, dwell "the fullness of the Godhead bodily" [Col 2:9]. Why? Because he was "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." What person? God's person. Joseph Smith's *Commentary on the Bible*, p. 186. The First Presidency wrote: "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is 'the express image' of His Father's person (Hebrews 1:3). He walked the earth as a human being, as a perfect man, and said, in answer to a question put to

Him: 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father' (John 14:9). This alone ought to solve the problem to the satisfaction of every thoughtful, reverent mind. The conclusion is irresistible, that if the Son of God be the express image (that is, likeness) of His Father's person, then His Father is in the form of man; for that was the form of the Son of God, not only during His mortal life, but before His mortal birth, and after His resurrection. It was in this form that the Father and the Son, as two personages, appeared to Joseph Smith, when, as a boy of fourteen years, he received his first vision. Then if God made man—the first man—in His own image and likeness, he must have made him like unto Christ, and consequently like unto men of Christ's time and of the present day. That man was made in the image of Christ, is positively stated in the Book of Moses: 'And I, God, said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and it was so...And I, God, created man in mine own image, in the image of mine Only Begotten created I him, male and female created I them' (2:26, 27). "The Father of Jesus is our Father also. Jesus Himself taught this truth, when He instructed His disciples how to pray: 'Our Father which art in heaven,' etc. Jesus, however, is the firstborn among all the sons of God the first begotten in the spirit, and the only begotten in the flesh. He is our elder brother, and we, like Him, are in the image of God. All men and women are in the similitude of the universal Father and Mother, and are literally the sons and daughters of Deity." (JOSEPH F. SMITH, JOHN R. WINDER, ANTHON H. LUND, from James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-75), 4: 206.) and upholding all things by the word of his ^cpower, ("The Father had given [Jehovah] all power and all authority in the universe. Jesus was 'the brightness of [the Father's] glory, and the express image of his person,' who upholds 'all things by the word of his power.' (Heb. 1:3.) Such divine acts as the creation of worlds without number, the governing of the earth and millions of others like it, the revelation to the prophets, and the atonement for all of God's children were entrusted into the hands of Jesus Christ, Jehovah, the Lord God of the universe, the Father of heaven and earth. Jesus was, as Paul taught, 'in the form of God' and 'thought it not robbery to be equal with God.' (Philip. 2:6.) How mighty this man was as a spirit son of God in premortality that the Father would endow him with all of the attributes of deity save only those that pertain to the possession of a physical body. How we, his spirit siblings but spiritual underlings, must have stood in awe of him as we followed him in the course that the Father laid out for his children. How we must have admired the indescribable wisdom with which, even then, he administered the Father's plan. How we must have marveled at the unutterable courage with which he stepped forward to accept the burden of the holy atonement. **If the present sensitivities that we feel for him, his sacred eternal work, and his gospel plan are any indication of the admiration that we had at that time in his presence, then heaven is a glorious place indeed. And if it is glorious because of the presence of the Son there, how glorious it must be because of the presence of the Father, the source of all glory in eternity.**" (Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet, eds., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 5: The Gospels* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1986], 1 - 2.)) when he had by himself ^dpurged (made purification, expiation for) our sins, sat down on the ^eright hand of the ^fMajesty on high;

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent ^aname than they. (B. H. Roberts said: "In this passage the superiority of Jesus over the angels is manifested in four ways: first, by the direct affirmation of God, that he was made 'better' than the angels; second, that by inheritance he obtained a more exalted name; third, that the angels are commanded to worship him; fourth, God, the Father, addressing Jesus, said, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.' In this passage the Father directly addresses Jesus by the title 'God.' And as God is exalted above all angels, Jesus must be superior to angels, for he is 'God.'" (*The Mormon Doctrine of Deity* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1903], 73 - 75.))

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my ^aSon, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a ^bFather, and he shall be to me a Son?

6 And again, when he bringeth in the ^afirstbegotten into the world, he saith, ^bAnd let all the angels of

God ^cworship him(, who maketh his ministers as a flame of fire).

7 And of the angels he saith, ~~Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.~~ (Angels are ministering spirits.)

8 But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy ^athrone, O God, (The Father is saying that Christ is God) *is* for ^bever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom. (Psalms 104) (John Taylor said: “Paul, when speaking of Jesus Christ, gives us to understand that he is the Firstborn of every creature, for by him were all things made that were made, and to him pertains all things; he is the head of all things; he created all things, whether visible or invisible, whether they be principalities, powers, thrones, or dominions; all things were created by him and for him, and without him was not anything made that was made. (Col. 1:13–19; Heb. 1:1–3; John 1:1–3; D&C 76:24). If all things were created by him and for him, this world on which we stand must have been created by him and for him; if so, he is its legitimate, its rightful owner and proprietor, its lawful sovereign and ruler ...” (“ ‘My Friend, My Savior, My Lord, My God’: Latter-day Prophets Bear Testimony of Jesus Christ,” *New Era*, Dec. 1979, 8))

9 Thou hast loved ^arighteousness, and hated iniquity; **therefore God, *even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness*** (Psalms 45:6-7) **above thy fellows.** (To king David it was revealed that the Father would anoint the Son with ‘the oil of gladness’ (see Ps. 45:6-7). This answers an important question. The title of *Christ* means “the Anointed One.” That is an important and well-known concept, but equally important is to know who anointed him and with what he was anointed. **Paul tells us that Elohim anointed Jehovah ‘with the oil of gladness.’ Just as with all other priesthood ordinations, the anointing is performed with holy oil, in this case, ‘the oil of gladness,’ a term which is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. Hence, Christ was anointed by the Father with the Holy Ghost according to the scripture, ‘God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power’** (Acts 10:38).)

10 And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the ^afoundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine ^bhands:

11 They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall ^awax old (grow old, become worn) as doth a garment;

12 And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my ^aright hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

14 Are they not all ^aministering ^bspirits, sent forth ^cto minister (for service) for them who shall be heirs of salvation? (These angels are under the direction of Michael or Adam, who acts under the direction of Christ. Joseph Smith’s Commentary on the Bible, p. 186. Parley P. Pratt said: “Angels are of the same race as men. They are, in fact, men who have passed from the rudimental state to the higher spheres of progressive being. Some have died and risen again to life, and are consequently possessed of a divine, human body of flesh and bones, immortal and eternal. They eat, drink, sing and converse like other men. Some of them hold the keys of Apostleship and Priesthood, by which they teach, instruct, bless, and perform miracles and many mighty works. Translated men, like Enoch, Elijah, John the Apostle, and three of the Apostles of the Western Hemisphere, are also like angels. Angels are ministers, both to men upon the earth, and to the world of spirits. They pass from one world to another with more ease, and in less time than we pass from one city to another. They have not a single attribute which man has not. But their attributes are more matured, or more developed, than the attributes of men in this present sphere of existence. Whenever the keys of Priesthood...are enjoyed by man on the earth, the people thus privileged, are entitled to the ministering of angels.” (*Key to the Science of Theology/A Voice of Warning* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1965], 113.))

CHAPTER 2

Jesus came to suffer death and save men—He came to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

1 THEREFORE (Because Christ is better than the prophets, better than the angels, is God...) we ought to give the more ^aearnest ^bheed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. (lost through neglect)

2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and ^adisobedience received a ^bjust recompence of reward;

3 How shall we ^aescape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with ^asigns and ^bwonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own ^cwill?

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. (Bruce R. McConkie said: “Now, if our fathers were condemned for transgressing and disobeying the law which came from angels through Moses, how much greater shall be our condemnation if we fail to live that gospel which came from the Lord himself through apostles and prophets.” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 3: 143.)

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is ^aman, that thou art mindful of him? (We are children of God.) or the son of man, that thou visitest him? (Psalms 8:4)

7 Thou madest him a little lower than the ^aangels (Heb-gods, GR- angels); thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: (because of Jesus’ mortality)

8 **Thou hast put all things in subjection under his ^afeet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.***

(Paul understands the meaning of the psalm. He understands that Adam was made lord over all the earth, that man was given dominion over the animals and all earthly things. Hence, God ‘hast put all things in subjection under his feet.’ But Paul sees a deeper meaning. He understands that the psalmists’ question ‘what is...the son of man, that thou visitest him?’ has reference to the Son of Man, another name for the Son of God. He understands that while man may have dominion over earthly things, it is Christ who has dominion over heavenly things. Hence, ‘we see not yet all things put under [man’s feet],’ for man has no dominion over death or sin, but lives in fear and bondage to both (v. 15). But the Son of Man hath been made a little lower than the angels being born as a mortal and suffering death that he may put all things—both earthly and heavenly—under his feet. Since Adam was given dominion over the earth, he must turn that dominion over to Christ at the meeting at Adam Ondi-Ahman.)

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little ^alower than the ^bangels (only during his mortality) ^cfor (through) the suffering of ^ddeath, ^ecrowned with glory and honour; that he by the ^fgrace of God should taste ^gdeath for every man.

10 For ^ait became him (it was fitting, suitable, proper for him), for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all ^bthings, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the ^ccaptain of their salvation ^dperfect through sufferings. (Spencer W. Kimball said: “Perfection is a long, hard journey with many pitfalls. It’s not attainable overnight. Eternal vigilance is the price of victory. Eternal vigilance is required in the subduing of enemies and in becoming the master of our lives. It cannot be accomplished in little spurts and disconnected efforts. There must be constant and valiant, purposeful living—righteous living. Do we have the power to attain this kind of abundance? The psalmist was inspired to write: ‘What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.’ (Ps. 8:4–6.) There are those today who say that man is the result of his environment and cannot rise above it. Those who justify mediocrity, failure, immorality of all kinds, and even weakness and criminality are certainly

misguided. Surely the environmental conditions found in childhood and youth are an influence of power. But the fact remains that every normal soul has its free agency and the power to row against the current and to lift itself to new planes of activity and thought and development. Man can transform himself. Man must transform himself.” (“The Abundant Life,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1985, 5))

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are ^asanctified *are* all of ^bone: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them ^cbrethren, (“Paul cited Old Testament texts to sustain his argument that we and Christ are children of the same Father. It was prophesied, Paul noted, that the Christ would not be ashamed to declare the name of God unto his ‘brethren’ of the ‘church’ (Heb. 2:12; Ps. 22:22), and that Christ would be called upon to ‘trust’ as with all of God’s ‘children’ (Heb. 2:13; Ps. 18:2; Isa. 8:18). Though he is God’s son, Christ did not take upon himself the ‘nature of angels.’ (Heb. 2:16.) It was for him to work out his salvation with fear and trembling like the rest of God’s children, ‘in all things.’ **Paul said, ‘it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.’ (Heb. 2:17.) Were this not the case, Christ’s life would be of little value to us as an example. We could not be expected to pattern our lives after someone whose nature was so very different from our own that following in his footsteps would be impossible.** It is our kinship with Christ, our descent from the same Father, that gives meaning to the divine plan for the salvation of men. We too are in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26; Mosiah 7:27; D&C 20:18); we too are heirs, even joint-heirs with Christ; we too may receive of his fullness (D&C 93:19), sit upon thrones (D&C 132:19), and become equal with him ‘in power, and in might, and in dominion’ (D&C 76:95). Thus, salvation comes to us as it did to Christ, by becoming one with the Father. The whole system of salvation centers in the doctrine of oneness and unity. As Christ is the revelation and manifestation of the Father, so we too are to be manifestations of the Father. As Christ was a living, moving, breathing revelation of his Father, so all who would be saved must be the same. This principle of similitude, or oneness, is the key that unlocks the book of Hebrews.” (Joseph F. McConkie, *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 6: Acts to Revelation*, ed. by Robert L. Millet [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 195.)

12 Saying, I will declare thy ^aname unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, I will put my ^atrust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

14 ^aForasmuch (Since) then as the children are partakers of ^bflesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might ^cdestroy him that had the power of ^ddeath, that is, the ^edevil; (Jesus is our personal Savior. He lived, he died, he knows us. John Taylor said: “Jesus descended below all things, that he might be raised above all things.’ He took upon him a body, that he might die as a man, and ‘that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.’ Hebrews 2:14. Having conquered Death, then, in his own dominions, burst the barriers of the tomb, and ascended with his body triumphant to the right hand of God, he has accomplished a purpose which God had decreed from before the foundation of the world, ‘and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.’ Hence man, through obedience to the Gospel, is placed in a position to be an adopted son of God, and have a legitimate right to his Father’s blessings, and to possess the gift of the Holy Ghost. And the Apostle says, that ‘If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.’ Romans 8:11 Thus, as Jesus vanquished death, so may we; as he overcame, so may we; and, if faithful, sit with him upon his throne, as he has overcome, and sat down upon his Father’s throne. Revelation 3:21 Thus, man will not only be raised from degradation, but will also be exalted to a seat among the intelligences which surround the throne of God. This is one great object of our coming here and taking bodies.” (*The Government of God* [Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852], 33 - 34.))

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to ^abondage.

16 For verily he took not on *him the nature* (likeness) of ^aangels; but he took on *him the* ^bseed of Abraham. (a little lower than the angels. “Note Paul’s words: ‘For verily he took not on him the nature of

angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.’ **That means that he did not come into this world with a wall around him that would shield him from pain and sorrow and temptation; rather, he came with the feeling, warmth, concern, and sensitivity common to other human beings.**

‘Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.’ (Heb. 2:16-18.) Paul also wrote that Jesus ‘was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.’ (Heb. 4:15-16.) ...The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that Jesus ‘descended in suffering below that which man can suffer; or, in other words, suffered greater sufferings, and was exposed to more powerful contradictions than any man can be’ (*Lectures on Faith* 5:2). **Because Jesus knew more he felt more; he understood more; he suffered more; and he could be tempted more than any other person. It seems that the number and severity of the temptations that one experiences are in proportion to one's knowledge and perception.** A person with greater capacity may be called on to endure greater temptations. On the other hand, the joys and the rewards for that same person are also greater... The foregoing passages of scripture show that Jesus denied himself of things that his mortal nature may have desired and yet were wrong for him; and he became spiritually strong as a result of that denial.” (Robert J. Matthews, *Behold the Messiah* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1994], 254-255.))

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make ^areconciliation for the sins of the people. (Bruce R. McConkie said: “Paul's epistle to the Hebrews takes on a whole new meaning when it is read and studied with an understanding of the sacrificial system and the temple rites that prevailed in the day of Jesus. Our apostolic friend begins his epistle—as it is the nature and disposition of a true apostle to do—by announcing that the Great Elohim, the God to whom the Hebrews prayed in times past, sent his Son into the world; that the Son was in the express image of the Father's person; and that he came as promised in the holy scriptures. The Son is identified by name as the Man Jesus—the Captain of their salvation, who came to destroy death—who ‘took on him the seed of Abraham,’ so that ‘in all things’ being ‘made like unto his brethren, . . . he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.’ (Heb. 2:16-18.) As we have seen, the high priests in Israel, on the Day of Atonement and at other times, through their sacrificial offerings made ‘reconciliation for the sins of the people.’ That is, by the shedding and sprinkling of the blood of bullocks and goats an atonement was wrought and the sins of the people were forgiven. It is this same prerogative that Paul is now claiming for another of Abraham's seed.” (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 1: 142.))

18 **For in that he himself hath suffered being ^atempted (tried, subjected to trial), he is able to ^bsuccour them that are tempted. (He knows more about temptation than all of the rest of us, because he never gave in to them. Jesus suffered more contradiction and temptation than anyone else on earth.** “Stated simply, Jesus Christ’s empathy for us in our suffering does not come only through revelation (‘the Spirit knoweth all things’) but from actual experience (‘according to the flesh’). Because of his own experience with pain and sorrow—his descent ‘below all things’ (D&C 88:6)—he knows ‘how to succor his people in their infirmities.’ To succor is to bring help or relief to someone in distress. Truly, the Savior does understand our pain and undoubtedly weeps with us in our extremities. He will bring peace, the healing of the soul, to those who trust in him.” (Larry E. Dahl, “The Morning Breaks, the Shadows Flee,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1997, 18–19) “While the Savior knew all things in the Spirit (Alma 7:13), he also knew the pains, infirmities, and temptations of man as experienced in the flesh. He never allowed godly power to insulate pain and affliction and weakness of man traverse and engulf his physical frame. Paul observed that he became ‘like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest’ (Hebrews 2:17). The refiner’s fire of human experience confirmed in his godly

nature the tenderness of heart, the softness of soul, that made the Savior not only just but merciful, not only omnipotent but compassionate. Elder Neal A. Maxwell gave this insight into the relationship between the Atonement and the Savior's succoring powers: 'His empathy and capacity to succor us—in our own sickness, temptations, or sins—were demonstrated and perfected in the process of the great atonement.' He also said, 'The marvelous atonement brought about not only immortality but also the final perfection of Jesus' empathetic and helping capacity.'"...No mortal can cry out, 'he does not understand my plight for my trials are unique.' There is nothing outside the scope of the Savior's experience. As Elder Maxwell observed, 'None of us can tell Christ anything about depression.' As a result of his mortal experience, culminating in the Atonement, the Savior knows understands, and feels every human condition, every human woe, and every human loss. He can comfort as no other. He can lift burdens as no other. He can listen as no other.'" (Tad Callister, *Infinite Atonement*, pp. 207-9))

CHAPTER 3

*Christ is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession—Jesus, being the Son is more than a servant—
Now is the time and the day of our salvation.*

1 WHEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, ^aconsider the ^bApostle and ^cHigh Priest of our profession (testimony), Christ Jesus; (James E. Talmage said: "The word 'apostle' is an Anglicized form derived from the Greek *apostolos*, meaning literally 'one who is sent,' and connoting an envoy or official messenger, who speaks and acts by the authority of one superior to himself. In this sense Paul afterward applied the title to Christ as one specially sent and commissioned of the Father." (*Jesus the Christ*, 212) Orson Pratt "The first officers placed in the kingdom of God are apostles...Paul informs us (Heb. 3:1) that Jesus Himself was an apostle. Holding the office Himself, He had the most perfect right to confer the same calling upon others; hence He first *chose* them, and then *ordained* them; after this He sent them forth to preach (Matthew 10)." (*Orson Pratt's Works* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1945], 41 - 42.))

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses *was faithful* in all his house.

3 For ~~this man~~ (he) was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. ("The epistle to the Hebrews was probably written to Jewish Christians who were struggling with the issue of the Law of Moses and its fulfillment in the gospel of Christ. This epistle is an extended essay on the superiority of Christ and the gospel to Moses and the institutions of the Mosaic Law. The author emphasizes the superiority of Christ to angels (Heb. 1–2) and to Moses (Heb. 3), his superiority as a high priest to the Jewish high priests (Heb. 4–5), the superiority of his Melchizedek Priesthood to the priesthood of Aaron (Heb. 7), and the superiority of his sacrifice and covenant to those of the Mosaic Law (Heb. 8–9)." (Stephen E. Robinson, "The Law after Christ," *Ensign*, Sept. 1983, 72)

4 For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God.

5 And Moses verily *was* faithful in all his house, as a ^aservant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

6 But Christ as a son over his own ^ahouse; whose ^bhouse are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. ("Now Paul is saying that the Meridian Saints are the Lord's house, among whom is Christ the Lord who excels even Moses in glory and greatness. Moses was the servant in the house for his day and age, but Christ is the Son who made the house and whose it is." (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:147))

7 Wherefore (as the ^aHoly Ghost saith, ^bTo day if ye will hear his voice,

8 ^aHarden not your hearts, as in the ^bprovocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: (See verse 15)

9 When your fathers tempted me, ^aproved me, and saw my works forty years.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that ^ageneration, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways.

11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not ^aenter into my ^brest.) (Israel wandering in the wilderness. ‘Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory. Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also’ (D&C 84:23-25).)

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil ^aheart of ^bunbelief, in ^cdeparting (apostatizing, withdrawing from) from the living God.

13 But ^aexhort one another daily, while it is called ^bTo day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence ^astedfast unto the end;

15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, ^aharden not your hearts, as in the ^bprovocation. (“Camped in the hot, waterless wilderness of southern Palestine, the Israelites challenged Moses, saying, ‘Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?’ (Exodus 17:3). This complaint might have been understandable had these people never seen the hand of God in their lives, but this incident occurred after the miraculous Passover, after their passage through the Red Sea dry shod, and after the outpouring of manna and quail from heaven. In response to the Israelites' faithlessness, an exasperated Moses cried out to the Lord, ‘What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me’ (Exodus 17:4). The Lord answered: ‘Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah’ (Exodus 17:6-7). Psalm 95 provides the linguistic link that identifies this incident as the Provocation: (quotes Psalm 95:7-11: 7 For he *is* our God; and we *are* the people of his pasture, and the ^asheep of his hand. ^bTo day if ye will ^chear his ^dvoice, 8 ^aHarden not your heart, as ^bin the ^cprovocation, *and as in* the day of ^dtemptation in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, ^aproved me, and saw my work. 10 ^aForty years long was I ^bgrieved with *this* ^cgeneration, and said, It *is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not ^aenter into my ^brest.). **The event at Meribah is the Provocation mentioned throughout the Bible. In that incident, the Lord tested the faith of the children of Israel and their willingness to accept his love and grace.** Grace is the Lord's divine enabling power, given to humankind to help them with all the challenges of their lives; grace ultimately empowers them to lay hold on heaven itself. But the Israelites' response to the Lord's abundant generosity illustrates a religious paradox: God offers his children grace, but the children will not seek it; God offers his children heaven, but the children will not enter in.” (M. Catherine Thomas, *Thy People Shall Be My People and Thy God My God: The 22d Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], 167.)

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose ^acarcasses fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of ^aunbelief.

CHAPTER 4

The gospel was offered to ancient Israel—Saints enter into the rest of the Lord—Though tempted in all points, Jesus was without sin.

1 LET us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his ^arest, any of you should seem to come short of it. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: “**No man can obtain that exaltation without receiving the covenants that belong to the priesthood. No woman can obtain this great honor and glory without receiving the blessings of faith, repentance and baptism, confirmation, and obedience to the covenants that are promised her and her husband in the temple of the Lord.** Otherwise, there would be no progress, that is, to the fulness. No man who is not willing to continue, even though he be a member of the Church, in receiving these covenants, and taking upon him these blessings and powers which the Lord has offered unto him by covenant, will ever reach the fulness. All such will be barred. There will come a certain place which they cannot pass. The fulness of knowledge, and understanding, and wisdom, by which men may become perfect even as God is perfect, can only be gained by a strict adherence to those eternal laws upon which this great blessing is based. **We fall short through lack of faithfulness if we refuse to receive covenants and take upon ourselves obligations that pertain to the exaltation. There will be a bar that will prevent us from continuing to that fullness.**” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 2: 45.))

2 For unto us was the ^agospel (rest) preached, as well as unto them: (Joseph Smith said: “We find also, that when the Israelites came out of Egypt they had the Gospel preached to them, according to Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, which says: ‘For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it’ (see Heb. 4:2). It is said again, in Gal. 3:19, that the law (of Moses, or the Levitical law) was ‘added’ because of transgression. What, we ask, was this law added to, if it was not added to the Gospel? It must be plain that it was added to the Gospel, since we learn that they had the Gospel preached to them. From these few facts, we conclude that whenever the Lord revealed Himself to men in ancient days, and commanded them to offer sacrifice to Him, that it was done that they might look forward in faith to the time of His coming, and rely upon the power of that atonement for a remission of their sins.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 59.)) but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with ^bfaith in them that heard it. (Today we still need to have faith in the gospel.)

3 ^aFor we ~~which~~ (who) have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, If they (harden their hearts they shall not enter into my rest; also, I have sworn, If they will not harden their hearts, they) shall enter into my ^brest: (**‘The rest here referred to is not physical rest, for there is no such thing as physical rest in the Church of Jesus Christ. Reference is made to the spiritual rest and peace which are born from a settled conviction of the truth in the minds of men.** We may thus enter into the rest of the Lord today, by coming to an understanding of the truths of the gospel.’ (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 126. See also p. 58.)) “As a further extension, ‘The rest of the Lord, in eternity, is to inherit eternal life, to gain the fulness of the Lord’s glory. (D&C 84:24.)’ (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed., p. 633.)) (J. Lewis Taylor, “New Testament Backgrounds: Hebrews,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1976, 59)) although the works (of God) were (prepared, (or finished,)) from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the ^aseventh *day* on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 ^aAnd in this *place* again, If (they harden not their hearts) they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and ^athey (those who formerly were taught the gospel) to whom it was first preached entered not in because of ^bunbelief: (disobedience, unbelief, obstinacy)

7 Again, he ^alimiteth (appoints, decrees, constitutes) a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will ^bhear his voice, ^charden not your hearts.

8 For if ^aJesus (Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. (There is a better rest. God’s rest. Rest from doubt, religious turmoil in the world. Secure in our testimony.)

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his. (One of the goals of discipleship is to submit our will to the will of the Father. This means, in part, that we bury our own agenda and adopt the Lord's. It means that our personal desires are replaced with divine desires. It means that the carnal mind is replaced with the mind of Christ. Paul also explains that it means that we stop doing our own work and start doing the work of the Lord. Once we cease from always being concerned about our 'own works,' we can focus on that work which ironically brings us rest. Hence the invitation, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden [with your own works], and I will give you rest. Take my yoke [the work of the Lord] upon you...and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' (Matt. 11:28-30))

11 Let us ^alabour (hasten, be eager) therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of ^bunbelief. (obstinacy, disobedience)

12 For the ^aword of God is ^bquick, (living) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged ^csword, ^dpiercing even to the dividing asunder ^eof ~~sou~~ (body) and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a ^fdiscerner of the ^gthoughts and ^hintents of the heart. (Dallin H. Oaks said: "Paul warned the Hebrews that God 'is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,' and 'all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him.' (Heb. 4:12-13.) In other words, **God judges us not only for our acts, but also for the desires of our hearts.** He has said so again and again. This is a challenging reality, but it is not surprising. Agency and accountability are eternal principles. We exercise our free agency not only by what we do, but also by what we decide, or will, or desire. Restrictions on freedom can deprive us of the power to do, but no one can deprive us of the power to will or desire. Accountability must therefore reach and attach consequences to the desires of our hearts. This principle applies both in a negative way—making us guilty of sin for evil thoughts and desires—and in a positive way—promising us blessings for righteous desires." ("The Desires of Our Hearts," *Ensign*, June 1986, 64-65))

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the ^aeyes of him with whom we have to do.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the ^aheavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession (testimony).

15 For we have not an high priest ^awhich cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities (unable to sympathize with our frailties, imperfections) ("We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was *in all points tempted like as we are*, yet without sin.' (Heb. 4:15; Because he 'was in all points tempted like as we are,' **our Savior understands our situation, knows from his own personal experience what we struggle against, and can sympathize with us and have compassion on us.** Thus, when I am tempted, I don't have to appeal to some distant entity who has never been in my shoes. I can take my problems to a high priest, Jesus, who *can* 'be touched with the feeling of [my] infirmities'—because he has been where I am. I can share my problems with a compassionate God who knows from experience what I am talking about and understands from experience what I am going through. There may be certain aspects of his nature that the rest of us do not fully share, but there is no aspect of our human nature that he does not share. And that is good news." (Stephen E. Robinson, *Believing Christ: The Parable of the Bicycle and Other Good News* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1992], 115.)); but was in all points ^btempted like as *we are*, yet without ^csin. (Howard W. Hunter "**It is important to remember that Jesus was capable of sinning, that he could have succumbed, that the plan of life and salvation could have been foiled, but that he remained true. Had there been no possibility of his yielding to the enticement of Satan, there would have been no real test, no genuine victory in the result. If he had been stripped of the faculty to sin, he would have been stripped of his very agency.** It was he who had come to safeguard and ensure the agency of man. He had to retain the capacity and ability to sin had he willed so to do. As Paul wrote, 'Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered' (Hebrews 5:8); and he 'was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin' (Hebrews 4:15). He was perfect and sinless, not because he had to be, but rather because he clearly and determinedly wanted to be. As the Doctrine

and Covenants records, 'He suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them' (D&C 20:22)." (*The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997], 4.) Harold B. Lee said: "As we read the story of the life of the Savior we are impressed by the fact that he was stirred by human emotions, just as we are. I wonder if he was not angered when he saw the money-changers making his Father's house a den of thieves. When the hypocritical Pharisees challenged him because he healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath day, the gospel writer records that he looked on them 'with anger being grieved because of their hardness of heart.'... Yes, Jesus was 'tempted as we are in all things' yet he was without sin. Although he was moved by human emotions throughout his life, there was an essential difference between his expression of them and ours. His emotions were always under control. Frequently ours are uncontrolled and end in bitterness that endangers our own souls. He could hate sin yet have compassion on the sinner. He was angered at the narrowness and bigotry that closed men's minds to truth, yet he was patient in his teachings. He loved all mankind and jealously shepherded them against the evils of the day." (*Decisions for Successful Living* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973], 42 - 43.))

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of ^agrace, (Bruce R. McConkie said: "It is pleasing to that God whose we are when we fast and pray and seek his blessings; when we plead with all the energy of our souls for those things we so much desire; when, as Paul says, we 'come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' (Heb. 4:16.)" ("Patterns of Prayer," *Ensign*, May 1984, 32)) that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Confidently. Harold B. Lee said: "[Speaking of Heb. 4:16] Now, that is the invitation to come to Him when we are faced with problems too much for human skill or for human wisdom, and we will thereby find the answer more divine than human intelligence can understand... Those timeless words should be written upon the tablets of our hearts: to likewise give us courage to withstand in our time of need." (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 129, 190.))

CHAPTER 5

Ministers must be called of God as was Aaron—Christ was a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek—Jesus Christ is the author of eternal salvation.

1 FOR every high priest (...though they were not high priests as we know them today, rather, they were presiding priests of the Aaronic order. They are similar to our Presiding Bishop.) taken from among men is ^aordained for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and ^bsacrifices for sins: (Paul is not speaking of the office of high priest in the Melchizedek priesthood. There was one man who held the office of high priest as the presiding authority of the Levitical priesthood. The Bible Dictionary explains: "Under the law of Moses the presiding officer of the Aaronic Priesthood was called the high priest. The office was hereditary and came through the firstborn among the family of Aaron, Aaron himself being the first high priest of the Aaronic order... The high priest's main duties, in addition to the duties of a regular priest, were to perform the service of the Day of Atonement; to inquire God's will by the Urim and Thummim in the breastplate of his office; and to offer sacrifices on Sabbaths, new moons, and yearly festivals. He also had to offer a meat offering twice daily for himself (Lev. 6:19-23)." (Bible Dictionary: High Priest))

2 Who can have ^acompassion on the ignorant, and on them that are ^bout of the way (straying, wandering); for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for ^asins. (Yom Kippor, the Day of Atonement. The high priest goes into the holy of holies once a year.)

4 And no man taketh this ^ahonour (the priesthood) unto himself (even Jesus had to be ordained), but he that is ^bcalled of God, as was ^cAaron. (We must receive proper authority to obtain the priesthood. We believe that no man can administer salvation through the gospel to the souls of men in the name of Jesus

Christ except he is authorized from God by revelation or by being ordained by someone whom God hath sent by revelation... And I would ask, how was Aaron called, but by revelation? Joseph Smith's Commentary on the Bible, p. 186. David O. McKay said: "This question of divine authority is one of the important factors which distinguish the Church of Jesus Christ from the Protestant creeds of Christendom. In plain, unmistakable terms the Church declares that 'a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.' (Articles of Faith, No. 5.) In this declaration the Church but reiterates the words of one who bore Christ's authority in the Meridian of Time, and who, in writing upon this very question, said, 'And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.' (Heb. 5:4.) "Herein lies one secret of the strength of this great latter-day work. Its origin consists not in the whims, the desires, or the aspirations of men, but in the order and the will of Christ himself, the author of our eternal salvation. If one man could assume the right to speak in the name of the Lord, other men would have the same privilege. These many men, all presuming to say, 'Thus saith the Lord,' yet not seeing 'eye to eye' on important elements of God's kingdom, the inevitable result would be confusion, and sincere men and women would be driven from, not attracted to Christ's Church, yet eventually would be made to suffer for not having obeyed the principles of life and salvation. "Yet the real cause of their failure to accept these eternal principles would be the fact that unauthorized men arrogated to themselves the right to officiate in things pertaining to God. Herein lies the explanation of the discordant condition existing among jarring creeds in the so-called Christian world today. Men who have no right so to do are officiating in the name of Christ. The result, of course, is confusion. Whatever else may be said of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the strength of his position in regard to divine authority must be recognized." (*Gospel Ideals: Selections from the Discourses of David O. McKay* [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953], 166.) Robert E. Wells said: "**Any ordinances performed without that authority are as invalid as a forged signature on a loan. Many baptisms and confirmations and other ordinances are performed by well-meaning people, but if those people lack the proper authority, they have no promise that the ordinance will be validated in this or the next life. Many, we fear, will be disillusioned when they arrive on the other side and find that the ordinances performed for them were invalid and the authority those who performed the ordinances thought they had is nonexistent. Sincerity or faith alone is not enough.**" (*The Mount and the Master* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 201.))

5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; **(But as pertaining to his mortal ministry, Christ our Lord received the Melchizedek Priesthood here on earth, and was ordained to the office of a high priest therein, thus setting an example for others and being in all things the Prototype of salvation. With reference to the mortal receipt of that holy order which is his, and which he had afore used to create this and an infinite number of other worlds, and which he had in fact given to Melchizedek in the first instance, the Prophet says: "If a man gets the fullness of the priesthood of God he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord. TPJS, p. 308. DNTC, 3:157) but he that said unto him, Thou art my ^aSon, to day have I begotten thee. (Bruce R. McConkie said: "True ministers... never call themselves; they do not and cannot endow themselves with divine authority. They must be called of God. **Even Christ 'glorified not himself to be made an high priest' (Heb. 5:5); even he was called and given power and sent forth by his Father.** Those who are called of God thus become his servants, his agents, his ambassadors. They are sent forth to do what he wants done and to represent him. Their words are his words and their acts his acts; when they serve within the field and scope of their authorization, it is as though the Lord himself had said or done whatever is involved." (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 2: 308.))**

6 As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a ^apriest ^bfor ever after the order of ^cMelchisedec.

7 ^aWho in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up ^bprayers and supplications with ^cstrong **mighty,**

powerful supplication) crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard^d in that he feared (because of his piety, reverence); (“What kind of a man was this Melchizedek? ...The Joseph Smith Translation provides an additional 16 verses in Genesis 14 (Gen. 14:25–40) ...As a child Melchizedek had such faith as to stop the mouths of lions and quench the violence of fire (see also JST, Heb. 5:7). He was ordained a high priest after the order of the Son of God. He was a prophet like unto Enoch who had power through his faith over the elements, over the nations of the earth, and the power to stand in the presence of God ‘by the will of the Son of God which was from before the foundation of the world’ (JST, Gen. 14:31). In addition to his biblical title ‘King of peace’ (Heb. 7:2), in the Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis 14:33 [Gen. 14:33] we learn Melchizedek was called by his people ‘the Prince of peace,’ another title identifying him as a type foreshadowing the ministry of Jesus Christ.” (David Rolph Seely, “The Joseph Smith Translation: ‘Plain and Precious Things’ Restored,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 14) JST Hebrews 5:7 Footnote: Does verse 8 refer to Melchizedek or Christ? The footnote states that verses 7 and 8 “are a parenthesis alluding to Melchizedek and not to Christ.” Yet, many prophets and apostles (e.g. *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 73) have spoken of verse 8 in reference to the Savior. How can we resolve this conflict? Robert J. Matthews explained it as follows: “The reference to Melchizedek was undoubtedly inserted because Melchizedek was a type or a foreshadowing of Christ...Hence, Hebrews 5:7–8, while referring specifically to Melchizedek, has equal, though indirect, application to Jesus Christ because Melchizedek typifies Christ.” (Robert J. Matthews, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1987, 21) In many instances, the Joseph Smith Translation focuses not on Paul’s original intent as much as it protects us against Satan’s distortion of the scriptures. This footnote provides a good example. Satan’s henchmen might argue that if Christ *learned obedience*, then he must have been *disobedient* at some point. Those who would detract from Christ’s perfect sinless life could use this scripture to argue that he was not perfect in mortality. Joseph Smith’s translation anticipates this Satanic ploy and gives us scriptural ammunition to fight it. However, if you understand the verse as Paul intended, it may be correctly applied to Jesus Christ. In this context, what does it mean when Christ *learned obedience* by the things which he suffered? Does it mean he was ever disobedient? Of course not! It means that he grew ‘grace for grace.’ It means that the physical suffering of Christ taught him what it meant to be obedient to the Father not just in the spiritual sense but in the physical sense. Prior to his mortal advent, he knew perfect obedience in the Spirit, but he had not yet experienced it in the flesh. His physical suffering was a learning experience for him just as it can be for us. Correctly understood, Paul never intended to imply that Christ had ever been *disobedient*. Did Jesus ever commit sin? (Heb. 5:8–9.) Because of Hebrews 5:8–9, which says that Jesus ‘learned ... obedience by the things which he suffered’ and was ‘made perfect,’ some have suggested that he was not always sinless in mortality. In response, Elder Bruce R. McConkie has written: ‘Christ always was perfect in that he obeyed the whole law of the Father at all times and was everlastingly the Sinless One. See Heb. 4:14–16; Heb. 5:1–3. But on the other hand he was made perfect, through the sufferings and experiences of mortality, in the sense that he thereby died and was resurrected in glorious immortality.’ (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:158.)” (J. Lewis Taylor, “New Testament Backgrounds: Hebrews,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1976, 59))

8 Though he were a Son, yet^a learned he^b obedience by the things which he^c suffered; (endured Neal A. Maxwell said: “**Suffering is a hard way to learn, but perhaps the only way for us to learn certain things, for deep insights do not come to an outsider; they come from being inside certain experiences. Obedience permits us to hear things we would not otherwise be able to listen to, because we would so easily be offended.** In Proverbs we read that a wise reprover is heard only by ‘an obedient ear.’ (Proverbs 25:12.)” (*Wherefore, Ye Must Press Forward* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 44.) Harold B. Lee said: “So it is in our day. God grant that you and I may learn obedience to God’s will, if necessary by the things which we suffer. One of the things that characterizes us as Saints, as King Benjamin told us, was to be ‘submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.’”

(Mosiah 3:19.)” (*Conference Report, October 1965, Afternoon Meeting 130 - 131.*)

9 And being made ^aperfect, (Spencer W. Kimball said: “...ridiculous is the idea that any of us can rise to the eternal heights without disciplining ourselves and being disciplined by the circumstances of life. The purity and perfection we seek is unattainable without this subjection of unworthy, ungodlike urges and the corresponding encouragement of their opposites. We certainly cannot expect the rules to be easier for us than for the Son of God, of whom it is recorded: ‘Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.’ (Heb. 5:8-9.) ‘Unto all them that obey him’—these are the operative words for us. And obedience always involves self-discipline. So does repentance, which is the way to annul the effects of a previous lack of obedience in one’s life. The dividends from both obedience and repentance amply repay the effort.” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], 28)) he became the ^bauthor of eternal ^csalvation unto all them that obey him;

10 ^aCalled of God an ^bhigh priest after the order of Melchisedec.

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and ^ahard to be ^buttered (difficult to be explained), seeing ye are dull of ^chearing.

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers (They were the first ones to have the gospel and have now slipped back.), ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles (revelations) of God; and are become such as have need of ^amilk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth ^amilk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (James E. Faust said: “There is a defense mechanism to discern between good and evil. It is called conscience. It is our spirit’s natural response to the pain of sin, just like pain in our flesh is our body’s natural response to a wound—even a small sliver. Conscience strengthens through use. Paul told the Hebrews, ‘But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.’ (Heb. 5:14.) Those who have not exercised their conscience have ‘their conscience seared with a hot iron.’ (1 Tim. 4:2.) A sensitive conscience is a sign of a healthy spirit.” (“A Crown of Thorns, a Crown of Glory,” *Ensign*, May 1991, 68))

CHAPTER 6

Let us go on to perfection—Sons of perdition crucify Christ afresh—God swears with an oath that the faithful shall be saved.

1 THEREFORE (not) ^aleaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ (having left behind the beginning of the doctrine), (The doctrine of Christ is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism, receiving the Holy Ghost and enduring in righteousness to the end. See 2 Nephi 31:21) let us go on unto

^bperfection; not laying again the foundation of ^crepentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

2 Of the ^adoctrine of ^bbaptisms, (Baptisms of water and of the Spirit.) “[Joseph Smith] said that the plural term ‘baptisms’ in this passage had reference to baptism for the living, baptism for the dead, and rebaptism. (Hebrews 6:1-2.)” (Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus, comps., *They Knew the Prophet*, p. 87)) and of ^claying on of ^dhands, and of (the) resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. (Joseph Smith said: “The doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead & Eternal Judgment are necessary to preach among the first principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” (*The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, compiled and edited by Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook [Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980], 4.))

3 ^aAnd ~~this will we do~~, (we will go on unto perfection) if God permit.

4 For ~~it is~~ (he hath made it) impossible for those who were once ^aenlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

5 And have ^atasted the good word of God, and the powers of the ^bworld to come,

6 If they shall ^afall away, to ~~renew them~~ (be renewed) again unto repentance; seeing they ^bcrucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open ^cshame. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: “These who are to be so severely punished must first have the testimony of the gospel and by the power of the Holy Ghost know that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God. Afterwards if they sin and openly and wilfully turn against the truth and deny Christ, they assent unto his death, and this is equivalent to crucifying him again and the shedding of innocent blood, and they put him to open shame.” *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966], 1: 63.) Joseph Smith said: “...according to the Scripture, if men have received the good word of God, and tasted of the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again, seeing they have crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame...the power of Elijah cannot seal against this sin, for this is a reserve made in the seals and power of the Priesthood.” *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 338.)

7 For the (day cometh that the) earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs ^ameet (suitable, fit, proper) for them (who dwelleth thereon,) by whom it is ^bdressed (cultivated, tilled), (who now) receiveth blessing(s) from God: (shall be cleansed with fire.)

8 ~~But~~ (For) that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto ^acursing; whose (therefore they who bring not forth good fruits, shall be cast into the fire, for their) end *is* to be burned. (The herbs and briers analogy is akin to the sheep and the goats. The sheep will be found righteous and inherit a place at the right hand of Christ at the final judgment. The goats will be found unworthy, except to be burned (Matt. 25:31-46). The herbs are the sheep. They will be redeemed and inherit one of three glorious kingdoms. The briers are the sons of perdition, who are ‘the only ones who shall not be redeemed in the due time of the Lord’ (D&C 76:38).)

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

10 For God *is* not ^aunrighteous to (, therefore he will not) forget your work and ^blabour of ^clove, which ye have ^dshew(ed) toward his ^dname, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same ^adiligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

12 **That ye be not ^aslothful, but followers of them who through ^bfaith and ^cpatience inherit the ^dpromises.** (Neal A. Maxwell said: “**Is it any wonder, then, if, in His plan, our ‘faith and patience’ are regularly tried? (See Mosiah 23:21.) Paul confirms that those who ‘inherit the promises’ are those who have triumphed ‘through faith and patience’ (Hebrews 6:12). Abraham ‘obtained the promise,’ but only ‘after he had patiently endured’ (Hebrews 6:15). Long-suffering, endurance, and patience are designed to be constant companions, as are faith, hope, and charity. “While a person is thinking his way through his particular hesitations or reservations about faith, he might ask, ‘Does God really know what I am passing through?’ The answer is ‘Yes!’ He knows!”** *Lord, Increase Our Faith* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1994], 39.)

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could ^aswear (promise, confirm by an oath) by no greater, he ^bswore by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will ^abless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently ^aendured, he obtained the promise. (Calling and election made sure.)

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an ^aoath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all ^bstrife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his ^acounsel (design, purpose), ^bconfirmed *it* by an ^coath:

18 That by two immutable things, (God swore a dual oath; that is, twice in the same promise he swore in his own name that Abraham and his seed should be blessed. DNTC, 3:165) in which *it was* impossible for God to ^alie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for ^brefuge to lay hold upon the ^chope

set before us:

19 Which ^ahope we have as an ^aanchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the ^bveil; (Neal A. Maxwell said: “Having ultimate hope does not mean we will always be rescued from proximate problems, but we will be rescued from everlasting death!” (“Brightness of Hope,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 35))

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an ^ahigh priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (Bruce R. McConkie said: “As the high priest in Israel passed through the veil into the holy of holies on the day of atonement, as part of the cleansing rites which freed Israel from sin (Lev. 16), so Jesus has entered into heaven to prepare the way for those who through obedience to his laws become clean and pure.” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 3: 165.))

CHAPTER 7

The Melchizedek Priesthood brings exaltation and administers the gospel—It is received with an oath and covenant—Superiority of the Melchizedek over the Aaronic Priesthood—Salvation comes through the intercession of Christ. (“There are many informative concepts about the priesthood in this chapter, such as the ideas that perfection comes through the Melchizedek Priesthood (Heb. 7:11–12), that the Melchizedek Priesthood is not restricted to one lineage (Heb. 7:13–15), that the priesthood is eternal (Heb. 7:16–17), that it is received with an oath and a covenant (Heb. 7:20–21), and that Christ’s priesthood function continues eternally (Heb. 7:27–28). This chapter could best be understood as a typology, with Melchizedek, the great high priest, being a ‘type’ of Christ—and the order of the priesthood held by Melchizedek and his people being typical of the order of the priesthood held by Jesus Christ and his disciples.” (James A. Carver, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1986, 55))

1 **FOR this Melchisedec.** (Now this Melchizedek was a king over the land of Salem; (Jerusalem) and his people had waxed strong in iniquity and abomination; yea, they had all gone astray; they were full of all manner of wickedness; But Melchizedek having exercised mighty faith, and received the office of the high priesthood according to the holy order of God, did preach repentance unto his people. And behold, they did repent; and Melchizedek did establish peace in the land in his days; therefore he was called the prince of peace, for he was the king of Salem; and he did reign under his father.’ (Alma 13:17-18.))
king of Salem, ^apriest of the most high God (Melchizedek was both a king and a priest. In this respect, he is a type for Christ, who was also both a king and a priest. Being a king and a priest is the natural consequence of exercising the fullness of the Melchizedek priesthood, and all holders of this priesthood are given the promise that they will someday be kings and priests unto the Most High God.), **who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;** (His position in the priestly hierarchy of God’s earthly kingdom was like unto that of Abraham, his contemporary whom he blessed and upon whom he conferred the priesthood. D&C 84:14. Which ^aAbraham received the priesthood from ^bMelchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till ^cNoah; DNTC, 3:166. “The names Melchizedek and Salem suggest the uniqueness of the king of Salem and his people. In fact, the very name Melchizedek consists of the two Hebrew words *malkî* (‘king’) and *sedeq* (‘righteousness’), implying the king of Salem’s faith in God—‘My king is righteousness.’ 1 Similarly, the Apostle Paul interpreted Melchizedek as ‘King of righteousness’ (Heb. 7:2). Salem, the name of Melchizedek’s land or city, may mean ‘peace’ or ‘peaceful.’ The Bible Dictionary in the LDS edition of the Bible identifies Salem as Jerusalem. Biblical text discloses that Melchizedek was the righteous leader of a group of people who earned a reputation for peace and stability. Thus, in the midst of violent and chaotic times dominated by warring tribal factions, Melchizedek and Salem indeed appear unique.” (Dennis A. Wright, “‘None Were Greater’: A Restoration View of Melchizedek,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1998, 30))

2 **To whom also Abraham gave a ^atenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of ^brighteousness, and after that also King of ^cSalem, which is, King of peace;** (Melchizedek was the presiding authority of

God on earth in the day of Abraham, and as such the great patriarch paid tithes to and was blessed by Melchizedek. DNTC, 3:168)

3 (For this Melchizedek was ordained a priest after the order of the Son of God, which order was)
^awithout father, without mother, without descent, having neither ^bbeginning of days, nor end of life; but
(And all those who are ordained unto this priesthood are) made like unto the Son of God; abid(ing)eth a
^cpriest continually. (It was righteousness that qualifies one for the priesthood, not descent from Levi.
Joseph F. McConkie, Studies in Scriptures, 6:202)

4 Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the ^apatriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. (For Paul's audience, Abraham is the pinnacle of religious history. He is the father of all righteousness whose supremacy is without dispute. Yet, Paul is proving that Melchizedek was even greater than Abraham. He also has to prove that Melchizedek's priesthood was superior to the Levitical tradition. The Jewish mind is going to be resistant to these ideas, especially because the scriptural record of Melchizedek is so scant. Hence, Paul invites, 'Now consider how great this man was.' Of Melchizedek, Alma declared, 'there were many before him, and also there were many afterwards, but none were greater' (Alma 13:19). He was superior to Abraham because Abraham paid tithes to him. He was superior because Abraham was blessed by him, 'And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.')

5 And verily they that are of the sons of ^aLevi, who receive the ^boffice of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: (And what of Levi? The Jewish traditions appropriately held that Levi was inferior to Abraham. If Abraham were inferior to Melchizedek, then logic would dictate that Levi and the Levitical priesthood were inferior to Melchizedek and the Melchizedek priesthood. Paul expresses this idea with the figurative notion that Levi also paid tithes to Melchizedek, being yet unborn 'in the loins of his father.')

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

10 For he (Levi) was yet in the loins of his father (Abraham), when Melchisedec met him (Abraham).

11 If therefore ^aperfection were by the ^bLevitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

12 For the ^apriesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. (The law of Moses was fulfilled so the higher priesthood came. James E. Talmage said: "The authority of administration in the Temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod, was that of the Lesser or Aaronic Priesthood; for the Higher or Melchisedek Priesthood, otherwise known as the Holy Priesthood after the order of the Son of God, had been taken from Israel with Moses. The temples of the present are administered under the greater authority. The importance of the distinction between these two orders of Priesthood may warrant a further consideration in this place. That the two are essentially separate and distinct is made plain by Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews." (*The House of the Lord* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1968], 197.))

13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14 For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of ^aJuda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

16 Who is made, not after the law of a ^acarnal commandment (Aaronic priesthood), but after the power of an endless life (Melchizedek priesthood. Joseph Smith said: "The power of the Melchizedek Priesthood is to have the power of 'endless lives.' ... What was the power of Melchizedek? It was not [the] priesthood of Aaron. [Melchizedek was] a king and a priest to the Most High God. [It was] a perfect law of theocracy, holding keys of power and blessings. [He] stood as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam [by] kingly powers of anointing..." (Kent P. Jackson, comp. and ed., *Joseph Smith's Commentary on the Bible* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], 192 - 193.)).

17 For he testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of ^aMelchisedec.

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the ^aweakness and unprofitableness thereof.

19 ^aFor the law (was administered without an oath and) made nothing ^bperfect, but (was only) the bringing in of a ^cbetter hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God. (The Mosaic law was a schoolmaster.)

20 And Inasmuch as (this high priest was) not without an ^aoath, ~~he was made priest~~: (Callings in the Aaronic Priesthood are conferred without an oath. DNTC, 3:172)

21 (For those ^apriests were made without an oath; (While the Melchizedek priesthood is 'without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life,' (v. 3) the Levitical priesthood was "with father, with mother, and with descent" for priesthood came by lineage not by righteousness. Furthermore, the Levitical priesthood had a beginning and it will have an end (D&C 13:1). Paul notes another significant difference—namely, that priests of the Melchizedek priesthood receive a promise of God that they will be priests 'for ever after the order of Melchisedec.' The Levitical priests could not make this claim, being made priests 'without an oath.' However, consider the following regarding the eternal nature of the Aaronic Priesthood:

The record of Joseph Smith that the Aaronic Priesthood is to remain on the earth "until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness" (D&C 13, italics added) may suggest to some that the Aaronic Priesthood is only temporary. Oliver Cowdery's earlier account is perhaps a bit more precise, using the word "that" instead of "until." In a special conference held 21 October 1848 in Kaneshville, Iowa (now Council Bluffs), Oliver Cowdery, who had been excommunicated 11 April 1838, arose to seek forgiveness of the Church and bore this testimony: "I was present with Joseph when an holy angel from God came down from heaven and conferred on us, or restored the lesser or Aaronic Priesthood, and said to us at the same time, that it should remain upon the earth while the earth stands." This statement is consistent with the Lord's declaration that the Aaronic Priesthood "continueth and abideth forever with the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God" (D&C 84:18, italics added). There are several ways in which the Aaronic Priesthood may be considered eternal in duration. In one respect everyone who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood also holds the Aaronic Priesthood for the following reasons: (1) The greater comprehends the lesser so that all who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood ipso facto hold the Aaronic Priesthood. (2) When a person receives the Aaronic Priesthood and subsequently receives the Melchizedek Priesthood, none of the former authority is taken away. In another respect it has been taught that the Church on earth, down to the office of Deacon, has been organized after the pattern of the Church which exists in Heaven. This would imply that somewhere in our Father's house, there is a place for the ministration of this lesser order of the priesthood. At least one realm in which this priesthood will minister is in the earths that will always be passing through a temporal existence. With respect to the functioning of the Aaronic Priesthood on this earth after it has "passed away" and become celestialized, Joseph Fielding Smith has explained, "As long as we have temporal things on the earth this priesthood is necessary. Eventually, when the earth is celestialized, I suppose all priesthood will be of the higher order." Studies in Scripture, 1:90-91) **but this with an ^boath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:** (The oath and covenant of the priesthood pertains only to the

Melchizedek Priesthood. D&C 84:33-44.)

22 By so much was Jesus made a ^(the) surety of a better ^atestament.

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

24 But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable ^apriesthood.

25 Wherefore he ^(Jesus) is able also to save them ^ato the uttermost ^(perfectly) that ^bcome unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make ^cintercession for them.

26 ^aFor such an ^bhigh priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, ^cseparate^r from ^dsinners, and made ^ehigher than ^(ruler over) the ^fheavens;

27 ~~Who needeth not~~ ^adaily, (And not) as those high priests, ~~to offer~~ (who offered) up ^bsacrifice (daily), first for ~~his~~ ^(their) own sins, and then for the ~~people's~~ (sins of the people): for (he needed not to offer sacrifice for his own sins, for he knew no sins; but for the sins of the people. And) this he did ^conce, when he ^doffered up himself. (Jesus did not need to atone for his own sins first. Gerald N. Lund said: "The apostle Paul in the book of Hebrews drew heavily on the typology of the Day of Atonement to teach the mission of Christ. In that epistle he pointed out that Christ is the great 'High Priest' who, unlike the high priest of the Aaronic Priesthood, was holy and without spot and did not need to make atonement for his own sins before he could be worthy to officiate for Israel and enter the Holy of Holies (Heb. 3:1; 7:26). His perfect life was the ultimate fulfillment of the symbol of wearing white garments." (*Selected Writings of Gerald N. Lund: Gospel Scholars Series* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1999], 20.))

28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the ^aoath, which was since the law, *maketh* the ^bSon, who is ^cconsecrated ^(perfected) for evermore. (Bruce R. McConkie said: "Thus far Paul has taught the principles involved. He has shown that Israel failed to enter into eternal glory through the law alone. He has shown that salvation did not come by the law of Moses alone. He has shown that the Messianic High Priest was needed to sacrifice himself for the sins of the people. Now he is prepared to show how each performance of the Mosaic sacrificial system bore record of and pointed to the great and eternal sacrifice of the promised High Priest. 'We have such an high priest,' he says, 'who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.' (Heb. 8:1)" (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 1: 148.))

CHAPTER 8

Christ offered himself as a sacrifice for sin—God promised to make a new covenant with Israel.

1 NOW of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an ^ahigh priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; ("Romans testified that Christ was 'at the right hand of God' making 'intercession for us' (Rom. 8:34; also v. 27). And Hebrews unfolds the Atonement with the same picture of the Lord 'on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens' (Heb. 8:1), living in eternity 'to make intercession for them' (Heb. 7:25). **Here is Christ the Advocate, one who walked unscorched through mortal fires. The Advocate is literally the Father's Counselor, who from personal understanding petitions for mercy for mortals. The Petitioner asks not through mere pleading, but because he can boldly certify that he has paid the price of sin. The great truths of modern revelation show why Christ is an effective advocate, for he satisfied justice (Alma 42:14-15) and in trembling pain 'suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent'** (D&C 19:16)... Thus, Christ literally intervenes between the Father and mankind to produce harmony. He does more than seek peace and understanding—he pays the price necessary to bring forgiveness. He is the contributing Mediator, the effectual Savior." (*Understanding Paul* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 216.))

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the ^atrue ^btabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to ^aoffer.

4 ~~For if he were~~ (Therefore while he was) on earth, (he offered for a sacrifice his own life for the sins of the people. Now every) ~~he should not be a priest~~ (under the law), ~~seeing that there are~~ ^bpriests that (must needs) offer gifts(, or sacrifices,) according to the law:

5 Who serve unto the example and ^ashadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the ^btabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the ^cpattern shewed to thee in the mount.

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the ^amediator of a **better ^bcovenant**, which was established upon better ^cpromises. (Jeffrey R. Holland said: “On those days when we have special need of heaven’s help, we would do well to remember one of the titles given to the Savior in the epistle to the Hebrews. Speaking of Jesus’ ‘more excellent ministry’ and why He is ‘the mediator of a better covenant’ filled with ‘better promises,’ this author—presumably the Apostle Paul—tells us that through His mediation and Atonement, Christ became ‘an high priest of good things to come.’ Every one of us has times when we need to know things will get better. Moroni spoke of it in the Book of Mormon as ‘hope for a better world.’ (Ether 12:4) For emotional health and spiritual stamina, everyone needs to be able to look forward to some respite, to something pleasant and renewing and hopeful, whether that blessing be near at hand or still some distance ahead. It is enough just to know we can get there, that however measured or far away, there is the promise of ‘good things to come.’ My declaration is that this is precisely what the gospel of Jesus Christ offers us, especially in times of need. There is help. There is happiness. There really is light at the end of the tunnel. It is the Light of the World, the Bright and Morning Star, the ‘light that is endless, that can never be darkened.’ It is the very Son of God Himself. In loving praise far beyond Romeo’s reach, we say, ‘What light through yonder window breaks?’ It is the return of hope, and Jesus is the Sun. To any who may be struggling to see that light and find that hope, I say: Hold on. Keep trying. God loves you. Things will improve. Christ comes to you in His ‘more excellent ministry’ with a future of ‘better promises.’ He is your ‘high priest of good things to come.’” (“An High Priest of Good Things to Come,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 36))

7 For if that first *covenant* had been ^afaultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of ^aJudah:

9 Not according to the ^acovenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

10 For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my ^alaws into their ^bmind, and write them in their ^chearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (Have you ever been in the temple and wondered, “why am I hearing the same thing over and over again?” We know that we learn by repetition, but something else is happening. God is fulfilling a promise he made to Jeremiah 2600 years earlier (Jer. 31:33). When you are in the temple, ask yourself if God isn’t putting his laws into your mind. Isn’t he writing his law in your heart? We can’t write down the temple ceremony, but same finger which wrote the law of Moses in tablets of stone can write the law in our minds and hearts in the house of the Lord. Hence is the law, ‘written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.’ (2 Cor. 3:3, see also Ezek. 11:19-20))

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (Bruce R. McConkie said: “**After Israel had been subject to the law for nearly 900 years, the Lord, through Jeremiah, promised to make a new and better covenant with them, a gospel covenant, a covenant which would bring them into his presence so that all might know him. In using this prophecy of Jeremiah to show that Christ brought the new gospel covenant, Paul is doing the same thing in principle as the Mormon Elders**

do in quoting Biblical passages about the restoration of the gospel in the latter-days. ...That the glorious and full effect of the covenant promised through Jeremiah will come to pass during the millennium, is shown by the following statement of the Prophet about making one's calling and election sure: 'This principle ought (in its proper place) to be taught, for God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what he will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them, for the day must come when no man need say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know him (who remain) from the least to the greatest. How is this to be done? It is to be done by this sealing power, and the other Comforter spoken of, which will be manifest by revelation.' (*Teachings*, p. 149.)" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 3: 180.))

12 For I will be merciful to their ^aunrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I ^bremember no more.

13 In that he saith, A ^anew covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth ^bold is ready to ^cvanish away.

CHAPTER 9

Mosaic ordinances prefigured Christ's ministry—Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant.

1 THEN verily the first ^acovenant had also ^bordinances of divine ^cservice, and a worldly sanctuary. (built on earth) (There were three main divisions in the tabernacle of Moses (the temple of Herod presumably was set up the same way). The first was an *outer courtyard* which contained the altar of sacrifice and the large laver for washing ordinances. This is where the Levites performed most of the animal sacrifice spoken of in the Mosaic Law. This area represented the telestial kingdom. The second division was called the *Holy Place*. Both the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies were contained in an enclosure within the courtyard—the two rooms being separated by an elaborate double veil. The Holy Place was a room which contained the altar of incense, the table of shewbread, and the golden candlestick. Paul refers to this room as the first tabernacle (v. 2,6). Performing ordinances in this room was common but still considered a privilege. This was the room Zacharias entered when 'his lot was to burn incense when he went unto the temple of the Lord' (Luke 1:9). This area represented the terrestrial kingdom. The third division was the *Holy of Holies*, the Most Holy Place, or 'the Holiest of all' (v. 3). **Paul refers to this place as "the second tabernacle" (v. 7). It contained the ark of the covenant and the holiest relics of the Mosaic tradition (v. 4). Representing the celestial kingdom, only the high priest was allowed to enter this room—and this was only allowed once a year. None of the other Levites were allowed to enter. Hence, the symbolism of the ancient tabernacle was that neither the people nor the priests could be brought into the presence of God by the Law of Moses. Paul doesn't miss the symbolism, declaring 'that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest...Which was a figure for the time then present' (v. 8-9).**

2 For there was a ^atabernacle (temple) made; the first (The Holy Place), wherein was the ^bcandlestick, and the ^ctable, and the ^dshewbread; which is called the sanctuary.

3 And after the second ^aveil, the tabernacle which is called the ^bHoliest of all (holy of holies);

4 Which had the golden censer, and the ^aark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden ^bpot that had manna, and ^cAaron's rod that budded, and the ^dtables of the covenant;

5 And over it the ^acherubims of glory shadowing the ^bmercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. (Too sacred to talk about.)

6 Now when these things were thus ^aordained (prepared, built), the ^bpriests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

7 But into the second went the ^ahigh priest alone ^bonce every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

8 The Holy Ghost ~~this~~ signifying **(this)**, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as **(yet)** the first tabernacle was **yet** standing: **(Christ brings us into the presence of the Father.)**
9 Which was a ^afigure **(similitude, type, parable)** for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service ^bperfect, as pertaining to the conscience; **(“Though Paul did not detail the meaning of each of these items associated with the temple, his purpose was to emphasize that each was intended as a witness of Jesus as the Christ.”** (Joseph F. McConkie in *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 6: Acts to Revelation*, ed. By Robert L. Millet, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 203.))

10 Which ~~stood~~ **(consisted)** only in meats and drinks, and divers ^awashings, and ^bcarnal ^cordinances, ^dimposed on them until the time of reformation. **(“Paul named various of the Mosaic ordinances and performances and said they were a ‘shadow of heavenly things.’** (Heb. 8:4-5.) The ‘meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation,’ he said, were designed as ‘a figure for the time then present.’ He spoke of the various formalities involved in sprinkling blood as ‘patterns’ of things of a much higher nature. ‘The law,’ he said, was ‘a shadow of good things to come.’ (Heb. 9:1-10, 19-23; 10:1.) But perhaps Amulek's statement is the clearest and best of them all. He said: ‘This is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal.’ (Alma 34:14.)” *(The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 417.))

11 But Christ being come an ^ahigh priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect ^btabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own ^ablood he entered in once into the ^bholy place, having obtained eternal ^credemption for us. **(Once a year, a high priest entered the holiest place. Symbolically, he was only allowed in once a year because it would only take one sacrifice of the Great High Priest to pass the impassable barrier—the veil of the temple. The Aaronic Priesthood had not the power to bring the children of Israel into the presence of God. Accordingly, none of the children of Israel or the priests were allowed past the veil. What would it take to break the barrier? How could the chosen people ever break through the veil? It would take the infinite and eternal sacrifice of the Son of God. His entering into the holy place and sitting at the right hand of the Father opened the holy of holies to all who would be his disciples. Hence, when the Great Sacrifice was complete, the veil of the temple was rent in two pieces. Was it the earthquake that tore the veil? The veil was suspended on two rods. An earthquake might have knocked it to the ground but it could not have torn it in two, ‘from the top to the bottom’ (Matt. 27:51). Rather, the temple veil was torn by the hand of God—symbolizing that moment when the Great High Priest had broken the great barrier, when He had spilt the blood that could actually atone for sins, when the Law of Moses and its temple ordinances had finally been fulfilled.** Bruce R. McConkie said: **“Deity rent the veil of the temple ‘from the top to the bottom.’ The Holy of Holies is now open to all, and all, through the atoning blood of the Lamb, can now enter into the highest and holiest of all places, that kingdom where eternal life is found.** Paul, in expressive language (Heb. 9 and 10), shows how the ordinances performed through the veil of the ancient temple were in similitude of what Christ was to do, which he now having done, all men become eligible to pass through the veil into the presence of the Lord to inherit full exaltation.” *(Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 1:830.))*

13 For if the ^ablood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the ^bpurifying of the flesh:

14 How much more shall the ^a**blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself ^bwithout ^cspot **(blameless)** to God, ^dpurge your ^econscience from dead works to serve the living God?

15 And for this cause he is the ^amediator of the ^bnew ^etestament **(covenant)**, that by means of ^ddeath, for the redemption of the ^ctransgressions *that were* under the first ^ftestament **(covenant)**, they which are

called might receive the ^gpromise of eternal ^hinheritance.

16 For where a ^atestament (covenant) *is*, there must also of necessity be the ^bdeath of the ^ctestator (victim).

17 For a ^atestament (covenant) *is* of force after ~~men are~~ (the victim *is*) dead: ^botherwise (since) it is of no strength at all while the testator (victim) liveth. (“In other words, Christ had to die to bring salvation.

The testament or covenant of salvation came in force because of the atonement worked out in connection with that death. Christ is the Testator. His gift, as would be true of any testator, cannot be inherited until his death. Christ died that salvation might come; without his death, he could not have willed either immortality or eternal life to men.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 785.))

18 Whereupon neither the first *testament* (covenant) was dedicated without blood.

19 For when Moses had ^aspoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the ^bblood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and ^csprinkled both the book, and all the people,

20 Saying, This *is* the blood of the *testament* (covenant) which God hath enjoined unto you.

21 Moreover he sprinkled (likewise) with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without ^ashedding of blood is no ^bremission. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: “**Here is a clear statement that the remission of sins cannot come except by the shedding of blood.** In ancient times sacrifices were made by the shedding of the blood of clean animals. This shedding of blood was twofold in its application. It pointed forward to the great sacrifice that was to be made by our Redeemer, and it also became a purifying agency which helped to remind Israel of sins and how to overcome them. **Since it was by the creation of blood that mortality came, it is by the sacrifice of blood that the redemption from death was accomplished, and all creatures freed from Satan's grasp. In no other way could the sacrifice for redemption of the world from death be accomplished. Blood being the agent of mortality, it had to be returned to Satan and to death, whence it came.** Have we ever stopped to think of the deplorable condition this mortal world was in due to the partaking of the fruit by Adam?... “No doubt Satan felt that he had accomplished his purpose in bringing death, and therefore the entire posterity of Adam would become subject unto him. The Beloved Son of God was chosen before the foundation of the world to redeem mankind. It had to be a redemption by the shedding of blood; also it had to be by a God, who had power over death, one who could lay down his body by the shedding of his blood, and then take his body up again by the inherent power which was in him. Jesus obtained his blood from his mother Mary; he obtained his power over death from his Father. Therefore he could and did voluntarily surrender himself to his enemies who crucified him by the shedding of his blood. When he arose from the tomb, he was free from blood, and his body had become subject to eternal law henceforth and forever.” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966], 3: 109.))

23 *It was* therefore necessary that the ^apatterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the ^atrue; but into ^bheaven itself, now to appear in the ^cpresence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the ^ahigh priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; (“...once a year on Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement... [the high priest] would make sacrifices for himself and his brother priests so as to make them symbolically worthy to perform their sacred functions. Then he would lay aside his priestly robes, don a simple white tunic in preparation for the sacrifice itself, and return to the outer court. Taking two pure and unblemished male goats, he would dedicate one to Jehovah and one to the evil one, Azazel, or the devil. The goat dedicated to Jehovah was then sacrificed in the outer court. Its blood was taken into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled on the mercy-seat and before the ark of the covenant. This symbolized that Israel's sins were atoned for by sacrifice.” (*Institute Manual, The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles*, 2nd ed., p.

390))

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once ^ain the ^bend of the world (meridian of time) hath he appeared to put away sin by the ^csacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

28 So Christ was once ^aoffered to ^bbear the ^csins of many; and ~~unto them that look for him shall he~~ (shall) ^dappear the second time without sin unto salvation (unto them that look for him). (“As the pure sacrificial offering, Christ was beyond sin; thus, he gave for sin what sin could not rightfully claim. As the perfect high priest, he gave himself as the perfect offering. He was ‘holy, innocent, spotless, set apart from sinners’ (Heb. 7:26, literal trans.). He took on himself our blame, though ‘without spot’—or literally ‘blameless’ (Heb. 9:14). Thus, his culminating sacrifice superseded the daily sacrifices. That is the point of Paul’s long arguments—repeated altar slayings were no longer necessary, for Christ died ‘once’ for sins to bring forgiveness to all. That thought and number is restated over a half-dozen times in about three chapters, revealing Paul’s core message. Christ ‘offered one sacrifice for sins for ever’ (Heb. 10:12).” (Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 217 - 218.) “The incompleteness of the priestly sacrifices, being offered annually, stands in contrast to the ‘infinite and eternal sacrifice’ (Alma 34:10) of Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest (see Heb. 3:1), and is further illustrated by the fact that Israel’s priests stood while offering sacrifice, whereas Jesus ‘offered one sacrifice for sins for ever’ and thereafter ‘sat down on the right hand of God’ (Heb. 10:12).” (“The Law of Sacrifice,” *Ensign*, June 1998, 29)

CHAPTER 10

We are sanctified by the shedding of the blood of Christ—Superiority of his sacrifice—Those who fall from grace through wilful sin are damned—The just shall live by faith.

1 FOR the ^alaw having a ^bshadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered (continually) ^cyear by year *continually* make the comers thereunto perfect. (The types and shadows of Mosaic rituals could not save, only Christ can save. We see the same shadowed symbolism in our day. Cast from the presence of the Almighty, the law of the gospel is for us ‘a shadow of good things to come.’ The sacrament is a shadow of the atoning sacrifice. Baptism is a shadow of our entrance into the kingdom and our commitment to discipleship. The celestial room is but a shadow of dwelling in the presence of God. In mortality, our vision is limited, seeing shadows as if looking ‘through a glass darkly’ (1 Cor. 13:12). But someday, we will see the Light of the World—not through a glass darkly, not as a shadow cast by the gospel of Christ—but ‘then face to face’ (1 Cor. 13:12).

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once ^apurged should have had no more ^bconscience of sins.

3 But in those ^asacrifices there is a ^bremembrance again *made* of sins every year.

4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. (The outward ordinances had no effect, but through faith in Christ. “It was not the blood of the animals that saved them (Hebrews 10:4) but rather what the blood stood for—the precious blood of the Messiah that would be shed in the meridian of time. If the people brought their offering in the right spirit, presented it to the priests, and repented fully of their transgression, a remission of sins followed. In our day, the Aaronic priest likewise officiates at the holy altar. We go to church, present our offering—a broken heart and a contrite spirit (3 Nephi 9:20; D&C 59:8)—and the priest officiates in our behalf. **It is not bread and water that save us but rather what the bread and water represent. If we can attend sacrament meeting with a broken heart and a contrite spirit (meaning that we are repentant and eager to rid ourselves of our sins), focus our thoughts and our feelings on the atoning offering of Christ our Savior, and covenant once again to keep the Lord’s commandments and plead for his strength and**

goodness to enable us to do so, then healing and cleansing take place. It is as though we can enjoy a rebaptism every Sabbath. Participation in the ordinance of the sacrament is an occasion for meditation, introspection, self-analysis, and covenant renewal. It is an important reason for attending sacrament meeting.” (Robert L. Millet, *Alive in Christ: The Miracle of Spiritual Rebirth* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997], 142 - 143.))

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and ^asacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, (law of Moses) that he may establish the second. (Law of Christ)

10 By ~~the~~ which will we are ^asanctified through the ^boffering (once) ^cof the ^dbody of Jesus Christ ^eonce for all.

11 And every priest standeth ^adaily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away ^bsins:

12 But this man, after he had offered one ^asacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 ^aFrom henceforth expecting till (to reign until) his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

15 Whereof the ^aHoly Ghost also is a ^bwitness to us: for after that he had said before,

16 This is the ^acovenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their ^bminds will I write them;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18 Now where ^aremission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

19 Having therefore, brethren, ^aboldness (license, authority) to enter into the ^bholiest by the blood of Jesus, (“The entrance of the high priest into the Holy of Holies and his passing through the sacred veil of the temple was a type for that future day when the Son of God would rend the veil to enter the heavenly temple and stand in the presence of God. Having satisfied the demands of justice through his atoning sacrifice, Christ could now commence his great work of mercy and mediation in behalf of all whose labors attested that they had accepted him. By virtue of his mercy and grace, the faithful of all ages could now also enter into the holiest place. ‘So now, my friends,’ Paul explained, ‘the blood of Jesus makes us free to enter boldly into the sanctuary by the new, living way which he has opened for us through the curtain, the way of his flesh. We have, moreover, a great priest set over the household of God; so let us make our approach in sincerity of heart and full assurance of faith, our guilty hearts sprinkled clean, our bodies washed with pure water.’ (Heb. 10:19-22, New English Bible.) “The purpose of the atonement was to remove the effects of the Fall whereby men were cast out of the presence of God. Through his sacrifice, Christ opened the door through which we might return to the divine presence.” (Joseph F. McConkie in *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 6: Acts to Revelation*, ed. by Robert L. Millet, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 199 - 200.))

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the ^aveil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And *having* (such) an ^ahigh priest over the house of God;

22 Let us ^adraw ^bnear with a true heart in full assurance of ^cfaith, having our hearts ^dsprinkled (purified) from an evil ^econscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the ^aprofession of our ^bfaith (hope) without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)

24 And let us ^aconsider (understand) one another to ^bprovoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the ^aassembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we ^asin ^bwilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, (“**When Paul is talking about wilful sin, he is talking again about the sons of perdition not the average members of the church.** These individuals obtain a *perfect knowledge* of God and then sin willfully against that *perfect* knowledge. For them to willfully rebel is akin to treading ‘under foot the Son of God,’ counting ‘the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, and unholy thing’ (v. 29). Hence, Elder McConkie notes, ”There is no forgiveness for those who receive a *perfect* knowledge of the truth and who then sin wilfully and defy the truth. (D. & C. 76:31-49.)” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 3: 192.) “It is not consistent with divine truth and mercy for the atonement of Christ to pay the debt of wilful sin after an individual has been sealed to eternal life. There is such a thing as man placing himself beyond the reach of Christ's mercy and forgiveness. “There is a difference between wilful sin and sin committed inadvertently as a result of the weaknesses of the flesh. It is in cases of wilful sin that those who make their calling and election sure are visited with judgments. Having sealed some brethren at Kirtland to eternal life in 1833, Joseph Smith warned that ‘if any of them should *sin wilfully* after they were thus cleansed, and sealed up unto eternal life, they should be given over unto the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption.” (Hyrum L. Andrus, *Principles of Perfection* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970], 342 - 343.))

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery ^aindignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that ^adespised (rejected, violated) Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:
29 Of how much sorer ^apunishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done ^bdespite (insult) unto the Spirit of grace? (“...where much is given, much is expected and required. Joseph Smith taught: ‘If men sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.’ In the words of a modern apostle: ‘Suppose such persons become disaffected and the spirit of repentance leaves them—which is a seldom and almost unheard of eventuality—still, what then? The answer is—and the revelations and teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith so recite!—they must then pay the penalty of their own sins, for the blood of Christ will not cleanse them.’ “When one is guilty of serious transgression and loses the right to the Spirit and the protective blessings of the priesthood, he is essentially ‘delivered unto the buffetings of Satan’ (D&C 132:26), such that ‘Lucifer is free to torment, persecute, and afflict such a person without let or hindrance. When the bars are down, the cuffs and curses of Satan, both in this world and in the world to come, bring indescribable anguish typified by burning fire and brimstone’ (cf. D&C 78:12; 82:20-21; 104:9-10; 1 Cor. 5:1-5).” (Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 1: The Doctrine and Covenants* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989], 520.))

30 For we know him that hath said, ^aVengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will ^brecompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall ^cjudge his people.

31 *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great ^afight of afflictions;

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took ^ajoyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring ^bsubstance. (Joseph Smith said: “...we next proceed to treat of the knowledge which persons must have, that the course of life which they pursue is according to the will of God, in order that they may be enabled to exercise faith in him unto life and salvation. “This knowledge supplies an important place in revealed religion; for it was by reason of it that the ancients were enabled to endure as seeing him who is invisible. **An actual knowledge to any person, that the course of life which he pursues is according to the will of God, is essentially**

necessary to enable him to have that confidence in God without which no person can obtain eternal life. It was this that enabled the ancient saints to endure all their afflictions and persecutions, and to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing (not believing merely) that they had a more enduring substance. (Heb. 10:34.) “Having the assurance that they were pursuing a course which was agreeable to the will of God, they were enabled to take, not only the spoiling of their goods, and the wasting of their substance, joyfully, but also to suffer death in its most horrid forms; knowing (not merely believing) that when this earthly house of their tabernacle was dissolved, they had a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Cor. 5:1.) **“Such was, and always will be, the situation of the saints of God, that unless they have an actual knowledge that the course they are pursuing is according to the will of God they will grow weary in their minds, and faint.”** (*Lectures on Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 6:1-4.)

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

36 For ye have need of ^apatience, that, after ye have done the ^bwill of God, ye might receive the ^cpromise. (Neal A. Maxwell said: “Paul, speaking to the Hebrews, brings us up short by writing that even after faithful disciples have ‘done the will of God, ... ye have need of patience’ (Heb. 10:36). How many times have good individuals done the right thing only to break, or wear away, under the subsequent stress, canceling out much of the value of what they have already so painstakingly done? “Sometimes that which we are doing is correct enough but simply needs to be persisted in—patiently—not for a minute or a moment but sometimes for years. Paul speaks of the marathon of life and how we must ‘run with patience the race that is set before us’ (Heb. 12:1). Paul did not select the hundred-yard dash for his analogy! “The Lord has twice said: ‘And seek the face of the Lord always, that *in patience ye may possess your souls*, and ye shall have eternal life’ (D&C 101:38, italics added; see also Luke 21:19). **Could it be that only when our self-control has become total do we come into true possession of our own souls?”** (“Patience,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1980, 28))

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. (*The Second Coming of Christ*.)

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* ^adraw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them who ^adraw back unto ^bperdition (*ruin, destruction*); but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

CHAPTER 11

By faith we understand the word and work of God—Faith of the ancients was centered in Christ—By faith men subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, and worked miracles.

1 NOW ^afaith is the ^bsubstance (*assurance*) (*basis, foundation*) of things ^choped for, the ^devidence (*proof*) of things not seen. (Alma 32: 21 And now as I said concerning faith—^afaith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith ye ^bhope for things which are ^cnot seen, which are true.)

2 For by it the elders ^aobtained (*received witness, testimony*) a good ^breport.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were ^aframed by the ^bword of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. (*The creations were made with God’s power. Joseph Smith said: “...faith is not only the principle of action, but of power also, in all intelligent beings, whether in heaven or on earth. Thus says the author of the epistle to the Hebrews (11:3): ‘Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.’ “By this we understand that the principle of power which existed in the bosom of God, by which the worlds were framed, was faith; and that it is by reason of this principle of power existing in the Deity, that all created things exist; so that all things in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, exist by reason of faith as it existed in HIM. “Had it not been for the principle*

of faith the worlds would never have been framed, neither would man have been formed of the dust. It is the principle by which Jehovah works, and through which he exercises power over all temporal as well as eternal things. Take this principle or attribute—for it is an attribute—from the Deity, and he would cease to exist. “Who cannot see, that if God framed the worlds by faith, that it is by faith that he exercises power over them, and that faith is the principle of power? And if the principle of power, it must be so in man as well as in the Deity? This is the testimony of all the sacred writers, and the lesson which they have been endeavouring to teach to man.” (*Lectures on Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 1:13-17.) “Faith, then, is the first great governing principle which has power, dominion, and authority over all things; by it they exist, by it they are upheld, by it they are changed, or by it they remain, agreeable to the will of God. Without it there is no power, and without power there could be no creation nor existence!” (*Lectures on Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 1:24))

4 By faith ^aAbel offered unto God a more excellent ^bsacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it **he being dead yet speaketh.** (Abel appeared to Paul. Joseph Smith said: **“How doth he yet speak? Why he magnified the priesthood which was conferred upon him, and died a righteous man, and therefore has become an angel of God by receiving his body from the dead, holding still the keys of his dispensation; and was sent down from heaven unto Paul to minister consoling words, and to commit unto him a knowledge of the mysteries of godliness. And if this was not the case, I would ask, how did Paul know so much about Abel, and why should he talk about his speaking after he was dead? Hence, that he spoke after he was dead must be by being sent down out of heaven to administer.”** (*Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, compiled by Alma P. Burton [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 54.))

5 By faith ^aEnoch was ^btranslated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this ^ctestimony, that he pleased God. (During the first 2200 or so years of the earth’s history – that is, from the fall of Adam to the ministry of Melchizedek – it was a not an uncommon occurrence for faithful members of the Church to be translated and taken into the heavenly realms without tasting death. Since that time there have been occasional special instances of translation, instances in which a special work of the ministry required it. MD, p. 804-7)

6 But without ^afaith *it is impossible to please him:* for he that ^bcometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a ^crewarder of them that ^ddiligently ^eseek him.

7 By faith ^aNoah, being ^bwarned of God of things not seen as yet, ^cmoved with fear (**being cautious, reverent**), prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the ^drighteousness which is by faith.

8 By faith ^aAbraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an ^binheritance, ^cobeyed; and he went out, not ^dknowing whither he went.

9 By faith he ^asojourned in the ^bland of ^cpromise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in ^dtabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a ^acity (**Abraham was looking for the City of Enoch.**) which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. (**Sarah had great faith.**)

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, ~~so~~ (**as**) *many* as the stars of the sky in ^amultitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the ^apromises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were ^bstrangers and pilgrims on the earth. (**The evidence of things not seen. The eye of faith.**)

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a ^acountry. (**homeland, native place**)

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now they desire a better ^acountry, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called

their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

17 By ^afaith Abraham, when he was ^btried, ^coffered up Isaac: and he that had received the ^dpromises offered up his only begotten *son*,

18 Of whom it was said, That in ^aIsaac shall thy ^bseed be called:

19 ^aAccounting (considering) that God *was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.* (Abraham believed that even though he took Isaac's life, his faith was such that God would raise him from the dead.)

20 By faith Isaac ^ablessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21 By faith ^aJacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, *leaning upon the top of his staff.* (Patriarchal blessings come by faith.)

22 By faith ^aJoseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

23 By faith ^aMoses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw (that) *he was a ^bproper (peculiar) (handsome) child;* and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years (of discretion), refused to be called the ^ason of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to ^asuffer affliction with the ^bpeople of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the ^areproach of Christ greater ^briches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

28 Through faith he kept the ^apassover, and the sprinkling of ^bblood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. (If they of the chosen seed had not believed in their hearts that the Lord Jehovah would spare their firstborn sons, the angel of death would have taken them as he did the firstborn of Pharaoh and all the families of Egypt. DNTC, 3:213)

29 By faith they passed through the Red ^asea as by dry *land:* which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

30 By faith the ^awalls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. (Faith is power.)

31 By ^afaith the harlot ^bRahab perished not with ^cthem that believed not (those who were unbelieving, disobedient), when she had received the spies with peace.

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, (Gideon and the 300 warriors.) and of ^aBarak, (with the help of Deborah) and of Samson, and of ^bJephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained ^apromises, stopped the mouths of ^blions, (Bruce R. McConkie said: "Paul, very obviously knowing much more about Melchizedek than he happened to record in his epistles, gave as an illustration of great faith some unnamed person who 'wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire.' (Heb. 11:33-34.) From the Prophet's inspired additions to the Old Testament we learn that Paul's reference was to Melchizedek. 'Now Melchizedek was a man of faith, who wrought righteousness; and when a child he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire.' (Inspired Version, Gen. 14:26.)" ("Melchizedek," *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed., [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 475.))

34 Quenched the violence of ^afire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made ^bstrong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting ^adeliverance; that they might obtain ^ba better (the first) resurrection:

36 And others had trial of ^acruel ^bmockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37 They were ^astoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;
38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

39 And these all, having obtained a ^agood ^breport (testimony, witness) through faith, received not the promise:

40 ^aGod having ^bprovided (provided beforehand) some better thing for us, ~~that they without us should~~ (them through their sufferings, for without sufferings they could) not be made ^cperfect. (“In the King James Version it reads: ‘God having provided some better thing for us, that they [referring to the dead who had had faith in the Savior] without us should not be made perfect.’ Members of the Church frequently cite this verse in connection with salvation for the dead. However, the Joseph Smith Translation says: ‘**God having provided some better things for them through their sufferings, for without sufferings they could not be made perfect.**’ This rendition is in harmony with the overall message of the chapter, which is not talking about those who died without the gospel but rather about those who were valiant in the gospel, even suffering and dying in defense of it. The JST rendition of verse 40 is thus consistent with the context of the chapter; the KJV rendition is not. “However, even though the Prophet Joseph Smith knew that Heb. 11:40 had reference to earthly suffering, he still occasionally used the KJV passage for teaching about salvation for the dead.” (Selected Writings of Robert J. Matthews: Gospel Scholars Series [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1999], 310.))

CHAPTER 12

Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth—God is the Father of spirits—To see God, follow peace and holiness—Exalted saints belong to the Church of the Firstborn.

1 **WHEREFORE** seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, (All the people he mentioned in the previous chapter.) let us lay aside every weight (get in condition for the race), **and the ^asin which doth so easily ^bbeset us, and let us run with ^cpatience the race that is set before us,**
2 Looking unto Jesus the ^aauthor and ^bfinisher (one who completes, perfects) of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him ^cendured the cross, despising the ^dshame, and is set down at the right hand of the ^ethrone of God.

3 For consider him that endured such ^acontradiction (rebellion, opposition) of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, ^astriving against sin. (If Jesus could carry his tremendous burdens, we should carry our lighter ones.)

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, **My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:** (“No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God...and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we come here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven...”

Orson F. Whitney, as cited in Kimball, Faith Precedes the Miracle, p. 98)

6 For whom the Lord loveth he ^achasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye ^aendure ^bchastening (correction, instruction), **God dealeth with you as with ^csons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?**

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had ^afathers of our flesh which ^bcorrected *us*, and we gave *them* ^creverence: shall we not much rather be in ^dsubjection unto the ^eFather of ^fspirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his ^aholiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the ^apeaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are ^bexercised (trained, disciplined) thereby. (D&C 101:4-5. We need to be chastened and tried.)

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and (strengthen) the ^afeeble knees;

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame (spiritually lame) be turned out of the way; but let it rather be ^ahealed.

14 Follow ^apeace with all *men*, and ^bholiness, without which no man shall ^csee the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man ^afail (want, fall short of, lack) of the ^bgrace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled;

16 Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his ^abirthright.

17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with ^atears. (This verse is poorly written. What Esau sought “carefully with tears” was not repentance, but the blessings of the birthright, which he had given up for a mess of pottage. DNTC, 3:228)

18 For ye are not come unto the ^amount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which ^avoice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

21 And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

22 But ye are come unto mount ^aSion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of ^bangels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the ^afirstborn, which are ^bwritten in heaven, and to God the ^cJudge of all, and to the ^dspirits of ^ejust men made perfect, (A great many men suppose there is no difference between an angel and a spirit of a just man made perfect, but Paul makes a distinction. He tells us that the Hebrew church had come into the presence of God and angels and to the spirits of just men made perfect. The spirit of a just man made perfect, if he made his appearance, would appear or be enveloped in flaming fire, and no man in this mortal state could endure it. But an angel could come and appear as another man. The spirits of just men are made ministering servants to those who are sealed unto life eternal...Angels have advanced higher in knowledge and power than spirits...Spirits can only be revealed in flaming fire, or glory. Angels have advanced farther, their light and glory being tabernacled, and hence [they] appear in bodily shape. Joseph Smith's Commentary on the Bible, p. 196-7)

24 And to Jesus the ^amediator of the ^bnew ^ccovenant, and to the ^dblood of sprinkling, that speaketh ^ebetter things than *that of* Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they ^aescaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven:

26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I ^ashake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, ~~let us~~ (should) have grace, whereby we

may serve God acceptably with ^areverence and godly ^bfear:
29 For our God *is* a consuming fire.

CHAPTER 13

Marriage is honorable in all—Christ is the same everlastingly—How the saints are to offer acceptable sacrifices.

1 LET ^abrotherly ^blove continue.

2 Be not forgetful to ^aentertain ^bstrangers: for thereby some have entertained ^cangels ^dunawares. (Among those who serve God as angels, that is as his ministers and messengers, are righteous mortal men. And so Paul, with perfect propriety, counsels the Hebrew Saints to entertain other saints who may be serving on the Lord's errand as his messengers, his ministers, his angels. DNTC, 3:235. The three "angels" who met Abraham and ate with Lot, were holy men, according to Joseph Smith.)

3 Remember them that are in ^abonds, as bound with them; *and* them which ^bsuffer adversity, as being yourselves also ~~in~~ (of) the body.

4 ^aMarriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but ^bwhoremongers and ^cadulterers God will ^djudge.

5 Let your ~~conversation~~ (consecrations) be without ^acovetousness; *and* be ^bcontent with (giving) such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor ^cforsake thee. (Our contributions should be willing offerings.)

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation. (Follow the counsel of the Brethren; give heed to the General Authorities; take direction from the bishop and stake president; pattern your faith after theirs; and follow their righteous examples. DNTC, 3:237)

8 Jesus Christ the ^asame yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

9 Be not ^acarried about with divers and strange ^bdoctrines. For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. (Paul is telling the Hebrew Saints to leave completely the dead letter of Mosaic performances.)

10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might ^asanctify the people with **his own ^bblood**, ^csuffered ^dwithout (outside of) the gate. (Jesus was crucified outside the walls of the City of Jerusalem.)

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his ^areproach.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

15 By him therefore let us offer the ^asacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the ^bfruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name.

16 But to do good and to ^acommunicate forget not: for with such ^bsacrifices God is well pleased.

17 ^aObey them that have the rule over you, and ^bsubmit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

18 Pray for us: for we trust we have a good ^aconscience, in all things willing to live ^bhonestly.

19 But I beseech *you* the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great ^ashepherd of the sheep, through **the blood of the ^beverlasting ^ccovenant**,

21 Make you perfect in every good ^awork to do his ^bwill, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

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.

Additional Readings: Bible Dictionary – Pauline Epistles – Hebrews:

Epistle to the Hebrews was written to Jewish members of the Church to persuade them that significant aspects of the law of Moses, as a forerunner, had been fulfilled in Christ, and that the higher gospel law of Christ had replaced it. When Paul returned to Jerusalem at the end of his third mission (about A.D. 60), he found that many thousands of Jewish members of the Church were still "zealous of the law" of Moses (Acts 21: 20). This was at least ten years after the conference at Jerusalem had determined that certain ordinances of the law of Moses were not necessary for the salvation of gentile Christians, but had not settled the matter for Jewish Christians. It appears that soon thereafter, Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews to show them by their own scripture and by sound reason why they should no longer practice the law of Moses. The epistle is built on a carefully worked-out plan. Some have felt that the literary style is different from that of Paul's other letters. However, the ideas are certainly Paul's.

Analysis of Hebrews

1. God has spoken to our fathers for centuries by means of prophets, but in our time he has sent his son Jesus, who is the heir and the Creator, an the exact image of the Father (Heb. 1: 1-3).

2. Superiority of Jesus.

a. Jesus is greater than the angels. He has a more excellent name, inheritance, and higher calling. They are servants; he is the Son (Heb. 1: 4 - 2: 18).

b. If the word of angels is important, how much "more earnest heed" we ought to give to the things spoken by the Lord (Jesus) (Heb. 2: 1-4).

3. Jesus is greater than Moses. Moses was a faithful servant, but Jesus was a faithful son (Heb. 3: 1-6).

4. The superiority of Jesus' word.

a. The Israelites while travelling through the wilderness could not enter into the promised land because they did not believe and obey the teachings of God received through Moses (Heb. 3: 7-19).

b. How much more important it is, therefore, to obey the words of Jesus who is greater than Moses, if we wish to enter the heavenly land (Heb. 4: 1-2).

5. Jesus, as a high priest of Melchizedek, is superior to the high priests of the law of Moses.

a. Jesus was of the order of Melchizedek, which is greater than the order of Aaron. Melchizedek was even greater than Abraham (Heb. 7: 1-12).

b. The law of the Melchizedek Priesthood (gospel) is greater than the law of the Aaronic Priesthood (law of Moses) (Heb. 5: 1 - 7: 28).

6. The tabernacle service was symbolic (or a shadow) or the real events.

a. The high priest under the law went through the veil into the Holy of Holies; but Jesus, the great high priest, has gone into heaven itself (Heb. 6: 19-20; Heb. 9: 1-14).

b. The traveling of Israel out of Egypt, through the wilderness, crossing over the Jordan River into the promised land, is similar to a man forsaking the worldly things, going through the wilderness of temptation, and finally passing through the veil of death into the celestial kingdom (cf. Alma 37: 38-45; D&C 84: 21-24).

7. The first covenant (testament) under Moses was fulfilled, and Jesus brought a new covenant (testament); thus we have in the Bible the Old and New Testaments (Heb. 8: 6 - 9: 28). That which is therefore fulfilled and is old "is ready to vanish away" (Heb. 8: 13).

8. Exhortation to faithfulness and diligence (Heb. 10: 1-39).

9. A discourse on faith (Heb. 11: 1-40).

10. Admonitions and greetings (Heb. 12: 1 - 13: 25).

Is Shem Melchizedek?

In ancient Jewish traditions Melchizedek is often thought to be Shem, the son of Noah. Melchizedek is a title meaning "king of righteousness," even though it is also used as a proper name. A modern writer examined the question of whether Shem and Melchizedek could be the same person and concluded that, while we cannot say for sure, the possibility is clearly there. The following is taken from the November 1973 Ensign magazine:

Question: Is it possible that Shem and Melchizedek are the same person?

Alma E. Gygi, Ensign, Nov, 1973, p. 15-16.

This question is frequently asked and is an interesting one. Let us examine first what we know about Shem. Although the Bible names Shem as the eldest son of Noah (Gen. 5:32), modern-day revelation places Japheth as the eldest (Moses 8:12). Both reports, however, are harmonious in naming Shem as the progenitor of Israel and in the fact that the priesthood descended through Shem to all the great patriarchs after Noah. (1 Chr. 1:24-27.) In this patriarchal order of priesthood, Shem stands next to Noah. He held the keys to the priesthood and was the great high priest of his day.

Living contemporary with Shem was a man known as Melchizedek, who was also known as the great high priest. The scriptures give us the details of Shem's birth and ancestry but are silent as to his ministry and later life. Of Melchizedek, however, the opposite is true. Nothing is recorded about his birth or ancestry, even though the Book of Mormon states that he did have a father. (Alma 13:17-18.) Concerning his ministry and life we have several interesting and important facts. (Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 7:1-4; Alma 13:17-18.)

All of this provokes some questions and calls for answers. Were there two high priests presiding at the same time? Why is the record silent concerning Shem's ministry? Why is nothing known concerning Melchizedek's ancestry?

Because of this state of knowledge on our part, many Saints and gospel scholars have wondered if these men were the same person. The truth is, we do not know the answer. But an examination of the scriptures is fascinating, because it seems to indicate that these men may have been one and the same. For example, here is the case for their oneness:

1. The inheritance given to Shem included the land of Salem. Melchizedek appears in scripture as the king of Salem, who reigns over this area.
2. Shem, according to later revelation, reigned in righteousness and the priesthood came through him. Melchizedek appears on the scene with a title that means “king of righteousness.”
3. Shem was the great high priest of his day. Abraham honored the high priest Melchizedek by seeking a blessing at his hands and paying him tithes.
4. Abraham stands next to Shem in the patriarchal order of the priesthood and would surely have received the priesthood from Shem; but D&C 84:5-17 says Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek.
5. Jewish tradition identifies Shem as Melchizedek.
6. President Joseph F. Smith’s remarkable vision names Shem among the great patriarchs, but no mention is made of Melchizedek.
7. *Times and Seasons* (vol. 6, p. 746) speaks of “Shem, who was Melchizedek. ...”

On the other hand, there is a case for their being two distinct personalities. Many persons believe D&C 84:14 is proof that there are perhaps several generations between Melchizedek and Noah. The scripture says, “Which Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah.”

If it does turn out that Shem and Melchizedek are the same person, this scripture should prove no stumbling block, because it could be interpreted to mean that priesthood authority commenced with Adam and came through the fathers, even till Noah, and then to Shem.