

# **‘But we see Jesus’**

## **Lessons from the epistle to the Hebrews**

### **General Introduction**

‘Only by knowing God here can we prepare to meet Him at His coming. In His lessons and His mighty works Christ is a perfect revelation of God. This Christ declares through the inspired evangelist. “No man hath seen God at any time,” He says; “the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (John 1:18). “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” These words show the importance of studying Christ’s character. Only by knowing Christ can we know God.

As our representative, Christ stands on the highest possible ground. When He came to the world as God’s messenger, He held the salvation of God in His hand. All mankind was delivered to Him, for in Him was the fullness of the Godhead. So fully did Christ reveal the Father that the messengers sent by the Pharisees to take Him were charmed by His presence. As they beheld the soft light of the glory of God that enshrouded His person, as they heard the gracious words that fell from His lips, they loved Him. And when they were asked by the Pharisees, “Why have ye not brought Him?” they answered, “Never man spake like this Man” (John 7:45, 46).

As we behold Christ we shall be changed into His image and made fit to meet Him at His coming. Now is the time to prepare for the coming of our Lord. Readiness to meet Him cannot be attained in a moment’s time. Preparatory to that solemn scene there must be vigilant waiting combined with earnest work. The union of these two makes us complete in Christ. The active and devotional must be combined as were the human and divine in Christ. So God’s children glorify Him. Amid the busy scenes of life their voices will be heard speaking words of encouragement, hope, and faith. The will and the affections will be consecrated to Christ. Thus they prepare to meet their Lord; and when He comes, they will say, with joy: “This is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.”

*In Heavenly Places, page 250.*

**Compiler’s note:** The Epistle to the Hebrews is unusual among the New Testament epistles in the fact that the writer does not identify himself. (The same is the case with the First Epistle of John, while the author of the Second and Third Epistles of John identifies himself simply as ‘the elder.’) Despite an ancient tradition in the Eastern Church that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by Paul and although many scholars who deny Paul’s authorship acknowledge that the arguments and thoughts of this epistle bear the stamp of Paul, popular scholarship proposes many alternative authors, for example, Barnabas, Apollos, Clement of Rome, Priscilla and others. It is the belief of the compiler of these lessons that the epistle was indeed written by Paul. An early Christian writer suggests that Paul chose to withhold his name from the epistle because the Jews were prejudiced against him. He also suggests that Paul wrote this epistle in Hebrew and the Greek version we have today is a translation into Greek by Luke, which explains why the style is at times similar to the book of Acts.

Though described as an epistle, it does not appear that Hebrews was written to a particular church or individual, as all Paul’s other letters were. There are no references to particular local problems or situations. J. B. Phillips chose to call it ‘The Letter to Jewish Christians’ which seems an apt title. Paul assumes that his readers have both knowledge of Jesus and a degree of belief in Him. But in this letter he tackles several of the stumbling blocks faced by Jews in all places who had become Christians.

This series of lessons is not an exhaustive verse-by-verse study of the entire epistle to the Hebrews. Rather it focuses on Paul’s insights into the nature, position and role of Jesus Christ. For ‘this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.’

- 1. Jesus: truly God**
- 2. Jesus: truly man**
- 3. Jesus: more worthy than Moses**
- 4. Entering into His rest**
- 5. A high priest taken from among men**
- 6. An anchor of the soul**
- 7. Christ’s right to be our High Priest**
- 8. Christ’s new covenant**
- 9. His own blood once for all**
- 10. A new and living way**
- 11. The great cloud of witnesses**
- 12. Looking unto Jesus**
- 13. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever**

**Lesson 1: December 26-January 1**  
**‘So much better than the angels’**

MEMORY VERSE: 'But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.' Hebrews 1:8.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 48.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 1:1-14.

LESSON AIM: To understand that Jesus Christ is truly God.

## Introduction

'In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life." 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life. "He that believeth in Me," said Jesus, "though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"' *Desire of Ages*, page 530.

'Study carefully the first chapter of Hebrews. Become interested in the Scriptures. Read and study them diligently. "In them ye think ye have eternal life," Christ said, "and they are they which testify of me." It means everything to us to have an experimental and individual knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, "whom He hath sent." "For this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." *Special Testimonies on Education*, page 179.

### 'God hath spoken to us by His Son'

#### 1. What means has God chosen to communicate with mankind in times past? Hebrews 1:1.

NOTE: 'The more fully we accept the light presented by the Holy Spirit through the consecrated servants of God, the deeper and surer, even as the eternal throne, will appear the truths of ancient prophecy; we shall be assured that men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. Men must themselves be under the influence of the Holy Spirit in order to understand the Spirit's utterances through the prophets. These messages were given, not for those that uttered the prophecies, but for us who are living amid the scenes of their fulfilment.' *Selected Messages, book 2*, page 114.

#### 2. Having communicated through prophets, what better method of revealing Himself to mankind did God use? Hebrews 1:2. Compare John 14:8-9.

NOTE: 'Christ came to the world to reveal the character of the Father, and to redeem the fallen race. The world's Redeemer was equal with God. His authority was as the authority of God. He declared that He had no existence separate from the Father. The authority by which He spoke, and wrought miracles, was expressly His own, yet He assures us that He and the Father are one. John bore witness of Christ, and pointed all men to Him as the promised Messiah. When he beheld Jesus before him, he declared, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for He was before me." "And of His fullness have we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." As legislator, Jesus exercised the authority of God; His commands and decisions were supported by the Sovereignty of the eternal throne. The glory of the Father was revealed in the Son; Christ made manifest the character of the Father. He was so perfectly connected with God, so completely embraced in His encircling light, that he who had seen the Son, had seen the Father. His voice was as the voice of God. Mark Christ's prayer before His crucifixion: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." Again He says, "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me." "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." *Review & Herald*, January 7, 1890.

### 'Thou hast laid the foundation of the world'

#### 3. What important truth are we shown about Christ? Hebrews 1:2, last part, Hebrews 1:10. Compare Colossians 1:16, John 1:3.

NOTE: 'All things were created by the Son of God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. . . . All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made." John 1:1-3. And since the Sabbath is a memorial of the work of creation, it is a token of the love and power of Christ.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 32.

'While God's Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding His pre-existence. The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and oneness with His Father. From everlasting He was the Mediator of the covenant, the one in whom all nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, if they accepted Him, were to be blessed. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Before men or angels were created, the Word was with God, and was God. The world was made by Him, "and without Him was not any thing made that was made" (verse 3). If Christ made all things, He existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore.' *Lift Him Up*, page 16.

#### 4. How are we shown Christ's continuing care over His creation? Hebrews 1:3, middle part. Compare Colossians 1:17.

NOTE: 'Christ is the Creator of the universe. "By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for

Him.” Of old He laid the foundation of the world; the heavens are the work of His hand. By the arm of His power He upholds His creation.’ *Youth’s Instructor*, November 11, 1897.

### ‘The express image of His person’

#### 5. What does Christ reveal about God? Hebrews 1:3, first part.

NOTE: ‘Christ Himself is the pearl of great price. In Him is gathered all the glory of the Father, the fullness of the Godhead. He is the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of His person. The glory of the attributes of God is expressed in His character. Every page of the Holy Scriptures shines with His light. The righteousness of Christ, as a pure, white pearl, has no defect, no stain. No work of man can improve the great and precious gift of God. It is without a flaw. In Christ are “hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Colossians 2:3. He is “made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” 1 Corinthians 1:30. All that can satisfy the needs and longings of the human soul, for this world and for the world to come, is found in Christ. Our Redeemer is the pearl so precious that in comparison all things else may be accounted loss.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 115.

#### 6. What characteristics of God has Christ revealed? Hebrews 1:9.

NOTE: ‘Jesus Christ revealed the Father in His true character to the world, representing Him as full of mercy, love, and light. Christ took upon Him humanity in order that the light and radiance of divine love should not extinguish man. When Moses pleaded, “I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory,” he was placed in the cleft of the rock, and the Lord passed by before him. When Philip asked Christ to show them the Father, He said, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.” He revealed the Father to Philip as He had revealed Him to Moses when He passed by before him, and proclaimed, “The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.” Jesus proclaimed Himself to the world as the perfect representation of the Father, and invited the love and confidence of the world to be centred in the Father. He said: “I am in the Father and the Father in Me.” “If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also; and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him. . . . Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?” . . . In plain language the Saviour taught the world that the tenderness, the compassion, and love that He manifested toward man, were the very attributes of His Father in heaven.’ *Signs of the Times*, August 20, 1894.

### ‘On the right hand of God’

#### 7. What position does Christ now occupy? Hebrews 1:3. Compare Mark 16:19, Acts 7:55-56, Romans 8:34.

NOTE: ‘He has taken our nature upon Him, and has Himself felt the force of our temptations; He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. When man rebelled, Christ became his surety and substitute. He undertook the combat with the powers of darkness; and when through death He destroyed him that had the power of death, the highest honours were bestowed upon Him. He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and sat down at the right hand of God; the very Jesus who had borne the curse of sin for us. And there was given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. To Him God has delegated His power; He has the keys of death and the grave.’ *Bible Echo*, January 15, 1889.

#### 8. What is meant by the phrase ‘right hand of God’? Exodus 15:6, Matthew 26:64, Luke 22:69.

NOTE: The phrase ‘the right hand of God’ represents the position from which power and authority are exerted. See Deuteronomy 33:2, Psalm 20:6. Thus Jesus, after His humiliation, has been exalted to the position of supreme power and authority. Compare Matthew 28:18, Philippians 2:9.

“‘If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God” [Colossians 3:1]. . . . Come to the great source of power for your strength.’ *Sermons & Talks, volume 2*, page 167.

‘No human being can understand our necessities as Christ. We shall receive help if we ask Him in faith. We are His by creation, we are His by redemption. By the cords of divine love we are bound to the Source of all power and strength.’ *Lift Him Up*, page 55.

### ‘So much better than the angels’

#### 9. How does Paul explain that Christ is more than an angel? Hebrews 1:13. Compare Hebrews 1:4-5.

NOTE: ‘Should the angel Gabriel be sent to this world to take upon himself human nature, and to teach the knowledge of God, how eagerly men would listen to his instruction. Supposing that he were able to set us a perfect example of purity and holiness, sympathising with us in all our sorrows, bereavements, and afflictions, and suffering the punishment of our sins, how eagerly we would follow him. What exaltation he would receive. Men would desire to place him on the throne of David, and to gather the nations of earth under his banner. . . . But One surpassing all that imagination can present came from heaven to this world. Nearly 2000 years ago a voice of strange and mysterious import was heard from the throne of God, “Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. . . . Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O God.” A prophet said: “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” As Paul beheld Christ in His power, he broke out into exclamations of admiration and amazement: “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” “By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.”’ *Signs of the Times*, April 4, 1906.

**10. What attitude do the angels take towards Christ? Hebrews 1:6. Compare Revelation 5:11-12, and consider Matthew 4:10, Revelation 19:10.**

NOTE: 'It was the marvel of the heavenly hosts that Christ should come to earth and do as He did, that His life here should be one of poverty, in such incomparable contrast with His glory in the heavenly courts. He might have come attended by the angelic throng; for the heavenly angels would have regarded themselves as honoured in being His bodyguard, in serving and worshipping Him. But we read that "though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." Christ's entire life was one of self-denial. He received of His Father that He might impart to others.' *Youth's Instructor*, January 21, 1897.

**'Thy throne, O God, is for ever'**

**11. How does the Father address Christ? Hebrews 1:8.**

NOTE: 'How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 48.

**12. What characteristic of God does Christ reveal? Hebrews 1:11-12, Hebrews 13:8. Compare Malachi 3:6.**

NOTE: 'Hang your helpless soul on Jesus Christ. He is unchangeable, the same yesterday, today, and forever.' *1888 Materials*, page 143.

'His promises will never fail; in Him we have an unchanging Friend. Let us now take hold to glorify, not self, but Christ; then the light of His presence will shine upon us, illuminating all the way.' *Loma Linda Messages*, page 333.

**Lesson 2: January 2-8**  
**'In all things like unto His brethren'**

MEMORY VERSE: '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.' Hebrews 2:17.

STUDY HELP: *Lift Him Up*, page 74.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 2:1-18.

LESSON AIM: To understand that Jesus Christ is truly man.

*Compiler's note:* The reality of Christ's humanity has long been a contentious issue. John goes so far as to state that a denial of the genuineness of Christ's humanity is characteristic of the Antichrist. 1 John 4:2-3. When Augustine formulated the theory of Original Sin, it was quickly realised that such a teaching necessarily requires that Christ did not share the humanity common to mankind. Roman Catholics therefore invented the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary to cope with the problems arising out of the theory of Original Sin. At the Reformation, Protestants modified this dogma to mean the Immaculate Conception of Jesus, rather than Mary, to cope with the same problem. Both versions of the Immaculate Conception deny that Christ accepted genuine humanity. American Evangelicals teach that Christ is 'the God-man', with a hybrid nature that made Him unable to sin and impervious to temptation. Thus again His genuine humanity is denied. The most recent denial of His genuine humanity comes from those who claim that He was born with 'the nature of Adam before the Fall,' a nature which He could not have received through His human mother, since Adam was unable to transmit such a nature to any of his offspring. All the above theories are a denial that Jesus came 'in the flesh', that is, that He was made in all things 'like unto His brethren.'

**Introduction**

'We need always to keep in view the truthfulness of the humanity of Christ Jesus. When Christ became our substitute and surety, it was as a human being. He came as a man, and rendered the obedience of human nature to the only true God. He came not to show us what God could do, but what God did do, and what man, when he is a partaker of the divine nature, can do. It was the human nature of Christ that endured the temptations in the wilderness, not His divine nature. In His human nature He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself. He lived a perfect human life.' *Manuscript Releases, volume 14*, page 334.

**'The things which we have heard'**

**1. What warning does Paul give concerning the truths entrusted to us? Hebrews 2:1.**

NOTE: The truth Paul has already discussed in chapter 1 is that Jesus is truly God. In this chapter he goes on to show that Jesus is truly man. It is vital that we do not let these two fundamental truths slip

'Christ calls upon us to hear His words, that we may know Him. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." We are not to hear as

did those of whom the apostles said, "The Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Those who hear savingly are those who hear in faith, and who give earnest heed to the things which they have heard, lest at any time they should let them slip.' *Signs of the Times*, January 27, 1898.

**2. How does Paul explain that these truths are connected with our salvation? Hebrews 2:3.**

NOTE: 'The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life.' *Desire of Ages*, page 530.

'In the humanity of Christ there are golden threads that bind the believing, trusting poor man to His own soul of infinite love.' *That I May Know Him*, page 43.

**'A little lower than the angels'**

**3. How does Paul describe the place of mankind in creation? Hebrews 2:7. Compare Psalm 8:5.**

NOTE: 'Created to be "the image and glory of God" (1 Corinthians 11:7), Adam and Eve had received endowments not unworthy of their high destiny. Graceful and symmetrical in form, regular and beautiful in feature, their countenances glowing with the tint of health and the light of joy and hope, they bore in outward resemblance the likeness of their Maker. Nor was this likeness manifest in the physical nature only. Every faculty of mind and soul reflected the Creator's glory. Endowed with high mental and spiritual gifts, Adam and Eve were made but "little lower than the angels" (Hebrews 2:7), that they might not only discern the wonders of the visible universe, but comprehend moral responsibilities and obligations.' *Education*, page 20.

**4. How does Paul show that Jesus too occupied this place in His incarnation? Hebrews 2:9.**

NOTE: 'This is the mystery of godliness. Human science, even though it be of the highest order, cannot explain it. Men may think that they possess superior qualities, represented by the noble oak, or the stately cedar. Mark the humble birth of Christ, His condescending grace, His infinite humility, the depths to which He descended. He is the eternal Word. Yet He was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Before Christ came in the likeness of men, He existed in the express image of His Father. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Nevertheless He voluntarily emptied Himself, and took the form of a servant. He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Yet He was born in a stable, in Bethlehem of Judea. He was the son of Mary, supposed to be the son of Joseph, and He grew up as any other child. His earthly life was one of self-denial and self-sacrifice. "The foxes have holes," he said, "and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." "We see Jesus," writes Paul, "who was made a little lower than the angels.'" *Youth's Instructor*, December 20, 1900.

**'That He by the grace of God should taste death'**

**5. How are we shown that the humanity Christ took was that of mortal man? Hebrews 2:9.**

NOTE: 'The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ?' *Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889.

**6. How are we shown that Christ's humanity would involve suffering? Hebrews 2:10.**

NOTE: 'Christ's mission could be fulfilled only through suffering. Before Him was a life of sorrow, hardship, and conflict, and an ignominious death.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 194.

'The human nature of Christ was like unto ours. And suffering was really more keenly felt by Him, for His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin. The aversion to suffering was in proportion to its severity. His desire for the removal of suffering was just as strong as human beings experience.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 26

'His hands were pierced with nails, His holy temples were crowned with thorns. He was indeed bruised by Satan, who nerved his agents to do most cruel things. Our salvation was wrought out by infinite suffering to the Son of God. The heel of Christ was indeed bruised when His humanity suffered, and grief heavier than that which ever oppressed the [human] beings He had created weighed down His soul as He was engaged in paying the vast debt that sinners owed to God, which they could never pay to redeem themselves from bondage. On Him was laid the transgression and grief of us all.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 292.

**'Not ashamed to call them brethren'**

**7. How does Paul explain that Christ is one with those He came to make holy? Hebrews 2:11.**

NOTE: 'In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17). He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He knew no sin. He was the Lamb "without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19). Could Satan in the least particular have tempted Christ to sin, he would have bruised the Saviour's head. As it was, he could only touch His heel. Had the head of Christ been touched, the hope of the human race would have perished. Divine wrath would have come upon Christ as it came upon Adam. Christ and the church would have been without hope. We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 256.

**8. How are we shown that Christ took the same humanity as the children of Adam? Hebrews 2:14.**

NOTE: Notice that Christ took the same flesh and blood as 'the children.' Of all who have lived in this world, Adam and Eve were the only ones who were never children. Thus Christ is shown not to have taken the same nature as Adam before his fall.

'When Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigour of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden, and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the wilderness to cope with Satan. For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation.' *Desire of Ages*, page 117.

'Letters have been coming in to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations. If He did not have man's nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man's behalf. His temptation and victory tell us that humanity must copy the Pattern; man must become a partaker of the divine nature.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 408.

**'In all things . . . like unto His brethren'**

**9. What was necessary to bring about the destruction of Satan? Hebrews 2:14-16.**

NOTE: 'He [Christ] humbled Himself to man's nature. He did this that the Scripture might be fulfilled; and the plan was entered into by the Son of God, knowing all the steps in His humiliation, that He must descend to make an expiation for the sins of a condemned, groaning world. What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man! It was a wonderful humility. But He stepped still lower; the Man must humble Himself as a man to bear insult, reproach, shameful accusations, and abuse. There seemed to be no safe place for Him in His own territory. He had to flee from place to place for His life. He was betrayed by one of His disciples; He was denied by one of His most zealous followers. He was mocked. He was crowned with a crown of thorns. He was scourged. He was forced to bear the burden of the cross. He was not insensible to this contempt and ignominy. He submitted, but, oh! He felt the bitterness as no other being could feel it. He was pure, holy, and undefiled, yet arraigned as a criminal! The adorable Redeemer stepped down from the highest exaltation. Step by step He humbled Himself to die, but what a death! It was the most shameful, the most cruel, the death upon the cross as a malefactor. He did not die as a hero in the eyes of the world, loaded with honours, as men in battle. He died as a condemned criminal, suspended between the heavens and the earth, died a lingering death of shame, exposed to the tauntings and revilings of a debased, crime-loaded, profligate multitude! All this humiliation of the Majesty of heaven was for guilty, condemned man. He went lower and lower in His humiliation, until there were no lower depths that He could reach, in order to lift man up from his moral defilement. All this was for you.' *That I May Know Him*, page 68.

**10. To what extent was it necessary for Christ to be made like those He came to save? Hebrews 2:17.**

NOTE: 'In order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He who knew no sin became sin for us. He humiliated Himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that He might be qualified to reach man and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." "And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." "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.'" *Confrontation*, pages 32-33.

**'A merciful and faithful High Priest'**

**11. How is Christ's work of intercession as our great High Priest affected by His likeness to us in nature? Hebrews 2:17.**

NOTE: 'Jesus is a compassionate Intercessor, a merciful and faithful high priest. He, the Majesty of Heaven! The King of glory can look upon finite man, subject to the temptations of Satan, knowing that He has felt the power of Satan's wiles. "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren [clothing His divinity with humanity], 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.' *Spalding-Magan Collection*, page 113.

**12. What advantage have the sufferings of Christ brought to us? Hebrews 2:18.**

NOTE: 'Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succour us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured.' *Desire of Ages*, page 117.

## **Lesson 3: January 9-15**

### **‘Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘For this Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.’ Hebrews 3:3.

STUDY HELP: *Lift Him Up*, page 29.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 3:1-19.

LESSON AIM: To show that Christ is worthy of more glory than Moses and to warn us not to repeat the errors of ancient Israel.

### **Introduction**

‘Because of the unbelief manifested toward Christ, the originator and foundation of the whole Jewish economy, a heavier retribution will come upon men than befell unbelieving Israel in the wilderness. Moses was the prophet by whom God communicated to the church in the wilderness; but great as was Moses, a greater than he is the Son of God, who builded the house.’ *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 7, page 927.*

### **‘Faithful to Him’**

#### **1. What comparison does Paul make between Moses and Christ? Hebrews 3:1-2.**

NOTE: ‘Moses was a type of Christ. God saw fit to discipline Moses in the school of affliction and poverty before he could be prepared to lead the hosts of Israel to the earthly Canaan. The Israel of God, journeying to the heavenly Canaan, have a Captain who needed no human teaching to prepare Him for His mission as a divine leader; yet He was made perfect through sufferings; and “in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:10, 18). Our Redeemer manifested no human weakness or imperfection; yet He died to obtain for us an entrance into the Promised Land. “And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, . . . but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” (Hebrews 3:5, 6).’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 111.

#### **2. How does Paul emphasise Moses’ faithfulness? Hebrews 3:5. Compare Numbers 12:7.**

NOTE: ‘Never, till exemplified in the sacrifice of Christ, were the justice and the love of God more strikingly displayed than in His dealings with Moses. God shut Moses out of Canaan, to teach a lesson which should never be forgotten, that He requires exact obedience, and that men are to beware of taking to themselves the glory which is due to their Maker. He could not grant the prayer of Moses that he might share the inheritance of Israel, but He did not forget or forsake His servant. The God of heaven understood the suffering that Moses had endured; He had noted every act of faithful service through those long years of conflict and trial. On the top of Pisgah, God called Moses to an inheritance infinitely more glorious than the earthly Canaan.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 111.

### **‘Worthy of more glory’**

#### **3. In what way is Christ more worthy than Moses? Hebrews 3:3-4. Consider Revelation 5:12.**

NOTE: ‘Remorse took hold of the disciples because they had allowed the prevailing unbelief to leaven their opinions and becloud their understanding. The Light of this dark world had been shining amid its gloom, and they had failed to comprehend whence were its beams. They asked themselves why they had pursued a course that made it necessary for Christ to reprove them. [See Luke 24:25.] They often repeated His conversations, and said, Why did we allow earthly considerations and the opposition of priests and rabbis to confuse our senses, so that we did not comprehend that a greater than Moses was among us, that One wiser than Solomon was instructing us? How dull were our ears! How feeble was our understanding!’ *Desire of Ages*, page 508.

#### **4. How is Christ greater than other Old Testament saints? Matthew 12:41-42, John 4:12-14, John 8:53-58.**

NOTE: ‘Christ distinctly appropriated to Himself the right to authority and allegiance. “Ye call Me Master and Lord,” He said, “and ye say well; for so I am.” “One is your Master, even Christ.” Thus He maintained the dignity that belonged to His name, and the authority and power He possessed in heaven. There were occasions when He spoke with the dignity of His own true greatness. “He that hath ears to hear,” He said, “let him hear.” In these words He was only repeating the command of God, when from His excellent glory the Infinite One had declared, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.” Standing amid the frowning Pharisees, who sought to make their own importance felt, Christ did not hesitate to compare Himself with the most distinguished representative men who had walked the earth, and to claim pre-eminence above them all. Jonah was one of these men, held in high estimation by the Jewish nation. As Christ recalled to the minds of His hearers, Jonah’s message and his instrumentality in saving that people, He said: “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.” Christ knew that the Israelites regarded Solomon as the greatest king that ever wielded a sceptre over an earthly kingdom. Yet Christ declared: “Behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”’ *Lift Him Up*, page 37.

## ‘A servant . . . a son’

### 5. What contrast does Paul make between Christ’s faithfulness and that of Moses? Hebrews 3:5-6.

NOTE: ‘The Son of God over His own house is higher than Moses, higher than the highest angel. He bears the name of Jehovah upon His mitre, while on His breastplate is written the name of Israel. Christ took humanity that humanity might touch humanity. In the form of man He humbled Himself, and became a servant, but as the Son of God He was higher than the angels. By His life in humanity man may become a partaker of the divine nature. As the Majesty of heaven, He was exalted above the angels, and in His work of redemption He carries with Him all who have received Him and believed on His name.’ *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 7, page 927.*

### 6. How did Jesus describe the changed relationship we may enjoy with Him? John 15:15. Consider John 1:12, Romans 8:14. 1 John 3:1-2.

NOTE: ‘The gospel is to be presented, not as a lifeless theory, but as a living force to change the life. God desires that the receivers of His grace shall be witnesses to its power. He would have His servants bear testimony to the fact that through His grace men may possess Christlikeness of character, and may rejoice in the assurance of His great love. He would have us bear testimony to the fact that He cannot be satisfied until the human race are reclaimed and reinstated in their holy privileges as His sons and daughters.’ *God’s Amazing Grace, page 148.*

## ‘I was grieved with this generation’

### 7. What was the problem with ancient Israel? Hebrews 3:16.

NOTE: ‘The original apostasy began in disbelief and denial of the truth; but if we would triumph, we must fix the eye of faith steadfastly upon Jesus, the Captain of our salvation. We are to follow the example of Christ. In all that Jesus did on earth, He had an eye single to the glory of God. Divinity and humanity were united in Christ, that He might reveal to us God’s purpose, and bring us into close union with Himself. This union will enable us to overcome the enemy, for through faith in Christ, we shall have divine power.’ *Christ Triumphant, page 34.*

### 8. How did God have to deal with those in ancient Israel who hardened their hearts against Him? Hebrews 3:11, 17-18.

NOTE: ‘May the Lord forbid that the history of the children of Israel in departing from God, in refusing to walk in the light, in refusing to confess their sins of unbelief and rejection of His messages, should be the experience of the people claiming to believe the truth for this time. For if they do as did the children of Israel in the face of warnings and admonitions, the same result will follow in these last days as came upon the children of Israel.’ *Review & Herald, October 21, 1890.*

‘The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ. Satan’s snares are laid for us as verily as they were laid for the children of Israel just prior to their entrance into the land of Canaan. We are repeating the history of that people. Their history should be a solemn warning to us. We need never expect that when the Lord has light for His people, Satan will stand calmly by and make no effort to prevent them from receiving it. Let us beware that we do not refuse the light God sends, because it does not come in a way to please us. If there are any who do not see and accept the light themselves, let them not stand in the way of others.’ *Healthful Living, page 280.*

## ‘An evil heart of unbelief’

### 9. What solemn warning does Paul give? Hebrews 3:7-8.

NOTE: ‘In these last days God’s people will be exposed to the very same dangers as were ancient Israel. Those who will not receive the warnings that God gives will fall into the same perils as did ancient Israel and come short of entering into rest through unbelief. Ancient Israel suffered calamities on account of their unsanctified hearts and unsubmitted wills. Their final rejection as a nation was a result of their own unbelief, self-confidence, impenitence, blindness of mind, and hardness of heart. In their history we have a danger signal lifted before us.’ *Last Day Events, page 60.*

### 10. Why were the majority in ancient Israel not permitted to enter the Promised Land? Hebrews 3:19.

NOTE: ‘It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached went not in “because of unbelief.” Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfil His covenant with them. For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord’s professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years. We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ’s sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action. By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord’s return.’ *Evangelism, page 696.*

## ‘Steadfast to the end’

### 11. How does Paul emphasise the importance of perseverance? Hebrews 3:14.

NOTE: 'In many hearts there seems to be scarcely a breath of spiritual life. This makes me very sad. I fear that aggressive warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil has not been maintained. Shall we cheer on, by a half-dead Christianity, the selfish, covetous spirit of the world, sharing its ungodliness and smiling on its falsehood? Nay! By the grace of God let us be steadfast to the principles of truth, holding firm to the end the beginning of our confidence. We are to be "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). One is our Master, even Christ. To Him we are to look. From Him we are to receive our wisdom. By His grace we are to preserve our integrity, standing before God in meekness and contrition, and representing Him to the world.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 127.

#### **12. Upon what does membership of the household of Christ depend? Hebrews 3:6.**

NOTE: 'We are now in a time when we are to stand steadfast for the truth. We are to cherish love for souls, but never, never are we to surrender the least vital point of truth, for it is by maintaining truth, pure, unadulterated truth, that we can at this time bring honour and glory to Jesus Christ our Prince. The Word is the bread of life, and in the Word Christ's disciples are represented as eating and drinking the flesh and the blood of Christ, making His Word a part of their lives. No lie is of the truth. Truth will stand the test in the time of false theories, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.' *Sons & daughters of God*, page 196.

#### **13. How does Paul propose that we help each other to persevere? Hebrews 3:13.**

NOTE: 'Having entered the narrow path of obedience, let us refresh our minds by communion with one another and with God. As we see the day of God approaching, let us meet often to study His Word and to exhort one another to be faithful unto the end. These earthly assemblies are God's appointed means by which we have opportunity to speak with one another and to gather all the help possible to prepare, in the right way, to receive in the heavenly assemblies the fulfilment of the pledges of our inheritance. Remember that in every assembly you meet with Christ, the Master of assemblies. Encourage a personal interest in one another; for it is not enough simply to know men. We must know men in Christ Jesus. We are enjoined to "consider one another." This is the keynote of the gospel. The keynote of the world is self. I would encourage those who assemble in little companies to worship God. Brethren and sisters, be not disheartened because you are so few in number. The tree that stands alone upon the plain, strikes its roots deeper into the earth, spreads out its branches farther on every side, and grows stronger and more symmetrical while wrestling singly with the tempest or rejoicing in the sunshine. So the Christian, cut off from earthly dependence, may learn to rely wholly upon God, and may gain strength and courage from every conflict. May the Lord bless the scattered and lonely ones, and make them efficient workers for Him.' *Our High Calling*, page 166.

## **Lesson 4: January 16-22 'Entering into His rest'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.' Hebrews 4:9.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies, volume 1*, pages 283-287.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 4:1-16.

LESSON AIM: To study how Israel's experience may be repeated today if we fail to learn from their errors.

### **Introduction**

'If you are willing to learn meekness and lowliness of heart in Christ's school, He will surely give you rest and peace. It is a terribly hard struggle to give up your own will and your own way. But this lesson learned, you will find rest and peace. Pride, selfishness and ambition must be overcome; your will must be swallowed up in the will of Christ. The whole life may become one constant love sacrifice, every action a manifestation, and every word an utterance of love. As the life of the vine circulates through stem and cluster, descends into the lower fibres, and reaches to the topmost leaf, so will the grace and love of Christ burn and abound in the soul, sending its virtues to every part of the being, and pervading every exercise of body and mind.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 76.

### **'Let us therefore fear'**

#### **1. With what warning does Paul begin this chapter? Hebrews 4:1**

NOTE: 'We shall be saved eternally when we enter in through the gates into the city. Then we may rejoice that we are saved, eternally saved. But until then we need to heed the injunction of the apostle, and to "fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it" (Hebrews 4:1). Having a knowledge of Canaan, singing the songs of Canaan, rejoicing in the prospect of entering into Canaan, did not bring the children of Israel into the vineyards and olive groves of the Promised Land. They could make it theirs in truth only by occupation, by complying with the conditions, by exercising living faith in God, by appropriating His promises to themselves.' *That I May Know Him*, page 162.

#### **2. Why was ancient Israel not profited when the Gospel was preached to them? Hebrews 4:2.**

NOTE: 'Fill the whole heart with the words of God. They are the living water, quenching your burning thirst. They are the living bread from heaven. Jesus declares, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." [John 6:53.] And He explains Himself by saying, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."'

[John 6:63.] Our bodies are built up from what we eat and drink; and as in the natural economy, so in the spiritual economy, it is what we meditate upon that will give tone and strength to our spiritual nature. The theme of redemption is one that the angels desire to look into; it will be the science and the song of the redeemed throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Is it not worthy of careful thought and study now? The infinite love and mercy of Jesus, the sacrifice made in our behalf, calls for the most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins. As we thus contemplate heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger, and our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love. They will be intelligent and fervent. There will be more constant confidence in Jesus, and a daily, living experience in His power to save to the utmost all that come unto God by Him. As we meditate upon the perfections of the Saviour, we shall desire to be wholly transformed, and renewed in the image of His purity. There will be a hungering and thirsting of soul to become like Him whom we adore. The more our thoughts are upon Christ, the more we shall speak of Him to others, and represent Him to the world.' *Christian Education*, page 57.

### **'Harden not your hearts'**

#### **3. What error of ancient Israel are we warned against? Hebrews 4:7.**

NOTE: 'It is now that we must keep ourselves and our children unspotted from the world. It is now that we must wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is now that we must overcome pride, passion, and spiritual slothfulness. It is now that we must awake and make determined effort for symmetry of character. "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Hebrews 3:7, 8, 15. Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God, candidates for heaven. Go forward, my brethren and sisters. I can only write briefly upon these points at this time, merely calling your attention to the necessity of preparation. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 334.

#### **4. How may we hear His voice today? Hebrews 4:12-13.**

NOTE: 'They get these truths all mixed with error, and they cannot tell what is truth; and if asked to sit down and search the Scriptures with you to see what saith the Lord, I never knew a case but the answer was that they had no need to search the Scriptures, for the Lord told them what to do. The voice of God is speaking to us through His Word, and there are many voices that we will hear; but Christ has said we should beware of them who will say, "Here is Christ, or there is Christ." Then how shall we know that they have not the truth unless we bring everything to the Scriptures? Christ has warned us to beware of false prophets who will come to us in His name, saying that they are Christ. Now, if you should take the position that it is not important for you to understand the Scriptures for yourselves, you will be in danger of being led away.' *Faith & Works*, page 55.

### **'He spake . . . of the seventh day'**

#### **5. What symbol does Paul use to represent the rest God offers? Hebrews 4:4-5.**

NOTE: "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it," and "did rest the seventh day from all His works." Genesis 2:3, Hebrews 4:4. This day which He in the beginning sanctified and upon which He rested became the sign of sanctification and holiness, of rest in God. Hebrews calls it "His rest," "My rest," "that rest." Hebrews 3:16, Hebrews 4:1, 3, 5, 11. With this background it can be easily understood why God should call attention to the seventh day when He speaks of entering into His rest, as in the fourth verse before us. The Sabbath is so closely connected with rest in God, with sanctification, that He could not do otherwise.' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 167.

'In being co-workers with Christ in the great work for which He gave His life, we shall find true rest. When we were sinners, He gave His life for us. He wants us to come to Him and learn of Him. Thus we are to find rest. He says He will give us rest. "Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." In doing this you will find in your own experience the rest that Christ gives, the rest that comes from wearing His yoke and lifting His burdens.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 76.

#### **6. How does Paul stress the permanence of the Sabbath as a symbol of the rest God offers to repentant sinners? Hebrews 4:9.**

NOTE: The marginal reading for this verse is: There remaineth therefore a keeping of a Sabbath for the people of God. The Greek word translated 'rest' in this verse is different from the word used in the other places. It is 'sabbatismos' which may be translated as 'Sabbath-keeping' or 'keeping of Sabbath.' Farrar translates it as 'a Sabbath rest,' and comments that it is rather a type of heaven than of Canaan.

'The promise is still open, its fulfilment not yet exhausted: there is reserved for the people of God, still to be expected by them, as a church of believers, a 'sabbatismos', the keeping of a Sabbath, the enjoyment of a Sabbath rest. So it is, and must be; for the Sabbath of God, the Creator, is destined to become the Sabbath of all creation.' Delitzsch: *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, volume 1, page 197.

### **'Let us hold fast our profession'**

#### **7. In view of all that Christ has done and is doing for us, what are we exhorted to do? Hebrews 4:14.**

NOTE: 'The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. Through defects in the character, Satan works to gain control of the whole mind, and he knows that if these defects are cherished, he will succeed. Therefore he is constantly seeking to deceive the followers of Christ with his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome. But Jesus pleads in their behalf His wounded hands, His bruised body; and He declares to all who would follow Him: "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Corinthians 12:9). Let none, then, regard their defects as incurable. God will give faith and grace to overcome them. We are now living in the great day of atonement. All who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 69

**8. How are we shown that entering into God's rest will require effort on our part? Hebrews 4:11.**

NOTE: 'Let every soul endeavour to speak words that will be a strength and an inspiration to those who hear. We profess to be following Christ. We claim to be Christians. Does the love of God continually flow from us to others? Do we in word and action confess our Redeemer? We are altogether too indifferent in regard to one another. We forget to give words of hope and cheer, words that will rest the weary and strengthen the weak. Those who are unwilling to give the Lord faithful, earnest, loving service will not find spiritual rest in this life nor in the life to come. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fail after the same example of unbelief." The rest here spoken of is the rest of grace, obtained by following the prescription. "Labour diligently." Those who learn of Jesus, His meekness and lowliness, find rest in practising His lessons. It is not in indolence and selfish ease that rest is obtained. Only from earnest labour come peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, happiness on earth and glory hereafter. We should labour for those who are loitering away their lives, accomplishing only half of what they might. We must strive to arouse them to a sense of their responsibility. We should pray for and exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching, to be earnest and active in good works. Let the voice of the faithful sentinel be heard, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."'  
*Pacific Union Recorder*, November 7, 1901.

### 'Our great High Priest'

**9. Of what are we assured concerning our High Priest's understanding of our situation? Hebrews 4:15, first part.**

NOTE: 'It does not become one to pronounce sentence upon others and look to himself as a model man. Christ is our model; imitate Him, plant your feet in His steps. You may professedly believe every point of present truth, but unless you practise these truths it will avail you nothing. We are not to condemn others; this is not our work; but we should love one another and pray for one another. When we see one err from the truth, then we may weep over him as Christ wept over Jerusalem. Let us see what our heavenly Father in His word says about the erring: "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). Jesus cares for each one as though there were not another individual on the face of the earth. As Deity He exerts mighty power in our behalf, while as our Elder Brother He feels for all our woes. The Majesty of heaven held not Himself aloof from degraded, sinful humanity. We have not a high priest who is so high, so lifted up, that He cannot notice us or sympathise with us, but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 78.

**10. What are we told concerning Christ's temptations? Hebrews 4:15, last part. Compare Hebrews 2:18, Hebrews 5:7-8.**

NOTE: 'Behold the Son of God in the wilderness of temptation, in the time of greatest weakness assailed by the fiercest temptation. See Him during the years of His ministry, attacked on every side by the forces of evil. See Him in His agony on the cross. All this He suffered for us.' *Testimonies*, volume 8, page 209.

'There is nothing so hard as the crucifixion of the will. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are; but His will was ever kept on the side of God's will. In His humanity He had the same free will that Adam had in Eden. He could have yielded to temptation as Adam yielded. And Adam, by believing God and being a doer of His word, could have resisted temptation as Christ resisted it. Had Christ so willed it, He could have commanded the stones to be made bread. He might have cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple. He might have yielded to Satan's temptation to fall down and worship him, the usurper of the world. But at every point He met the tempter with, "It is written." His will was in perfect obedience to the will of God, and the will of God was revealed throughout His entire life.' *Our High Calling*, page 107.

### 'Come boldly to the throne of grace'

**11. With what spirit are we told to approach the throne of God in prayer? Hebrews 4:16, first part.**

NOTE: 'The throne of grace is itself the highest attraction because occupied by One who permits us to call Him Father. But God did not deem the principle of salvation complete while invested only with His own love. By His appointment He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed with our nature. As our Intercessor, His office work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters. Christ intercedes in behalf of those who have received Him. To them He gives power, by virtue of His own merits, to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. And the Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ, who paid our ransom with His blood, by receiving and welcoming Christ's friends as His friends. He is satisfied with the atonement made. He is glorified by the incarnation, the life, death, and mediation of His Son. No sooner does the child of God approach the mercy seat than he becomes the client of the great Advocate. At his first utterance of penitence and appeal

for pardon Christ espouses his case and makes it His own, presenting the supplication before the Father as His own request.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 68.

**12. What two things may we receive when we approach the throne of grace? Hebrews 5:16, last part.**

NOTE: 'As Christ intercedes in our behalf, the Father lays open all the treasures of His grace for our appropriation, to be enjoyed and to be communicated to others. "Ask in My name," Christ says; "I do not say that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because you have loved Me. Make use of My name. This will give your prayers efficiency, and the Father will give you the riches of His grace; wherefore, 'ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full' (John 16:24)."' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 68.

## **Lesson 5: January 23-29 'Called of God'**

MEMORY VERSE: '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.' Hebrews 5:8-9.

STUDY HELP: *Our High Calling*, page 48.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 5:1-14.

LESSON AIM: To understand Christ's qualifications to be our great High Priest.

### **Introduction**

'Christ came as the sinner's substitute to bear the guilt Himself, which justly belonged to man. Through the perfection of His character He was accepted of the Father as a mediator for sinful man. He only could save man by imputing to him His righteousness. His sinless, divine nature united Him to God, while His human nature brought Him into sympathy with the weaknesses and sufferings of humanity. "For 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." The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering, and thus qualified to help fallen man just where he needed help.' *Youth's Instructor*, January 1, 1874.

### **'Taken from among men'**

**1. What is the first qualification for a high priest? Hebrews 5:1, first part. Compare Hebrews 2:18, Exodus 28:1.**

NOTE: The high priest must come from man's side and is appointed to act for men. The high priest must be human, sharing the weakness of the men whom he represents before God. Thus he is qualified to intercede on their behalf. In order for Christ to function as 'our great High Priest,' it was essential that He should be made man. ('In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest.') Had Christ not taken upon Himself the same human nature as those for whom He intercedes, He would have been disqualified to act as their great High Priest. 'The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God.' *Our High Calling*, page 48.

**2. What is the function of the High Priest? Hebrews 5:1, last part. Compare Hebrews 10:11-12.**

NOTE: 'In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. But He stepped still lower in the path of humiliation. "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:8. As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of the common priest, so Christ took the form of a servant, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." Isaiah 53:5. Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. "With His stripes we are healed." *Desire of Ages*, page 25.

### **'Can have compassion'**

**3. What was one of the reasons why the high priest had to be taken from among men? Hebrews 5:2.**

NOTE: 'Christ suffered, being tempted; therefore He always sympathises with the tempted ones whom Satan is seeking to destroy. That He might be a merciful and faithful high priest, He was in all things made like those He came to help. He has compassion on the ignorant, and on those who are out of the way; for when on this earth He was compassed with infirmity. He is able to help us in our perplexities. As He works for us, let us work for one another. Let us reveal His love for our fellow-workers, acting in such a way that they will have full confidence in us.' *Pacific Union Recorder*, March 13, 1902.

**4. How did Christ differ from the high priests of the order of Aaron? Hebrews 5:3. Compare Leviticus 4:3.**

NOTE: 'In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17). He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He knew no sin. He was the Lamb "without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19). Could Satan in the least particular have tempted Christ to sin, he would have bruised the Saviour's head. As it was, he could only touch His heel. Had the head of Christ been touched, the hope of the human race would have perished. Divine wrath would have come upon Christ as it came upon Adam. Christ and the church would have been without hope. We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 256.

### **'Christ glorified not Himself'**

#### **5. How was Christ appointed to be our great High Priest? Hebrews 5:4-5. See Psalm 2:7.**

NOTE: 'One important consideration in the office of high priest is the call. This must come from God. If a man thus receives a call from God, he is divinely fitted to exercise the prerogatives of his call, and man must give him due honour. . . . In the century before Christ, the selection of candidates for the high priesthood became irregular, and was no longer confined to the house of Aaron. Wicked men sought the honour, and often obtained the office by the most dishonest means. . . . Conditions such as these make more pertinent the statement that Christ did not glorify Himself to become high priest. "It is My Father that honoureth Me." John 8:54. Christ did not appoint Himself. The Father appointed Him.' Andreasen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 197.

#### **6. How was the high priesthood of Christ designated? Hebrews 5:6, 10. See Psalm 110:4.**

NOTE: From the time of Moses onwards, the priesthood was ordained to come from the line of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi. Quoting Psalm 110:4, Paul refers to a man who is described in Scripture as 'the priest of the Most High God.' Genesis 14:18. Thus he is able, using the authority of Scripture, to show that a man may be a divinely appointed priest, without being of the line of Aaron. Additional force is added to Paul's argument in that Melchisedec's priesthood preceded Aaron's and was therefore older. Thus Christ's divine appointment as high priest was valid, even though Christ was not of the line of Aaron. 'It was Christ that spoke through Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Melchizedek was not Christ, but he was the voice of God in the world, the representative of the Father. And all through the generations of the past, Christ has spoken; Christ has led His people, and has been the light of the world.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 409.

### **'The things which He suffered'**

#### **7. How is Christ's struggle with the powers of evil described? Hebrews 5:7. Compare Luke 22:44.**

NOTE: 'The mind of man cannot conceive of the unutterable anguish that tortured the soul of our Redeemer. The holy Son of God had no sins or griefs of His own to bear: He was bearing the griefs of others; for on Him was laid the iniquity of us all. Through divine sympathy He connects Himself with man, and as the representative of the race He submits to be treated as a transgressor. He looks into the abyss of woe opened for us by our sins, and proposes to bridge the gulf of man's separation from God. It was soul anguish that wrung from the lips of God's dear Son this cry of woe: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He was overwhelmed with horror at the fearful work that sin had wrought. His burden of guilt, because of man's transgression of the Father's law, was so great that human nature was inadequate to bear it. The sufferings of martyrs can bear no comparison with the agony of Christ. The divine presence was with them in their sufferings; but the Father's face was hidden from His dear Son. It was this that brought from the trembling lips of Christ the words, "Now is My soul troubled." "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Again in submission He prays: "O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." The awful moment had come that was to decide the destiny of the world. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. The Son of God might even now refuse to drink the bitter cup. He might wipe the bloody sweat from his brow, and leave men to perish in their iniquity. Will the Son of the infinite God drink the cup of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the curse of sin, to save the guilty? But now the history of the human race comes up before the world's Redeemer. He sees the power of sin and the utter helplessness of man to save himself. The woes and lamentations of a lost world rise before Him, He beholds its impending doom, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself. He accepts His baptism of blood, that through Him perishing millions may gain everlasting life. He has left the heavenly courts, where all is purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that has fallen by transgression, and He will not be turned from the mission He has chosen.' *Bible Echo*, August 1, 1892.

#### **8. In what special sense did Christ 'learn obedience'? Hebrews 5:8. Compare Philippians 2:8.**

NOTE: 'Point after point Paul lingered over, in order that those who should read his epistle might fully comprehend the wonderful condescension of the Saviour in their behalf. Presenting Christ as He was when equal with God and with Him receiving the homage of the angels, the apostle traced His course until He had reached the lowest depths of humiliation. Paul was convinced that if they could be brought to comprehend the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, all selfishness would be banished from their lives. He showed how the Son of God had laid aside His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to the conditions of human nature, and then had humbled Himself as a servant, becoming obedient unto death, "even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8), that He might lift fallen man from degradation to hope and joy and heaven.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 333.

'Jesus consents to honour His Father by doing His will and bearing His curse, the consequence of humanity's transgression. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Here was what was involved in Adam's disobedience and what the obedience of the Son of God means to us.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 24.

### **'The Author of eternal salvation'**

#### **9. How does Paul explain the positive outcome of Christ's life of resistance to evil and temptation? Hebrews 5:8. Compare 1 Peter 2:21-23.**

NOTE: 'If our characters are to meet the approval of God we must fashion the life according to the perfect pattern. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; . . . full of grace and truth." The followers of Christ are to represent Him in all that they do and say. They are to live His life. The principles by which He was guided are to shape their lives and mould their characters. The youth should keep ever before them the course that Christ followed. It was a course of constant overcoming. He wrestled with temptations greater than any you will be called to meet; and He stood the test. He refused to yield to temptation. Though physical strength failed, His faith did not fail. It was not only on the cross that Christ gave Himself for humanity, not only in the wilderness of temptation and in Gethsemane that He overcame in our behalf. Every day's experience was an outpouring of His life; every day He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And because the life of Jesus was a life of perfect trust His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering. He met and resisted all the temptations that man must meet because in His humanity He relied upon divine power.' *Columbia Union Visitor*, October 2, 1912.

#### **10. What was wrought for us by Christ's victory over evil and temptation? Hebrews 5:9.**

NOTE: 'Jesus came to bring moral power to combine with human effort, and in no case are His followers to allow themselves to lose sight of Christ, who is their example in all things. He said, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:19). Jesus presents the truth before His children that they may look upon it, and by beholding it, may become changed, being transformed by His grace from transgression to obedience, from impurity to purity, from sin to heart-holiness and righteousness of life.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 262.

### **'Ye have need that one should teach you again'**

#### **11. How does Paul chide his readers for failing to grasp the true significance of the things he is trying to teach them? Hebrews 5:11-12.**

NOTE: 'The terrible tempest that is gathering will sweep away our sandy foundation, and leave our house a wreck on the shores of time; but the house that is built upon the rock shall stand forever. We must be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." The apostle spoke some plain words to his Hebrew brethren that meet the condition of many of those who profess the truth for this time. . . . [Hebrews 5:11-14 quoted] It is positively necessary for those who believe the truth, to be making continual advancement, growing up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. There is no time for backsliding and indifference. Each one must have a living experience in the things of God. Have root in yourselves. Become grounded in the faith, so that having done all you may stand, with unwavering confidence in God, through the time that will try every man's work and character. Exercise your powers in spiritual things, till you can appreciate the deep things of God's word, and go on from strength to strength.' *Review & Herald*, January 10, 1888.

#### **12. How does Paul contrast those who have not progressed beyond an elementary knowledge of the truth with those who have exercised their spiritual powers? Hebrews 5:13-14.**

NOTE: 'Paul could not speak to the Jewish converts as plainly as he desired regarding the mystery of godliness. Because of their spiritual weakness, their lack of perception, he could not utter the truth, which, could they have heard aright, with intelligent comprehension, would have been to them a savour of life unto life. The fault was not with their instructors, but with themselves. They were dull of understanding. Abundant advantages had been given them. They could have increased in understanding regarding Christ, His work, His power to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. But they had not pressed onward and upward, improving their opportunity to learn more and still more of the Saviour. Because they had not received in faith the truths imparted to them, their memory was weak. They could not retain in their minds the truths essential to success in character-building. The apostle calls their attention to their fault in this respect, which had become their spiritual infirmity. Their misconceptions gave them an indistinct view of Christ's power to make His people a praise in the earth. How exactly their condition represents the condition of many of the people of God today, who have had every advantage, every privilege, and who, feeling the burden of God's work, ought to be saying with the whole heart, Here I am, Lord; send me. But in the place of being teachers, as they might be, they themselves cannot bear the plain application of the Word of God. They do not discern the value of Bible truth. They are not a strength to the church. Had they thoroughly consecrated themselves to the Lord from their first reception of the truth, surrendering themselves unreservedly to Him, and obeying the call, "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me," they would have walked in the companionship of Christ, learning His lessons, receiving His divine impress. They would have recognised the claims of Christ, and would not have been half Christians and half worldlings, but whole-hearted Christians, believing and practising the Word, enlightened continually, not dwelling on vague generalities, but proclaiming Christ as the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.' *Review & Herald*, June 16, 1903.

## **Lesson 6: January 30-February 5**

## **‘An anchor of the soul’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.’ Hebrews 6:18-19.

STUDY HELP: *In Heavenly Places*, page 127.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 6:1-20.

LESSON AIM: To study the importance of steadfastness in the faith.

### **Introduction**

‘Hope has been set before us, even the hope of eternal life. Nothing short of this blessing for us will satisfy our Redeemer, but it is our part to lay hold upon this hope by faith in Him who has promised. We may expect to suffer, for it is those who are partakers with Him in His sufferings who shall be partakers with Him in His glory. He has purchased forgiveness and immortality for the sinful, perishing souls of men, but it is our part to receive these gifts by faith. Believing in Him, we have this hope as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. We are to understand that we may confidently expect God’s favour not only in this world but in the heavenly world, since He paid such a price for our salvation. Faith in the atonement and intercession of Christ will keep us steadfast and immovable amid the temptations that press upon us in the church militant. Let us contemplate the glorious hope that is set before us, and by faith lay hold upon it. We gain heaven not through our own merits but through the merits of Jesus Christ. Let your hope not be centred in yourself, but in Him who has entered within the veil.’ *That I May Know Him*, page 79.

### **‘Let us go on’**

#### **1. How does Paul stress the need for Christians to grow in their knowledge and experience of the doctrine of Christ? Hebrews 6:1-2.**

NOTE: ‘The best way to prevent the growth of evil is to preoccupy the soil. The greatest care and watchfulness is needed in cultivating the mind and sowing therein the precious seeds of Bible truth. The Lord, in His great mercy, has revealed to us in the Scriptures the rules of holy living. He tells us the sins to shun; He explains to us the plan of salvation, and points out the way to heaven. He has inspired holy men to record, for our benefit, instruction concerning the dangers that beset the path, and how to escape them. Those who obey His injunction to search the Scriptures will not be ignorant of these things. Amid the perils of the last days, every member of the church should understand the reasons of his hope and faith, reasons which are not difficult of comprehension. There is enough to occupy the mind, if we would grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ *Christian Education*, page 188.

#### **2. What will be the outcome for those who, instead of advancing in the truth, return to their former life of sin? Hebrews 6:4-6.**

NOTE: Paul does not say that the backslider cannot return to Christ. (If this were true, the parable of the prodigal son would be meaningless.) What he is saying is that those who return to their former life of sin, those, that is, who by their actions are crucifying the Son of God once more, are impossible to restore to repentance because, so long as they are doing this, they are not in a condition to repent.

‘By a momentary act of will you may place yourself in the power of Satan, but it will require more than a momentary act of will to break his fetters and reach for a higher, holier life. The purpose may be formed, the work begun, but its accomplishment will require toil, time, and perseverance, patience, and sacrifice. The man who deliberately wanders from God in the full blaze of light will find, when he wishes to set his face to return, that briars and thorns have grown up in his path, and he must not be surprised or discouraged if he is compelled to travel long with torn and bleeding feet. The most fearful and most to be dreaded evidence of man’s fall from a better state is the fact that it costs so much to get back. The way of return can be gained only by hard fighting, inch by inch, every hour.’ *My Life Today*, page 322.

### **‘Ye shall know them by their fruits’**

#### **3. How does Paul stress the need for fruitfulness in the life of the Christian? Hebrews 6:7.**

NOTE: ‘There can be no growth or fruitfulness in the life that is centred in self. If you have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, you are to forget yourself, and try to help others. Talk of the love of Christ, tell of His goodness. Do every duty that presents itself. Carry the burden of souls upon your heart, and by every means in your power seek to save the lost. As you receive the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of unselfish love and labour for others, you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 67.

#### **4. What contrasting picture of the unfruitful life does Paul draw? Hebrews 6:8.**

NOTE: ‘Grace can thrive only in the heart that is being constantly prepared for the precious seeds of truth. The thorns of sin will grow in any soil; they need no cultivation; but grace must be carefully cultivated. The briars and thorns are always ready to spring up, and the work of purification must advance continually. If the heart is not kept under the control of God, if the Holy Spirit does not work unceasingly to refine and ennoble the character, the old habits will reveal themselves in the life. Men

may profess to believe the gospel; but unless they are sanctified by the gospel, their profession is of no avail. If they do not gain the victory over sin, then sin is gaining the victory over them. The thorns that have been cut off but not uprooted grow apace, until the soul is overspread with them.' *A Call to Stand Apart*, page 21.

### **'Things that accompany salvation'**

#### **5. What examples of 'things that accompany salvation' did Paul mention? Hebrews 6:9-10. Compare 1 Thessalonians 1:3.**

NOTE: 'No act of kindness shown in His name will fail to be recognised and rewarded. And in the same tender recognition Christ includes even the feeblest and lowliest of the family of God. "Whosoever shall give to drink," He says, "unto one of these little ones" - those who are as children in their faith and their knowledge of Christ - "a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matthew 10:42).' *Conflict & Courage*, page 207.

#### **6. How does Paul show that God wants each of us to display the same diligence in our 'labour of love'? Hebrews 6:11-12.**

NOTE: 'Let no one permit himself to be unhappy and repine because his talents are few, and he cannot glorify God with that which has not been bestowed upon him, and for the use of which he is not responsible. If you can do but little, you are responsible only for the doing of that little with fidelity. If you have but one talent, use it well, and God will accept your effort to make the most of what He has given; He will approve of you as He sees you faithful over a few things. We have all been entrusted with some gift of God, and for its use we shall be held accountable. Whether saint or sinner, we shall be required to render an account for the use of the talents God has given us, according to our several ability. Christ has made an infinite sacrifice that the sinner may come to Him, and behold Him whom his sins have pierced. The only hope for the perishing is to believe in Him who has loved us and given Himself for us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." When the sinner comes to God confessing his sins, he receives pardon, and becomes a child of God, an heir of heaven. He then realises that his talents are the gift of heaven, and that through faith in his Redeemer he is under obligation to God to fulfil His requirements. He knows that he is justified by faith, but judged by his works, and that life is a day of trust wherein he is preparing for the final reckoning.' *Review & Herald*, March 7, 1893.

### **'Be not slothful'**

#### **7. Against what sin does Paul warn these Jewish Christians? Hebrews 6:12, first part.**

NOTE: 'This is a warning to those who claim to be Christians. Those who have had light upon the important, testing truths for this time, and yet are not making ready for the coming of the Son of man, are not taking heed. "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." There is no period of time when spiritual slothfulness is excusable.' *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 24.

#### **8. Whose example does Paul advise us to follow? Hebrews 6:12, last part.**

NOTE: 'Wherever in the providence of God we may be placed, whatever the work that is given us to do, God is honoured by whole-hearted, cheerful service. He is pleased when we take up our work with gratitude, rejoicing that He has accounted us worthy to be co-labourers with him. None need be idlers; for all around us there is earnest work to be done. The Christian rule of service is, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." God will help those who are "not slothful in business," but "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;" and through faith and patience they will "inherit the promises.'" *Signs of the Times*, June 12, 1884.

### **'God . . . confirmed it by an oath'**

#### **9. How did God emphasise the certainty of His promise? Hebrews 6:13-14, 16-17. See Genesis 22:16-18.**

NOTE: 'His word is pledged. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but His kindness shall not depart from His people, neither shall the covenant of His peace be removed. His voice is heard, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3). "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee" (Isaiah 54:8). How amazing is this love, that God condescends to remove all cause for doubt and questioning from human fears and weakness and takes hold of the trembling hand reached up to Him in faith; and He helps us to trust Him by multiplied assurances and securities. He has made us a binding agreement upon condition of our obedience, and He comes to meet us in our own understanding of things. We think that a pledge or promise from our fellow men, if recorded, still needs a guarantee. Jesus has met all these peculiar fears, and He has confirmed His promise with an oath: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath." What more could our Lord do to strengthen our faith in His promises?' *That I May Know Him*, page 262.

#### **10. What 'two immutable things' give us consolation and hope? Hebrews 6:17-18.**

NOTE: 'By the promise and by the oath of God, the "two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie." Hebrews 6:18.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 371.

### **'Within the veil'**

### **11. Where is the hope set before us based? Hebrews 6:19.**

NOTE: The words 'within the veil' clearly point us to the sanctuary, as do the words 'fled for refuge' in verse 18. As 1 Kings 2:28 shows, there was a practice that a person, believing himself in danger, fled to the sanctuary and laid hold of the horns of the altar. Some have questioned whether the veil, referred to in verse 19, refers to the first or second veil. The emphasis of the passage is not, however, on the veil itself, but on our great High Priest Himself. If He is within the first veil, this is where our hopes lie. If He is within the second veil, this is where our hopes lie. Wherever Christ is, there is our anchor and hope. Thus this hope set before us is for Christians of all ages.

'The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 203.

### **12. Who is the One in whom all our hope is based? Hebrews 6:20.**

NOTE: 'If our faith is fixed upon God, through Christ, it will prove "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered." It is true that disappointments will come; tribulation we must expect; but we are to commit everything, great and small, to God. He does not become perplexed by the multiplicity of our grievances nor overpowered by the weight of our burdens. His watchcare extends to every household and enriches every individual; He is concerned in all our business and our sorrows. He marks every tear; He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. All the afflictions and trials that befall us here are permitted, to work out His purposes of love toward us, "that we might be partakers of His holiness," and thus become participants in that fullness of joy which is found in His presence.' *Lift Him Up*, page 279.

## **Lesson 7: February 6-12 'Consecrated for evermore'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.' Hebrews 7:25.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, page 166.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 7:1-28.

LESSON AIM: To understand more about Christ's qualifications to be our great High Priest.

### **Introduction**

"In that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." Jesus Christ alone is qualified to act as our high priest and Saviour, because, however difficult it may be to understand, He only has passed through such experiences of test and trial as enable Him to know how to meet the needs of every tempted soul.' D. E. Robinson: *Review & Herald*, May 4, 1911.

*Compiler's Note:* After his brief digression, exhorting his readers to gain a deeper understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus, Paul returns to the controversial question of the priesthood of Christ. His readers had been accustomed to regard descent from Aaron of the tribe of Levi as the essential qualification for a high priest. Jesus was, however, of the tribe of Judah; so how could He possibly be qualified to be our High Priest?

### **'The order of Melchisedec'**

#### **1. Upon what prophecy did Paul base his case for Christ's priesthood? Psalm 110:4, Hebrews 7:17, 21. Compare Hebrews 5:6, 10, Hebrews 6:20.**

NOTE: Psalm 110 is a Messianic psalm. Its opening verse was applied by Jesus to the Messiah several times (Matthew 22:41-45, Mark 12:35-37, Luke 20:41-44). Peter applied it to Jesus in his Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:34). Paul quotes this same verse, applying it to Christ, in Hebrews 1:13. Psalm 110:4 shows that the Messiah is not only Lord and King, but also Priest. Not, however, of the Aaronic line of priests, but of the order of Melchisedec, that is, appointed directly by God.

#### **2. How does Paul explain that the prophecy itself shows that another and better priesthood was to supersede the Levitical priesthood? Hebrews 7:11.**

NOTE: 'By virtue of His death and resurrection He became the minister of the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 8:2. Men reared the Jewish tabernacle; men builded the Jewish temple; but the sanctuary above, of which the earthly was a type, was built by no human architect. "Behold the Man whose name is The Branch; . . . He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne." Zechariah 6:12, 13. The sacrificial service that had pointed to Christ passed away; but the eyes of men were turned to

the true sacrifice for the sins of the world. The earthly priesthood ceased; but we look to Jesus, the minister of the new covenant, and “to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” *Desire of Ages*, page 165.

### **‘Consider how great this man was’**

#### **3. What spiritual significance does Paul see in the name ‘Melchisedec’ and in the name of his kingdom? Hebrews 7:2.**

NOTE: The Jewish Targums [Aramaic paraphrases/commentaries on the Old Testament Scriptures] interpret the name Melchisedek to mean ‘king of righteousness’ or ‘the righteous king.’ The name of his kingdom, Salem, which is generally identified with Jerusalem, is interpreted to mean peace. In associating righteousness and peace in this way, Paul may have in mind verses like Psalm 85:10 and Isaiah 32:17.

#### **4. In what three ways did Paul assert that the order of Melchisedec was superior to the Levitical priesthood?**

NOTE: All we know of Melchisedec is contained in three verses in Genesis 14, which give us his name, the name of his kingdom, the fact that he was priest of the most high God, that he brought refreshment to Abraham’s battle-weary force, that he blessed Abraham, and that Abraham returned tithes to him. There has been much speculation as to who Melchisedec was. The Bible gives no more information than this. Some have speculated that he was Christ in human form. (See note under Question 6 in Lesson 5.) Others have proposed that he was the Holy Spirit in human form, though we are nowhere told of the Holy Spirit ever assuming human form. The Jews believed that he was Shem since Shem lived 502 years after the Flood. Some have even suggested that Melchisedec was a being from another world. If it were important for us to know more about the identity of Melchisedec, God would surely have revealed it. In the absence of such information, we should not become entangled in speculation, and accept what we have been told, that he was a contemporary of Abraham, king of a small city-state and functioned as ‘priest of the most high God.’

- **Not dependent on ancestry. Hebrews 7:3**

NOTE: In the Aaronic priesthood, no one could serve as priest unless his descent from Aaron could be proved in unbroken line. The right of Melchisedec to be ‘priest of the most high God’ [Genesis 14:18] was not dependent on his descent from the line of Aaron. The Word of God reveals nothing whatever about his parentage, his descendants, when he was born nor how long he lived. The fact that he was ‘priest of the most high God’ was not dependent on this kind of information. Likewise Christ’s priesthood is not dependent on his ancestry. So in this respect, the priesthood of Melchisedec was ‘made like unto the Son of God.’

- **Received tithes from Abraham himself. Hebrews 7:4-6.**

The Levites were not simply permitted but commanded to receive tithes. This was by divine appointment. But Melchisedec received tithes before the Levitical priesthood was instituted. ‘He whose descent is not counted received tithes.’ If the man who was the father of all Israel and ‘the friend of God’ recognised the priesthood of Melchisedec and returned tithes to him, surely the order of Melchisedec is greater than the order of Aaron.

- **Melchisedec blessed Abraham. Hebrews 7:6-7.**

NOTE: As Paul explains in verse 7, it is obvious that the one who blesses is better than the one who is blessed. Abraham by bowing his head to receive the blessing of Melchisedec acknowledged his spiritual superiority and authority as ‘priest of the most high God.’

#### **5. What final argument does Paul put forward to show the superiority of the order of Melchisedec over the Levitical priesthood? Hebrews 7:9-10.**

NOTE: Since Levi was the great-grandson of Abraham, Paul proposes that, as part of Abraham’s seed, Levi was, in a sense, involved in Abraham’s act of paying tithes. Paul’s introductory phrase for this argument, ‘as I may so say,’ suggests that he is aware that this final point is somewhat forced. But it is a Biblical concept that the act of an ancestor commits his descendants.

### **‘A change also of the law’**

#### **6. How does Paul explain that different orders of priesthood have different rules governing them? Hebrews 7:12.**

NOTE: ‘The law provided that Aaron should be priest and that his sons should serve after him. As Christ did not belong to the tribe of Levi, and as only members of this tribe could be priests, it is evident that there must be a change in the law if Christ is to serve.’ Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 252.

#### **7. What particular change regarding Christ’s priesthood does Paul have in mind? Hebrews 7:13-14.**

NOTE: ‘Christ came of the house of David and the tribe of Judah. (Romans 1:3, Mark 10:47-48, Micah 5:2, Matthew 1:1, Luke 3:33.) Of this tribe, “no man gave attendance at the altar.” Only men of the tribe of Levi could do that.’ Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 252.

### **‘An unchangeable priesthood’**

#### **8. What was the fundamental limitation of the Levitical priesthood? Hebrews 7:23-24.**

NOTE: ‘The Levitical priests died, and could not continue their work. Whenever a high priest died, another priest would have to carry on. This change was disadvantageous, in theory at least, in that the same high priest who was responsible in the daily

service could not complete his work in the services of the Day of Atonement. It happens at times that an attorney-at-law in charge of a case at court, because of illness or death, is unable to continue, and another must take his place. The second man may be as good as the first, but he does not know or understand fully the background as did the first, and the client feels uneasy.' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 258.

**9. What thing in particular makes Christ better than either Melchisedec or the Levitical priesthood? Hebrews 7:24-25.**

NOTE: 'To this argument the author returns again and again, and on this he bases his argument. No mere man could be a priest forever. The Levitical priests served only a few years. If, therefore, one is to come who is to serve forever [Psalm 110:4], he must be more than a man, more than a Levite. Hence, it is "far more evident" that there must be a change of the priestly law if that kind of priest is to officiate.' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 253.

**'Holy, harmless, undefiled'**

**10. What further qualification makes Christ better suited to being our great High Priest? Hebrews 7:26.**

NOTE: 'The infinite sufficiency of Christ is demonstrated by His bearing the sins of the whole world. He occupies the double position of offerer and of offering, of priest and of victim. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. "The prince of this world cometh," He declares, "and hath nothing in Me." He was a Lamb without blemish and without spot,' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 7*, page 933.

'By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfil His word. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder." God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. It is the "Son of man" whose name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. The I AM is the Daysman [Job 9:33] between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," is not ashamed to call us brethren. Hebrews 7:26; 2:11. In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.' *Desire of Ages*, page 25.

**11. In contrast, what did the Levitical high priests have to do before they could sacrifice on behalf of the people? Hebrews 7:27. Compare Hebrews 5:3.**

NOTE: In the high priest's prayer of intercession, he said: "O do Thou expiate the misdeeds, the crimes, and the sins, wherewith I have done evil and have sinned before Thee, I and my house." Until he had thus confessed to the Lord his own sins, he himself was regarded as guilty, and so could not offer any sacrifice for others who were guilty. Compare Leviticus 4:3, Leviticus 9:7, Leviticus 16:6.

**'Higher than the heavens'**

**12. How does Paul sum up the shortcomings of the Levitical high priests? Hebrews 7:28.**

NOTE: 'The priests had infirmity. Christ had none. The law made sinful men high priests. The oath made Christ high priest. If the law of heredity had been invoked, Christ could never have been high priest, for only the sons of Aaron could hold this office. As it is, we have a high priest consecrated forevermore, because God went outside the rank of priestly succession to choose His own Son. This is significant in view of the stress some churches place upon apostolic succession. Had this principle been followed, Christ would not now be a high priest consecrated forevermore. He would have been ruled out as ineligible.' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 263.

**13. What practical result comes from the priesthood of Christ? Hebrews 7:25.**

NOTE: 'The Saviour took upon Himself the infirmities of humanity, and lived a sinless life, that men might have no fear that because of the weakness of human nature they could not overcome. "The prince of this world cometh," said Jesus, "and hath nothing in Me." John 14:30. There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan's sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. We need not retain one sinful propensity. As we partake of the divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character, and we are made a living power for good. Ever learning of the divine Teacher, daily partaking of His nature, we co-operate with God in overcoming Satan's temptations.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 23.

## **Lesson 8: February 13-19**

### **‘A better covenant’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people.’ Hebrews 8:10.

STUDY HELP: *That I May Know Him*, page 299.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 8:1-13.

LESSON AIM: To study the New Covenant and why the first covenant was superseded.

### **Introduction**

‘Though this covenant was made with Adam and renewed to Abraham, it could not be ratified until the death of Christ. It had existed by the promise of God since the first intimation of redemption had been given; it had been accepted by faith; yet when ratified by Christ, it is called a new covenant. The law of God was the basis of this covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God’s law.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 133.

‘The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the “second” or “new” covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed **after** the blood of the first covenant.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 77. [Emphasis added.]

### **‘This is the sum’**

#### **1. How does Paul sum up what he has been teaching thus far? Hebrews 8:1**

NOTE: ‘Of the high priest of Israel we read, “Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.” What a beautiful and expressive figure this is of the unchanging love of Christ for His church! Our great High Priest, of whom Aaron was a type, bears His people upon His heart. And should not His earthly ministers share His love and sympathy and solicitude? As ministers labour in connection with one another, they are to follow the example of Christ, manifesting His tenderness, His kindness, His courtesy, His love. Christ as the great high priest, making a perfect atonement for sin, stands alone in divine majesty and glory. Other high priests were only types, and when He appeared, the need of their services vanished.’ *Review & Herald*, March 17, 1903.

#### **2. Where does Christ minister as our great High Priest? Hebrews 8:2.**

NOTE: ‘What was done in type in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary is done in reality in the ministration of the heavenly sanctuary. After His ascension our Saviour began His work as our high priest. Says Paul: “Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Hebrews 9:24.’ *Great Controversy*, page 420.

### **‘Ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices’**

#### **3. What is the function of the high priest? Hebrews 8:3. Compare Hebrews 5:1.**

NOTE: ‘In patriarchal times the sacrificial offerings connected with divine worship constituted a perpetual reminder of the coming of a Saviour, and thus it was with the entire ritual of the sanctuary services throughout Israel’s history. In the ministration of the tabernacle, and of the temple that afterward took its place, the people were taught each day, by means of types and shadows, the great truths relative to the advent of Christ as Redeemer, Priest, and King; and once each year their minds were carried forward to the closing events of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners. The sacrifices and offerings of the Mosaic ritual were ever pointing toward a better service, even a heavenly. The earthly sanctuary was “a figure for the time then present,” in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices; its two holy places were “patterns of things in the heavens;” for Christ, our great High Priest, is today “a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Hebrews 9:9, 23; 8:2.’ *Heaven*, pages 19-20.

#### **4. What is the offering that Christ has made? Hebrews 7:27, last part.**

NOTE: ‘The Jews saw in the sacrificial offerings the symbol of Christ whose blood was shed for the salvation of the world. All these offerings were to typify Christ and to rivet the great truth in their hearts that the blood of Jesus Christ alone cleanseth from all sin, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Some wonder why God desired so many sacrifices and appointed the offering of so many bleeding victims in the Jewish economy. Every dying victim was a type of Christ, which lesson was impressed on mind and heart in the most solemn, sacred ceremony, and explained definitely by the priests. Sacrifices were explicitly planned by God Himself to teach this great and momentous truth, that through the blood of Christ alone there is forgiveness of sins.’ *Selected Messages, book 1*, pages 106-107.

### **‘The example and shadow of heavenly things’**

#### **5. Why could Christ not be a high priest on earth? Hebrews 8:4.**

NOTE: The question as to when Christ became priest has been much discussed. Did He become priest at His baptism. His ascension, or at some other time? According to the text we are here considering, a priest could not begin to serve until He had "somewhat . . . to offer." As Christ ministers His own blood, He could not begin to minister until that blood was shed. . . These verses show that the days of His earthly sojourn were days of preparation, "that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest." Hebrews 2:17. In view of this we may safely assert that His life on earth was a preparation for His high priesthood, and that His ministry did not begin until His preparation had ended.' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, pages 270-271.

#### **6. How did Paul explain the purpose of the earthly priesthood? Hebrews 8:5**

NOTE: 'Here is revealed the sanctuary of the new covenant. The sanctuary of the first covenant was pitched by man, built by Moses; this is pitched by the Lord, not by man. In that sanctuary the earthly priests performed their service; in this, Christ, our great High Priest, ministers at God's right hand. One sanctuary was on earth, the other is in heaven. Further, the tabernacle built by Moses was made after a pattern. The Lord directed him: "According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." And again the charge was given, "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount." Exodus 25:9, 40. And Paul says that the first tabernacle "was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices;" that its holy places were "patterns of things in the heavens;" that the priests who offered gifts according to the law served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things," and that "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Hebrews 9:9, 23; 8:5; 9:24. The sanctuary in heaven, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy.' *Great Controversy*, pages 413-414.

### **'Better covenant . . . better promises'**

#### **7. What has been achieved by the High Priesthood of Christ? Hebrews 8:6.**

NOTE: 'God's people are justified through the administration of the "better covenant," through Christ's righteousness. A covenant is an agreement by which parties bind themselves and each other to the fulfilment of certain conditions. Thus the human agent enters into agreement with God to comply with the conditions specified in His Word. His conduct shows whether or not He respects these conditions. Man gains everything by the covenant keeping with God. God's attributes are imparted to man, enabling him to exercise mercy and compassion. God's covenant assures us of His unchangeable character. Why then are those who claim to believe in God changeable, fickle, untrustworthy? Why do they not do service heartily, as under obligation to please and glorify God? It is not enough for us to have a general idea of God's requirements. We must know for ourselves what His requirements and our obligations are. The terms of God's covenant are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10:27). These are the conditions of life. "This do," Christ said, "and thou shalt live" (Luke 10:28).' *Manuscript Releases, volume 1*, pages 110-111.

#### **8. What are some of these better promises? Hebrews 8:10, 12. Compare Ezekiel 11:19-20.**

NOTE: 'The "new covenant" was established upon "better promises", the promise of forgiveness of sins, and of the grace of God to renew the heart, and bring it into harmony with the principles of God's law.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 78.

### **'Ye cannot serve the LORD'**

#### **9. What were the promises on which the old covenant was based? Exodus 19:8, Exodus 24:3, 7.**

NOTE: 'You desire to make your life such as will fit you for heaven at last. You are often discouraged at finding yourself weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits and customs of your old life in sin. Your promises are like ropes of sand. You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises or your faith are of no value until you put your will on the side of faith and action. . . . Your feelings, your impressions, your emotions, are not to be trusted, for they are not reliable. But you need not despair. It is for you to yield up your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession and work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your whole nature will then be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ, and even your thoughts will be subject to Him. You cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire; but you can control the will, and you can make an entire change in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, your life will be hid with Christ in God and allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from God that will hold you fast to His strength; and a new light, even the light of living faith, will be possible to you. But your will must co-operate with God's will. Will you not say, "I will give my will to Jesus, and I will do it now," and from this moment be wholly on the Lord's side?' *Our High Calling*, page 103.

#### **10. What was wrong with these promises? Joshua 24:19. (Read verses 16-18.)**

NOTE: 'The people did not realise the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God's law; and they readily entered into covenant with God. Feeling that they were able to establish their own righteousness, they declared, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Exodus 24:7. They had witnessed the proclamation of the law in awful majesty, and had trembled with terror before the mount; and yet only a few weeks passed before they broke their covenant with God, and bowed down to worship a graven image. They could not hope for the favour of God through a covenant which they had broken; and now, seeing their sinfulness and their need of pardon, they were brought

to feel their need of the Saviour revealed in the Abrahamic covenant, and shadowed forth in the sacrificial offerings.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 78.

## **'All shall know Me'**

### **11. How are we shown that we must no longer live under the old covenant of making promises of obedience to God? Hebrews 8:7, 13.**

NOTE: 'There was no fault to be found with the old covenant as such, for God Himself had prescribed the terms. It was the people who were at fault. *They* continued not in the covenant. [See Hebrews 8:9.] This statement places the stress where it should be placed. Had the people continued in the covenant, it would have been a good covenant and there would have been found no place for a second. When the people failed, God was compelled to recognise their failure and establish a new covenant. The law which they had broken He now writes in the heart, and provision is made to restore them by forgiveness, should they come short.' Andreasen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 275.

### **12. What effect will entering into the new covenant have upon our relationship with God? Hebrews 8:11. Compare Ezekiel 16:62.**

NOTE: 'A nominal faith in Christ, which accepts Him merely as the Saviour of the world, can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. He who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith, cannot receive blessing from God. It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigour, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.' *Desire of Ages*, page 347.

'Are you taking God at His word, planting your feet on the eternal Rock that cannot be moved? You should daily be making advancement in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. If you have been labouring in your own strength, make a covenant with God that from this time forth you will rely upon Him who is mighty to save to the uttermost all who come unto Him. If you have gone before the people, presenting your own weakness, now say, as did Moses, "I will not go up unless Thou goest with me." When you are imbued with the Spirit of God, self will no longer be cherished. What has been the trouble with your experiences in the past? Why have you not made a success of the Christian life? It has been because of vain conceit, self-esteem, self-righteousness, and unbelief. May God help us that self may die here. May He help us to humble our souls by repentance and confession until we can come before Him clothed in the righteousness of Christ.' *Signs of the Times*, March 25, 1889.

## **Lesson 9: February 20-26** **'In the presence of God for us'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' Hebrews 9:24.

STUDY HELP: *Our Father Cares*, page 289.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 9:1-28.

LESSON AIM: To understand the importance of Christ's intercession for us.

*Compiler's note:* In Hebrews 8-10, the translators of the King James Bible were not consistent in their translation of the Greek terms for the sanctuary. The Greek 'ta hagia' literally means 'the holy places' and is best translated as 'the sanctuary.' This is how it is translated in Hebrews 8:2, Hebrews 9:1 & Hebrews 9:2. In other places the translation is erratic. In Hebrews 9:8 it is translated as 'the holiest of all' (despite the fact that the correct Greek term for this is found in Hebrews 9:3), in Hebrews 9:12 as 'the holy place', in Hebrews 9:24 as 'the holy places', in Hebrews 9:25 as 'the holy place,' and in Hebrews 10:19 as 'the holiest.' Other translations are equally unpredictable, showing that a degree of interpretative paraphrase is going on, rather than translation. (In Hebrews 9:3, the Greek is 'hagia hagion', literally 'holy of holies' which is rendered as 'Holiest of all.') This inaccuracy has led to widespread misunderstanding of Paul's teaching concerning the sanctuary service.

### **Introduction**

'Christ Jesus is represented as continually standing at the altar, momentarily offering up the sacrifice for the sins of the world. He is a minister of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. The typical shadows of the Jewish tabernacle no longer possess any virtue. A daily and yearly typical atonement is no longer to be made, but the atoning sacrifice through a mediator is essential because of the constant commission of sin. Jesus is officiating in the presence of God, offering up His shed blood, as it had been a lamb slain.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 154.

### **'A worldly sanctuary'**

#### **1. How did Paul describe the earthly sanctuary? Hebrews 9:1-5.**

NOTE: In verse 4, the King James Bible appears to have 'the golden censer' in the Most Holy Place. The Greek word may be

translated either as 'censer' or 'altar,' though most probably the latter is intended, since the golden altar of incense, a most important part of the sanctuary, is not elsewhere mentioned. Paul says that the Holy of Holies **had** the golden altar, not that the altar was in it. In 1 Kings 6:22, we are told that the golden altar of incense **belonged to** 'the oracle,' that is, to the Holy of Holies. The incense burned on the altar, with the prayers of the people, was directed towards the Holy of Holies on the other side of the second veil.

'Besides the outer court, which contained the altar of burnt offering, the tabernacle itself consisted of two apartments called the holy and the most holy place, separated by a rich and beautiful curtain, or veil; a similar veil closed the entrance to the first apartment. In the holy place was the candlestick, on the south, with its seven lamps giving light to the sanctuary both by day and by night; on the north stood the table of shewbread; and before the veil separating the holy from the most holy was the golden altar of incense, from which the cloud of fragrance, with the prayers of Israel, was daily ascending before God. In the most holy place stood the ark, a chest of precious wood overlaid with gold, the depository of the two tables of stone upon which God had inscribed the law of Ten Commandments. Above the ark, and forming the cover to the sacred chest, was the mercy seat, a magnificent piece of workmanship, surmounted by two cherubim, one at each end, and all wrought of solid gold. In this apartment the divine presence was manifested in the cloud of glory between the cherubim.' *Great Controversy*, pages 411-412.

## **2. How did Paul briefly describe both the daily and the annual ministry of the sanctuary? Hebrews 9:6-7.**

NOTE: 'The ministration of the priest throughout the year in the first apartment of the sanctuary, "within the veil" which formed the door and separated the holy place from the outer court, represents the work of ministration upon which Christ entered at His ascension. It was the work of the priest in the daily ministration to present before God the blood of the sin offering, also the incense which ascended with the prayers of Israel. So did Christ plead His blood before the Father in behalf of sinners, and present before Him also, with the precious fragrance of His own righteousness, the prayers of penitent believers. Such was the work of ministration in the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven.' *Great Controversy*, page 420.

'Such was the work that went on day by day throughout the year. The sins of Israel being thus transferred to the sanctuary, the holy places were defiled, and a special work became necessary for the removal of the sins. God commanded that an atonement be made for each of the sacred apartments, as for the altar, to "cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." Leviticus 16:19. Once a year, on the great Day of Atonement, the priest entered the most holy place for the cleansing of the sanctuary. The work there performed, completed the yearly round of ministration.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 198.

### **'A greater and more perfect tabernacle'**

## **3. How is the heavenly sanctuary where Christ ministers described? Hebrews 9:11.**

NOTE: 'The holy places of the sanctuary in heaven are represented by the two apartments in the sanctuary on earth. As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne." Revelation 4:5. He saw an angel "having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." Revelation 8:3. Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the "seven lamps of fire" and the "golden altar," represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, "the temple of God was opened" (Revelation 11:19), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the holy of holies. Here he beheld "the ark of His testament," represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God. Moses made the earthly sanctuary after a pattern which was shown him. Paul teaches that that pattern was the true sanctuary which is in heaven. And John testifies that he saw it in heaven.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 202.

## **4. What was the function of the earthly sanctuary? Hebrews 9:8-10.**

NOTE: 'The sacrifices and offerings of the Mosaic ritual were ever pointing toward a better service, even a heavenly. The earthly sanctuary was "a figure for the time then present," in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices; its two holy places were "patterns of things in the heavens;" for Christ, our great High Priest, is today "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 9:9, 23; 8:2. The slaying of the Passover lamb was a shadow of the death of Christ. Says Paul: "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Corinthians 5:7. The sheaf of first fruits, which at the time of the Passover was waved before the Lord, was typical of the resurrection of Christ. Paul says, in speaking of the resurrection of the Lord and of all His people: "Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." 1 Corinthians 15:23. Like the wave sheaf, which was the first ripe grain gathered before the harvest, Christ is the first fruits of that immortal harvest of redeemed ones that at the future resurrection shall be gathered into the garner of God.' *Heaven*, page 20.

### **'By His own blood He entered'**

## **5. What did the high priest take into the earthly sanctuary as he ministered on behalf of the people? Hebrews 9:7. See verse 13.**

NOTE: 'Important truths concerning the atonement are taught by the typical service. A substitute was accepted in the sinner's stead; but the sin was not cancelled by the blood of the victim. A means was thus provided by which it was transferred to the sanctuary. By the offering of blood the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law, confessed his guilt in transgression, and expressed his desire for pardon through faith in a Redeemer to come; but he was not yet entirely released from the condemnation of the law. On the Day of Atonement the high priest, having taken an offering from the congregation, went into

the most holy place with the blood of this offering, and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, directly over the law, to make satisfaction for its claims.' *Great Controversy*, page 420.

**6. What does Christ take into the heavenly sanctuary as He ministers for His people? Hebrews 9:12. See verse 14.**

NOTE: 'Christ in His own spotless righteousness, after shedding His precious blood, entered into the heavenly sanctuary to minister in the sinner's behalf. And there the crimson current is brought into the service of reconciling God to man. "And having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.'" *Review & Herald*, January 9, 1883.

**'The mediator of the new covenant'**

**7. What has Christ made possible through His death? Hebrews 9:15.**

NOTE: The Greek word 'diatheke', here translated as testament in the King James Bible is elsewhere translated as 'covenant.' A testament, that is, a will, does not require a mediator as it is executed by one person; no mediator is needed. A covenant, being between two or more parties, requires a mediator to gain the agreement of the parties involved. A testament comes into force only after death; a covenant ceases to be in force at death. However, in verses 16-17, Paul considers the other meaning of 'diatheke' as a 'last will and testament.'

"And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death . . . they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Jesus is our Advocate, our High Priest, our Intercessor. Our position is like that of the Israelites on the Day of Atonement. When the high priest entered the most holy place, representing the place where our High Priest is now pleading, and sprinkled the atoning blood upon the mercy seat, no propitiatory sacrifices were offered without. While the priest was interceding with God, every heart was to be bowed in contrition, pleading for the pardon of transgression. Type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. Our great High Priest has made the only sacrifice that is of any value in our salvation. When He offered Himself on the cross, a perfect atonement was made for the sins of the people.' *Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1899.

**8. How does Paul explain the importance of the shedding of Christ's blood? Hebrews 9:22.**

NOTE: 'To many it has been a mystery why so many sacrificial offerings were required in the old dispensation, why so many bleeding victims were led to the altar. But the great truth that was kept before men, and imprinted upon mind and heart, was this, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). In every bleeding sacrifice was typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 155.

**'Christ was once offered'**

**9. How does Paul explain the difference between the sacrifices offered by the earthly high priests and Christ's sacrifice? Hebrews 9:25-26.**

NOTE: 'The priests entered into the earthly with the blood of an animal as an offering for sin. Christ entered into the heavenly sanctuary by the offering of His own blood. The earthly priests were removed by death; therefore they could not continue long; but Jesus was a priest forever. Through the sacrifices and offerings brought to the earthly sanctuary, the children of Israel were to lay hold of the merits of a Saviour to come. And in the wisdom of God the particulars of this work were given us that we might, by looking to them, understand the work of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary.' *Early Writings*, page 252.

**10. How does Paul emphasise the importance of Christ's priesthood? Hebrews 9:24.**

NOTE: 'Christ is our sacrifice, our substitute, our surety, our divine intercessor; He is made unto us righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." The intercession of Christ in our behalf is that of presenting His divine merits in the offering of Himself to the Father as our substitute and surety; for He ascended up on high to make an atonement for our transgressions. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). From these scriptures it is evident that it is not God's will that you should be distrustful, and torture your soul with the fear that God will not accept you because you are sinful and unworthy. Present your case before Him, pleading the merits of the blood shed for you upon Calvary's cross. Satan will accuse you of being a great sinner, and you must admit this, but you can say: "I know I am a sinner, and that is the reason I need a Saviour. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' I have no merit or goodness whereby I may claim salvation, but I present before God the all-atoning blood of the spotless Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is my only plea. The name of Jesus gives me access to the Father. His ear, His heart, is open to my faintest pleading, and He supplies my deepest necessities.'" *Our Father Cares*, page 289.

**'Shall He appear the second time'**

**11. What link does Paul make between the offering of Christ and what awaits every man? Hebrews 9:27-28, first part. Consider Romans 14:10.**

NOTE: 'Let us thank God today that we are not yet before the judgment seat of God, but we have an Intercessor, One who has loved us so that He gave His own precious life for us individually, just as though there were not another soul in the universe. He died for us and we are of infinite value of Jesus Christ. How can we measure the sacrifice He has made for us?' *Manuscript Releases, volume 11, page 242.*

**12. What glorious hope is open to all who accept Christ's sacrifice and look for Him? Hebrews 9:28.**

NOTE: 'We cannot afford to lose heaven. We ought to have our conversation on heavenly things. There there is no death nor pain. Why are we so reluctant to talk of these things? Why do we dwell upon earthly things? The apostle exhorts us to have our conversation in heaven. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20). Christ will soon return to gather those who are prepared, and take them to this glorious place. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28). Do we love to think of this event or do we want to put it off? The more we talk of Jesus, the more we shall reflect His divine image. By beholding we become transformed. We need to bring Christ into our religious experience. When you assemble together, let the conversation be on Christ and His salvation. The more we talk of Jesus the more of His matchless charms we shall behold. Those who take no pleasure in thinking and talking of God in this life will not enjoy the life that is to come, where God is ever present, dwelling among His people. But those who love to think of God will be in their element, breathing in the atmosphere of heaven.' *Maranatha, page 331.*

## **Lesson 10: February 27-March 5 'A new and living way'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful that promised.)' Hebrews 10:23.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 201.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 10:1-39.

LESSON AIM: To show that the ceremonial law cannot make people perfect, but Christ can.

### **Introduction**

'Anciently believers were saved by the same Saviour as now, but it was a God veiled. They saw God's mercy in figures. Christ's sacrifice is the glorious fulfilment of the whole Jewish economy. When as a sinless offering Christ bowed His head and died, when by the Almighty's unseen hand the veil of the temple was rent in twain, a new and living way was opened. All can now approach God through the merits of Christ. It is because the veil has been rent that men can draw nigh to God. They need not depend on priest or ceremonial sacrifice. Liberty is given to all to go directly to God through a personal Saviour.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 155.

### **'It is not possible'**

**1. What was the essential defect in the ceremonial law? Hebrews 10:1. Contrast Psalm 19:7.**

NOTE: 'The chief weakness of the sanctuary service . . . was that it did not and could not "make the comers thereunto perfect." This was evident in the very plan itself, which provided for a yearly recurring service. If the sacrifices had accomplished their purpose, "would they not have ceased to be offered? Because the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins." But as soon as the yearly round of services ended, another round began that culminated in another Day of Atonement. No sooner were the expiatory services on the Day of Atonement concluded than the evening sacrifice began again, the lamb was killed, and the blood sprinkled – all showing that even the great atonement which had been made that day had not accomplished its purpose; it had not made the worshippers perfect.' Andreasen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 419.

**2. What did the continual repetition of the sacrifices show? Hebrews 10:2-4, 11.**

NOTE: 'Christ Himself was the originator of the Jewish system of worship, in which, by types and symbols, were shadowed forth spiritual and heavenly things. Many forgot the true significance of these offerings; and the great truth that through Christ alone there is forgiveness of sin, was lost to them. The multiplying of sacrificial offerings, the blood of bulls and goats, could not take away sin. A lesson was embodied in every sacrifice, impressed in every ceremony, solemnly preached by the priest in his holy office, and inculcated by God Himself, that through the blood of Christ alone is there forgiveness of sins.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 155.

'This makes of no avail the offering of the mass, one of the falsehoods of Romanism. The incense that is now offered by men, the masses that are said for the deliverance of souls from purgatory, are not of the least value in God's sight. All the altars, sacrifices, traditions, and inventions, whereby men hope to earn salvation, are fallacious.' *Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1899.

### **'By one sacrifice He hath perfected for ever'**

**3. In contrast what may be achieved by the one sacrifice of Christ? Hebrews 10:14.**

NOTE: 'By His suffering and death a new and living way was opened. There is no longer a wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." This enabled Him to proclaim on the cross, with a clear and triumphant voice, "It is finished." "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." "This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." Christ entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." He has qualified Himself to be not only man's representative, but His advocate, so that every soul, if he will, may say, I have a Friend at court, a High Priest who is touched with the feeling of my infirmities.' *Review & Herald*, June 12, 1900.

**4. So what did Jesus do about the ceremonial law of animal sacrifices? Hebrews 10:9-10.**

NOTE: 'The ceremonial system was made up of symbols pointing to Christ, to His sacrifice and His priesthood. This ritual law, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be performed by the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings were to cease. It is this law that Christ "took . . . out of the way, nailing it to His cross." Colossians 2:14.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 365.

**'I come to do Thy will'**

**5. How did Jesus demonstrate that man may be saved from sin even in his fallen nature? Hebrews 10:7. Consider 1 Samuel 15:22 and compare Hebrews 10:5-8.**

NOTE: 'The fall of our first parents broke the golden chain of implicit obedience of the human will to the divine. Obedience has no longer been deemed an absolute necessity. The human agents follow their own imaginations which the Lord said of the inhabitants of the old world was evil and that continually. The Lord Jesus declares, I have kept my Father's commandments. How? As a man! "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." To the accusations of the Jews He stood forth in His pure, virtuous, holy character and challenged them, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" The world's Redeemer came not only to be a sacrifice for sin, but to be an example to man in all things.' *Lift Him Up*, page 169.

**6. How did Christ come? Hebrews 10:5.**

NOTE: 'As one of us He was to give an example of obedience. For this He took upon Himself our nature, and passed through our experiences. "In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren." Hebrews 2:17. If we had to bear anything which Jesus did not endure, then upon this point Satan would represent the power of God as insufficient for us. Therefore Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are." Hebrews 4:15. He endured every trial to which we are subject. And He exercised in His own behalf no power that is not freely offered to us. As man, He met temptation, and overcame in the strength given Him from God. He says, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. As He went about doing good, and healing all who were afflicted by Satan, He made plain to men the character of God's law and the nature of His service. His life testifies that it is possible for us also to obey the law of God. By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey.' *Desire of Ages*, page 24.

**7. How is the effectiveness of Christ's salvation to be demonstrated in the lives of His people? Hebrews 10:15-16.**

NOTE: 'Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, God works a moral change in the lives of His people, changing them into the likeness of Christ. Then, when the last trumpet call shall reach the ears of the dead who sleep in Christ, they will come forth to a new life, clothed with the garments of salvation. They enter in through the gates into the City of God, welcomed to the happiness and joy of their Lord. Would that we all could understand and ever keep in mind the joys that await those who keep their eyes on the pattern Christ Jesus, and in this life seek to form a character like His.' *The Upward Look*, page 78.

**'In full assurance of faith'**

**8. Because of Christ's sacrifice for our sins, how may we now approach God? Hebrews 10:21-22**

NOTE: 'Jesus invites, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." [Matthew 11:28, 29.] Have you found this rest? If not, there is something for you to do. Do not rely on an experience that you had years in the past, it is your privilege to have a living connection with Christ now. Come to Him with brokenness of heart and contrition of spirit, praying for His grace. The melting power of God can do wonders in subduing the heart, and making it tender and impressible. You may come with full assurance of faith, and He will fill your heart with rest, and peace, and love.' *Gospel Workers*, 1892 ed., page 432.

**9. With this assurance, what are we warned to ensure that we do? Hebrews 10:23, 35.**

NOTE: 'Jesus is soon coming, and our position should be that of waiting and watching for His appearing. We should not allow anything to come in between us and Jesus. We must learn here to sing the song of heaven, so that when our warfare is over we can join in the song of the heavenly angels in the city of God. What is that song? It is praise, and honour, and glory unto Him

that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. We shall meet opposition; we shall be hated of all men for Christ's sake, and by Satan, because he knows that there is with the followers of Christ a divine power, which will undermine his influence. We cannot escape reproach. It will come; but we should be very careful that we are not reproached for our own sins and follies, but for Christ's sake. We should not allow our time to be so occupied with things of a temporal nature, or even with matters pertaining to the cause of God, that we shall pass on day after day without pressing close to the bleeding side of Jesus. We want to commune with Him daily. We are exhorted to fight the good fight of faith. It will be a hard battle to maintain a life of earnest faith; but if we cast ourselves wholly upon Christ, with a settled determination to cleave only to Him, we shall be able to repulse the enemy, and gain a glorious victory. The apostle Paul exhorts us, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." *Historical Sketches*, page 145.

### **'Consider one another'**

#### **10. What counsel are we given as believers? Hebrews 10:24-25. Consider Malachi 3:16-17.**

NOTE: 'Those who are of the household of faith should never neglect the assembling of themselves together; for this is God's appointed means of leading His children into unity, in order that in Christian love and fellowship they may help, strengthen, and encourage one another. As brethren of our Lord, we are called with a holy calling to a holy, happy life. Having entered the narrow path of obedience, let us refresh our minds by communion with one another and with God. As we see the day of God approaching, let us meet often to study His Word and to exhort one another to be faithful unto the end. These earthly assemblies are God's appointed means by which we have opportunity to speak with one another and to gather all the help possible to prepare, in the right way, to receive in the heavenly assemblies the fulfilment of the pledges of our inheritance. Remember that in every assembly you meet with Christ, the Master of assemblies. Encourage a personal interest in one another; for it is not enough simply to know men. We must know men in Christ Jesus. We are enjoined to "consider one another." This is the keynote of the gospel. The keynote of the world is self. I would encourage those who assemble in little companies to worship God. Brethren and sisters, be not disheartened because you are so few in number. The tree that stands alone upon the plain, strikes its roots deeper into the earth, spreads out its branches farther on every side, and grows stronger and more symmetrical while wrestling singly with the tempest or rejoicing in the sunshine. So the Christian, cut off from earthly dependence, may learn to rely wholly upon God, and may gain strength and courage from every conflict. May the Lord bless the scattered and lonely ones, and make them efficient workers for Him.' *Our High Calling*, page 166.

#### **11. What warning are we given not to return to our former lives of sin? Hebrews 10:26. Read verses 26-32.**

NOTE: 'Some have been greatly distressed by these verses dealing with wilful sin. They have taken them to mean that any sin which they might have done knowingly or with partial knowledge is the unpardonable sin. But this is not the case. Sin against the Holy Ghost is deliberate, persistent, defiant sin. It is total and final apostasy from which there is no turning back. It refers to those who turn from good to evil, despite the proffered mercy, resist the Spirit, and remain in obdurate rebellion. For such there is no hope.' *Andreasen: The Book of Hebrews*, page 449.

### **'Ye have need of patience'**

#### **12. What quality is especially important for the follower of Christ to possess? Hebrews 10:36. Compare Revelation 14:12.**

NOTE: 'There is constant need of patience, gentleness, self-denial, and self-sacrifice in the exercise of Bible religion. But if the word of God is made an abiding principle in our lives, everything with which we have to do, each word, each trivial act, will reveal that we are subject to Jesus Christ. If the word of God is received into the heart, it will empty the soul of self-sufficiency and self-dependence. Our lives will be a power for good, because the Holy Spirit will fill our minds with the things of God.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 248.

#### **13. What fact are we never to lose sight of? Hebrews 10:37.**

NOTE: 'It will not be long till we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centred. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Hebrews 10:35-37. Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5:7, 8.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 358.

## **Lesson 11: March 6-12**

### **'The just shall live by his faith'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.' Hebrews 11:6.

STUDY HELP: *That I May Know Him*, page 165.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 11:1-40.

LESSON AIM: To study the example of some who learned to live by faith.

## Introduction

'It is the glory of God to give His virtue to His children. He desires to see men and women reaching the highest standard; and when by faith they lay hold of the power of Christ, when they plead His unfailing promises, and claim them as their own, when with an importunity that will not be denied they seek for the power of the Holy Spirit, they will be made complete in Him.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 530.

### 'Substance of things hoped for'

#### 1. What does Paul say about faith? Hebrews 11:1.

NOTE: 'This verse is not so much a definition of faith as a statement of what faith will do. It presents faith so strong and vital that the person not only feels himself in possession of that which he has not as yet received, but is caused to experience the strength, the courage, the confidence that ordinarily only possession would give. Faith thus enables a Christian not only to claim promised blessings but to *have* and enjoy them now. "The powers of the world to come" become a present possession; and the kingdom of heaven is not merely a future possibility; it is even now within.. Faith gives the "good things to come" a real subsistence in the soul and mind. They are no longer dreams to be fulfilled in the future; they are living realities which the soul enjoys and appreciates. . . The old Syriac Version of the Scriptures well translates: "Now faith is the persuasion of things which are in hope, as if they were in fact; and the manifestation of things not seen,"' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 472.

#### 2. What are some of the 'things hoped for'? Hebrews 11:10, 13-14, 16.

NOTE: 'Here are your life-insurance papers. This is not an insurance policy the value of which someone else will receive after your death; it is a policy that assures you a life measuring with the life of God, even eternal life. O what an assurance! What a hope! Let us ever reveal to the world that we are seeking for a better country, even a heavenly. Heaven has been made for us, and we want a part in it. We cannot afford to allow anything to separate us from God and heaven. In this life we must be partakers of the divine nature. Brethren and sisters, you have only one life to live. O let it be a life of virtue, a life hid with Christ in God! Unitedly we are to help one another gain perfection of character. To this end, we are to cease all criticism. Onward and still onward we may advance toward perfection, until at last there will be ministered unto us an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 29.

### 'Through faith we understand'

#### 3. What basic truth are we to place our faith in? Hebrews 11:3.

NOTE: 'We have God's statement that He was the One who created, and that in six days He made heaven and earth. This is a simple straightforward pronouncement that accounts for all the facts. True, it rests upon faith – faith in God and in His Word. But this faith is certainly more intelligent than the belief that blind and unconscious forces are adequate to the production of intelligent life, of moral creatures, of spiritual beings.' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 476.

#### 4. How does God reply to those who claim knowledge of such things apart from His Word? Job 38:4, 21.

NOTE: 'It should clearly be understood that there is no common ground between the theory of evolution and belief in the Genesis account of creation. It is one or the other, not both, nor parts of both. The line of demarcation is clear. Acceptance of the theory of evolution means a definite rejection of God's statement publicly proclaimed that *He* made the world and the universe. [See Exodus 20:11.] . . . God did this for the avowed purpose of having it declared on the highest authority that God is Creator, and that men's contrary opinions in this matter have no weight.' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, page 476.

### 'The elders obtained a good report'

#### 5. What evidence are we given that men lived under the covenant of faith from earliest times? Hebrews 11:4-5, 7.

NOTE: 'Christ was just as truly the water of life to Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, and all who received his instruction then, as He is at the present time to those who ask of Him the refreshing draught. God has given His Word to His chosen ones, and made known His way. Through His Son He has been supplying them with the dews and showers of His grace.' *Signs of the Times*, April 22, 1897.

'The covenant of grace was first made with man in Eden, when after the fall, there was given a divine promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. To all men this covenant offered pardon, and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ. It also promised them eternal life on condition of fidelity to God's law. Thus the patriarchs received the hope of salvation.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 131.

#### 6. What wonderful examples of faith did Abraham show? Hebrews 11:8, 17-19.

NOTE: 'Heavenly beings were witnesses of the scene as the faith of Abraham and the submission of Isaac were tested. The trial was far more severe than that which had been brought upon Adam. Compliance with the prohibition laid upon our first parents involved no suffering, but the command to Abraham demanded the most agonising sacrifice. All heaven beheld with

wonder and admiration Abraham's unfaltering obedience. All heaven applauded his fidelity. Satan's accusations were shown to be false. God declared to His servant, "Now I know that thou fearest God [notwithstanding Satan's charges], seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." God's covenant, confirmed to Abraham by an oath before the intelligences of other worlds, testified that obedience will be rewarded.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 155.

### **'By faith Moses'**

#### **7. What example of his faith was shown by Moses? Hebrews 11:24-27.**

NOTE: 'It was implicit faith in God that made Moses what he was. According to all that the Lord commanded him, so he did. All the learning of the wise men could not make Moses a channel through which the Lord could work, until he lost his self-confidence, realised his own helplessness, and put his trust in God; until he was willing to obey God's commands, whether they seemed to his human reason to be right or not. It was not the teaching of the schools of Egypt that enabled Moses to triumph over his enemies, but an ever-abiding, unflinching faith, a faith that did not fail under the most trying circumstances. At the command of God, Moses advanced, although apparently there was nothing ahead for his feet to tread upon. More than a million people were depending on him, and he led them forward step by step, day by day.' *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 408.

#### **8. How did Moses explain the terms of God's covenant with the people? Deuteronomy 8:11, 19.**

NOTE: 'The Lord had through Moses set before His people the result of unfaithfulness. By refusing to keep His covenant, they would cut themselves off from the life of God, and His blessing could not come upon them. "Beware," said Moses, "that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God. . . . And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. . . . And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God.'" Deuteronomy 8:11-14, 17, 19, 20.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 291.

#### **9. What sign or token of their covenant with God were the people of Israel given? Exodus 31:16.**

NOTE: 'From the pillar of cloud Christ declared concerning the Sabbath: "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Exodus 31:13. The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience. To us as to Israel the Sabbath is given "for a perpetual covenant." To those who reverence His holy day the Sabbath is a sign that God recognises them as His chosen people. It is a pledge that He will fulfil to them His covenant. Every soul who accepts the sign of God's government places himself under the divine, everlasting covenant. He fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise.' *Counsels for the Church*, pages 261-262.

### **'Of whom the world was not worthy'**

#### **10. What were those who lived by faith willing to undergo because of their loyalty to God? Hebrews 11:33-38.**

NOTE: 'Those evil times were not without witnesses for God and the right. The trying experiences through which Judah had safely passed during Hezekiah's reign had developed, in the hearts of many, a sturdiness of character that now served as a bulwark against the prevailing iniquity. Their testimony in behalf of truth and righteousness aroused the anger of Manasseh and his associates in authority, who endeavoured to establish themselves in evil-doing by silencing every voice of disapproval. "Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another." 2 Kings 21:16. One of the first to fall was Isaiah, who for over half a century had stood before Judah as the appointed messenger of Jehovah. "Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Hebrews 11:36-38.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 382.

#### **11. What conclusion does Paul draw about these people? Hebrews 11:38, first part.**

NOTE: 'Under the fiercest persecution, these witnesses for Jesus kept their faith unsullied. Though deprived of every comfort, shut away from the light of the sun, making their home in the dark but friendly bosom of the earth, they uttered no complaint. With words of faith, patience, and hope, they encouraged one another to endure privation and distress. The loss of every earthly blessing could not force them to renounce their belief in Christ. Trials and persecutions were but steps bringing them nearer their rest and their reward. They called to mind the words of their Master, that when persecuted for Christ's sake they were to be exceeding glad; for great would be their reward in Heaven; for so had the prophets been persecuted before them. Like God's servants of old, they were "tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." [Hebrews 11:35.] They rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the truth, and songs of triumph ascended in the

midst of crackling flames. Looking upward by faith, they saw Christ and angels leaning over the battlements of Heaven, gazing upon them with the deepest interest, and regarding their steadfastness with approval. A voice came down to them from the throne of God, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." [Revelation 2:10.] *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4, pages 40-41.*

### **'Not ashamed to be called their God'**

#### **12. What are we told about the importance of faith? Hebrews 11:6.**

NOTE: 'The fact that human beings can please God is a wonderful incentive for us to make the most persevering, intense efforts, efforts which are proportionate to the value of the object that we are seeking to gain. "We are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." Enoch walked with God. He was not satisfied with his own companionship. He walked with God. He pleased God. The Lord is not pleased when those whom He has created are sinners. We are ever to walk with God and learn of Jesus Christ, who has overcome every temptation wherewith we are beset. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. The Lord draws people close to His side, to walk with them, to work with them, to teach them how He overcame every temptation in humanity, and how, therefore, they may overcome through the provision the Lord has made. With every temptation there is a way of escape, by walking humbly with God. Without faith, ever increasing faith, it is impossible to please God.' *Christ Triumphant, page 53.*

#### **13. How does God respond to those who put their faith in Him? Hebrews 11:16.**

NOTE: 'It is recorded of the holy men of old that God was not ashamed to be called their God [Hebrews 11:16]. The reason assigned is that instead of coveting earthly possessions or seeking happiness in worldly plans or aspirations they placed their all upon the altar of God and made disposition of it to build up His kingdom. They lived only for God's glory and declared plainly that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth, seeking a better country, that is, an heavenly. Their conduct proclaimed their faith. God could entrust to them His truth and could leave the world to receive from them a knowledge of His will.' *God's Amazing Grace, page 344.*

## **Lesson 12: March 13-19**

### **'Looking unto Jesus'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' Hebrews 12:14.

STUDY HELP: *Conflict & Courage, page 51.*

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 12:1-29.

LESSON AIM: To understand something of the race set before us and how we are to run it.

### **Introduction**

'In this world these heroes of faith were counted unworthy of life; but in heaven they are enrolled as sons of God, worthy of the highest honour. "They shall walk with Me in white," Christ declares: "for they are worthy" (Revelation 3:4). In the courts of heaven there awaits them an "eternal weight of glory." "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1). "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:17, 18).' *In Heavenly Places, page 268.*

### **'Run with patience'**

#### **1. In view of the example left for us by this great cloud of witnesses, what does Paul counsel us to do? Hebrews 12:1.**

NOTE: 'Envy, malice, evil-thinking, evil-speaking, covetousness, these are weights that the Christian must lay aside if he would run successfully the race for immortality. Every habit or practice that leads into sin and brings dishonour upon Christ, must be put away, whatever the sacrifice. The blessing of heaven cannot attend any man in violating the eternal principles of right. One sin cherished is sufficient to work degradation of character, and to mislead others.' *The Faith I Live By, page 369.*

#### **2. From where will we receive the power to lay aside every weight and our besetting sins so that we can run the Christian race? Hebrews 12:2**

NOTE: 'Looking unto Jesus we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, and by beholding we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for knowing God. More and more we enter into fellowship with the heavenly world, and we have continually increasing power to receive the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of eternity.' *Christ's Object Lessons, page 355.*

‘The softening, subduing influence of the Spirit of God upon human hearts and minds will make the true children of God sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. There will be a soft, subdued spirit in all those who are looking unto Jesus. The love of Jesus always leads to Christian courtesy, refinement of language, and purity of expression that testify to the company we are with, that like Enoch we are walking with God. There is no storming, no harshness, but a sweet fragrance in speech and in spirit.’ *Christ Triumphant*, page 45.

### ‘The peaceable fruit of righteousness’

#### **3. How are we to regard the Lord’s chastening? Hebrews 12:5-6.**

NOTE: ‘Trials and obstacles are the Lord’s chosen methods of discipline and His appointed conditions of success. He sees that some have powers and susceptibilities which, rightly directed, might be used in the advancement of His work. In His providence He brings these persons into different positions and varied circumstances that they may discover in their character the defects which have been concealed from their own knowledge. He gives them opportunity to correct these defects and to fit themselves for His service.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 240.

#### **4. What does this chastening reveal about our relationship with God? Hebrews 12:7-10.**

NOTE: ‘The fact that we are called upon to endure trial shows that the Lord Jesus sees in us something precious which He desires to develop. If He saw in us nothing whereby He might glorify His name, He would not spend time in refining us. He does not cast worthless stones into His furnace. It is valuable ore that He refines. The blacksmith puts the iron and steel into the fire that he may know what manner of metal they are. The Lord allows His chosen ones to be placed in the furnace of affliction to prove what temper they are of and whether they can be fashioned for His work.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 240.

#### **5. What is the intended outcome of the chastening the Lord permits to come to us? Hebrews 12:11.**

NOTE: ‘We should receive with gratitude whatever will quicken the conscience, elevate the thoughts, and ennoble the life. The fruitless branches are cut off and cast into the fire. Let us be thankful that through painful pruning we may retain a connection with the living Vine; for if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with Him. The very trial that taxes our faith the most severely and makes it seem as though God had forsaken us is to lead us more closely to Him, that we may lay all our burdens at the feet of Christ and experience the peace which He will give us in exchange. God loves and cares for the feeblest of His creatures, and we cannot dishonour Him more than by doubting His love to us. O let us cultivate that living faith that will trust Him in the hour of darkness and trial!’ *My Life Today*, page 93.

### ‘Follow peace with all men’

#### **6. During times of chastening, how are we to help one another? Hebrews 12:12-13.**

NOTE: “‘Ye are God’s husbandry” (1 Corinthians 3:9). As one takes pleasure in the cultivation of a garden, so God takes pleasure in His believing sons and daughters. A garden demands constant labour. The weeds must be removed; new plants must be set out; branches that are making too rapid development must be pruned back. So the Lord works for His garden, so He tends His plants. He cannot take pleasure in any development that does not reveal the graces of the character of Christ. The blood of Christ has made men and women God’s precious charge. Then how careful should we be not to manifest too much freedom in pulling up the plants that God has placed in His garden! Some plants are so feeble that they have hardly any life, and for these the Lord has a special care. In all your transactions with your fellow men, never forget that you are dealing with God’s property. Be kind; be pitiful; be courteous. Respect God’s purchased possession. Treat one another with tenderness and courtesy. Exert every God-given faculty to become examples to others. Let Him who knows the heart and all its waywardness be able to deal with you in mercy because you have shown mercy and compassion and love.’ (Hebrews 12:13).’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 65.

#### **7. What important counsel does Paul give concerning our relationships with others? Hebrews 12:14-15, Romans 12:18.**

NOTE: ‘We must speak no unkind word, either at home or abroad; we must be gentle and considerate toward all. We cannot be fretful and impatient, and still be Christians; for a fretful, impatient spirit is not the Spirit of Christ. With such a spirit, you are making crooked paths, and some one else will follow you; and so you are not only making crooked paths for your own feet, but for the feet of others. You ask: how shall you perfect a Christian character? Look to the life of Jesus. He is your pattern. See what kind of spirit be manifested, and endeavour to show the same in your daily life and conversation. Make just such paths as He made. You are to follow Him, that you may know that “His going forth is prepared as the morning.” His path is a most precious path in which to walk. If a brother does you a wrong, you are not to retaliate by doing him a wrong. If you have done him a wrong, you must go to him, and ask him to forgive you. You must not let an injury to your brother remain unrepented of, and unforgiven, for even one night. You must say, “I will get this out of the way. I will have harmony between my soul and my brother’s.” In pursuing this course, you are giving others an example.’ *Review & Herald*, August 14, 1888.

#### **8. What example does Paul mention to show the danger of rejecting the grace of God? Hebrews 12:16-17.**

NOTE: ‘Oh, that the people of God would consider that by one wrong action on their part a blot is made in the history and experience that nothing but the blood of Christ can wash away. Every action of the life should be carefully considered, for it is sending forth to the world, as from an open fountain, streams of blessing or streams of evil. Let those who know their Bibles live the life of Christ. All should consider that they are doing work that will be as lasting as eternity. No one in our world can do a selfish act but that they are in danger of selling their birthright for a mess of pottage. Let them remember that Esau was

controlled by his desires; appetite and inclination ruled the man, and he sold his soul for the gratification of appetite. Are there any doing this who know the present truth?' *Christ Triumphant*, page 85.

### **'So terrible was the sight'**

#### **9. How does Paul describe the scene when Israel entered into the old covenant? Hebrews 12:18-19.**

NOTE: 'As the eyes of all the people were turned toward the mount, its summit was covered with a thick cloud, which grew more black and dense, sweeping downward until the entire mountain was wrapped in darkness and awful mystery. Then a sound as of a trumpet was heard, summoning the people to meet with God; and Moses led them forth to the base of the mountain. From the thick darkness flashed vivid lightnings, while peals of thunder echoed and re-echoed among the surrounding heights. "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." "The glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount" in the sight of the assembled multitude. And "the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder." So terrible were the tokens of Jehovah's presence that the hosts of Israel shook with fear, and fell upon their faces before the Lord. Even Moses exclaimed, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Hebrews 12:21.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 304.

#### **10. What was the state of mind of the people and their leader, Moses? Hebrews 12:20-21.**

NOTE: 'God accompanied the proclamation of His law with exhibitions of His power and glory, that His people might never forget the scene, and that they might be impressed with profound veneration for the Author of the law, the Creator of heaven and earth. He would also show to all men the sacredness, the importance, and the permanence of His law. The people of Israel were overwhelmed with terror. The awful power of God's utterances seemed more than their trembling hearts could bear. For as God's great rule of right was presented before them, they realised as never before the offensive character of sin, and their own guilt in the sight of a holy God. They shrank away from the mountain in fear and awe. The multitude cried out to Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.'" *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 309.

### **'Unto Mount Sion'**

#### **11. How does Paul contrast the situation of those who enter into the new covenant? Hebrews 12:22-24.**

NOTE: 'Having given a view of the inauguration of the old covenant, the writer now turns to the new. . . . No scene comparable to this took place on earth when Christ instituted the new covenant. . . . We believe that such an event *did* take place; however, this time it was not on earth, but in heaven . . . The place to which we are to come is Mount Sion, as contrasted with Mount Sinai. Mount Sion is "the heavenly Jerusalem", "the city of the living God". Christ is there and is called "Jesus the Mediator." He is mediator of the new covenant and as such sprinkles the blood that speaks better things than that of Abel. The occasion is called a "general assembly," or rather a "festival assembly." There is an innumerable company of angels, literally "myriads," tens of thousands, the same word as used in Daniel 7:10. With them is the church of the first born, written, or registered, in heaven, and "the spirits of just men made perfect." . . . This is the joyful and solemn scene presented before us. The contrast is striking; but there are also some striking similarities that call us back to the solemn scene at Sinai. In both covenants God is the same, and His requirements are the same. The law, which was the basis of the covenant at Sinai is also the basis of the new covenant, but with this difference: in the new covenant the law is written in the heart, not merely on tables of stone.' Andraesen: *The Book of Hebrews*, pages 526-528.

#### **12. What warning does Paul give and what example did he draw from the experience of Israel of old? Hebrews 12:25.**

NOTE: "'See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh.'" Hebrews 12:25. Jesus said, "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of My supper." They had rejected the invitation, and none of them were to be invited again. In rejecting Christ, the Jews were hardening their hearts, and giving themselves into the power of Satan so that it would be impossible for them to accept His grace. So it is now. If the love of God is not appreciated and does not become an abiding principle to soften and subdue the soul, we are utterly lost. The Lord can give no greater manifestation of His love than He has given. If the love of Jesus does not subdue the heart, there are no means by which we can be reached. Every time you refuse to listen to the message of mercy, you strengthen yourself in unbelief. Every time you fail to open the door of your heart to Christ, you become more and more unwilling to listen to the voice of Him that speaketh. You diminish your chance of responding to the last appeal of mercy. Let it not be written of you, as of ancient Israel, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." Hosea 4:17. Let not Christ weep over you as He wept over Jerusalem, saying, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Luke 13:34, 35.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 236-237.

### **'That things which cannot be shaken may remain'**

#### **13. How does Paul describe the way in which God's people will be shaken? Hebrews 12:26-27.**

NOTE: 'I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God's people. The testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This

testimony must work deep repentance, and all that truly receive it will obey it and be purified.’ *Counsels for the Church*, page 338.

‘Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads, it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved, just as soon as God’s people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, that we may know what is coming.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 287.

#### **14. Since we are to receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, how are we to serve God? Hebrews 12:28-29.**

NOTE: ‘Those who accept Christ, and in their first confidence say, I am saved, are in danger of trusting to themselves. They lose sight of their own weakness and their constant need of divine strength. They are unprepared for Satan’s devices. Our only safety is in constant distrust of self, and dependence on Christ. Man’s great danger is in being self-deceived, indulging self-sufficiency, and thus separating from God, the source of his strength. The Lord is coming very soon, and we are entering into scenes of calamity. We need not say: The perils of the last days are soon to come upon us. Already they have come. We need now the sword of the Lord to cut to the very soul and marrow of fleshly lusts, appetites, and passions. Minds that have been given up to loose thought need to change. The thoughts must be centred upon God. Now is the time to put forth earnest effort to overcome the natural tendencies of the carnal heart. As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel’s message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position, and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. We are in the shaking time, the time when everything that can be shaken will be shaken. The Lord will not excuse those who know the truth if they do not in word and deed obey His commands.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 336.

### **Lesson 13: March 20-26**

#### **‘Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and for ever’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.’ Hebrews 13:6, last part-7.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 92.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 13:1-25.

LESSON AIM: To contemplate important truths about our Saviour.

#### **Introduction**

‘We must study Christ, the Pattern of character that God has given us. If we have a garment to cut, we study the pattern. And in the Christian life, we must give up our own ideas and plans, and go according to the Pattern.’ *Review & Herald*, August 27, 1889

*Compiler’s note:* Paul has finished his message to the Hebrews. He has presented Christ as God and man, as our great high priest, and instructed his readers in regard to the work Christ is doing in the sanctuary above. All that remains is some parting counsel. Rather than going through the miscellaneous pieces of advice, in concluding these lessons we will focus on what the chapter tells us about our Saviour.

#### **‘I will never leave thee’**

##### **1. What precious promise has been given to those who follow Jesus? Hebrews 13:5.**

NOTE: ‘We cannot please our Saviour more than by having faith in His promises. His mercies can come to you, and your prayers can come to Him. Nothing can break this line of communication. We must learn to bring all perplexities to Jesus Christ, for He will help us. He will listen to our requests. We may come to Him in full assurance of faith, nothing doubting, for He is the living Way. The more we press our petitions to His throne, the more sure we are of constantly receiving the great grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. You do not give strength to the road you are travelling by having faith. But you increase in strength and in assurance because you have a Guide right by your side, and you can ask Him with perfect faith to guide your steps aright. Then trust in the Lord Jesus to lead you step by step into the right path. You can derive assurance and strength at every step you advance, for you can be assured that your hand is in His hand. You can “run and not be weary”; you can “walk and not faint,” for you can realise by faith that you have your hand in the hand of Christ. You will not sink under discouragement, for as you follow on to know the Lord, trusting in Him, you will have the assurance that the One who never forsakes those who fully trust Him is your constant Helper.’ *Our Father Cares*, page 279.

##### **2. How does Isaiah amplify this promise? Isaiah 43:2.**

NOTE: ‘If you are called to go through a fiery furnace for Christ’s sake, Jesus will be by your side. To you He declares: “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” The threats of men sink into

insignificance beside the word of the living God. Be loyal and true, and the God who walked with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, who manifested Himself to John on the lonely island, will be with you. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain you, and you will realise the fulfilment of the promise, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." *Youth's Instructor*, July 12, 1904.

### **'The Lord is my helper'**

#### **3. When oppressed by men, what assurance will give us courage? Hebrews 13:6.**

NOTE: 'Often the Christian life is beset with dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before, and bondage and death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly, Go forward. Faith looks beyond the difficulties, and lays hold of the unseen, even Omnipotence, therefore it cannot be baffled. Faith is the clasping of the hand of Christ in every emergency. Every ship sailing the sea of life needs to have the divine Pilot on board; but when storms arise, when tempests threaten, many persons push their Pilot overboard, and commit their bark into the hand of finite man, or try to steer it themselves. Then disaster and wreckage generally follow, and the Pilot is blamed for running them into such dangerous waters. Do not commit yourselves into the keeping of men, but say, "The Lord is my helper"; I will seek His counsel; I will be a doer of His will.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 100.

#### **4. How did David express his confidence in the Lord's help? Psalm 27:1.**

NOTE: 'The more you trust your Redeemer, the more you will love Him. He is your Friend in life or death. He is the Crown of your rejoicing. He is worthy of your fullest faith. All the sorrows and afflictions that we suffer here only constitute our discipline for the higher life. God designs that thus we shall be fitted for heaven. Wait upon God. Lean upon Him in entire dependence; for His everlasting arms will sustain you. He who says that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of the heavenly Father will care for those who love and trust Him. Jesus knows every throb of pain, every throe of anguish and distress, and He will give His children grace to endure the afflictions that He permits to come upon them. His heart beats in sympathy with suffering humanity and those who suffer most have most of His pity and sympathy.' *Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1906.

### **'The same yesterday and today and for ever'**

#### **5. Amid the uncertainty of this world, upon what truth may we depend? Hebrews 13:8.**

NOTE: 'With the continual change of circumstances, changes come in our experience; and by these changes we are either elated or depressed. But the change of circumstances has no power to change God's relation to us. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and He asks us to have unquestioning confidence in His love.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 120.

#### **6. Even though the heavens may grow old, of what may we be certain? Hebrews 1:10-12.**

NOTE: 'He is always the same, yesterday, today, and forever, always seeking to do us good, always encouraging and guiding us, leading us onward step by step. What He is today, a faithful high priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, He will be tomorrow and forevermore. He is our guide, our teacher, our counsellor, our friend, ever bestowing His blessings upon us in response to our faith. He invites us to abide with Him. When we do this, when we make our home with Him, all friction, all ill temper, all irritation, will cease.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 187.

### **'Jesus suffered without the gate'**

#### **7. What reproach did Jesus bear on our behalf? Hebrews 13:12. Compare Leviticus 24:14,**

NOTE: Throughout the law of Moses, any defilement must be taken 'without the camp'. Thus all persons and things which defiled the camp of Israel were to be dealt with outside the camp. This is the reason why Golgotha, the place of execution for Jerusalem, was outside the city walls. Jesus, by being taken 'without the gate', was being treated as something that defiled the camp of Israel.

'For transgression of the law of God, Adam and Eve were banished from Eden. Christ, our substitute, was to suffer without the boundaries of Jerusalem. He died outside the gate, where felons and murderers were executed. Full of significance are the words, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Galatians 3:13.' *Desire of Ages*, page 741.

#### **8. In view of Christ's willingness to bear reproach for us, what should we be prepared to do? Hebrews 13:13-14.**

NOTE: 'Shall we think it too great a disgrace to suffer reproach for the name of Christ? God forbid. Let us go without the camp, and, if required, bear reproach cheerfully, gladly, for Christ's sake.' *Signs of the Times*, July 16, 1896.

'Clothe yourselves with the whole armour of God, move steadily forward, and be not greatly influenced by criticism, reproach, or censure. Bear in mind that the messengers whom God sends must go without the camp and bear reproach for Christ's sake. Whatever may come to you, remember that Christ has borne all this and more for you. Whatever course of action you may pursue, there will be some one to criticise and censure you. Move forward in the fear and love of God, strengthening yourselves by faith, having courage in the Lord, and being always cheerful. The truth is solemn, elevating, and ennobling in its influence. The message of warning given to the world is to call attention from earthly things to matters of eternal interest. The truth will ever sanctify the receiver; those who preach the truth must be sanctified through it. But when they make special efforts to accommodate themselves to the peculiar ideas and feelings of their hearers, in order to avoid criticism, they will weaken their own testimony, and fail of the object they wish to secure. They will do injustice to their mission, injustice to

themselves, and also to those who criticise them. All who are working for the Master can and should improve in their methods of labour, but they can do this only as they shall study diligently the life of Christ, and practise His virtues. Do not permit murmuring and fault-finding to weaken your hands and dim your hopes. "Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread." *Special Testimonies, series A, no. 7, page 5.*

### **'The great Shepherd of the sheep'**

#### **9. How are we to regard Jesus? Hebrews 13:20. Consider John 10:11, 14-15.**

NOTE: 'The Lord has His eye upon every soul that is seeking Him. He is interested in every soul needing help, and He will not leave one in the darkness of error, but step by step will lead him into the full light of the truth that is shining from every page of the Scriptures. The Lord sees our every act. He knows just what progress we have made in the Christian pathway. How kind, how tender, our Great Shepherd is! With intense interest He looks down from His exalted throne upon the sheep of His pasture, and gives them grace and strength.' *In Heavenly Places, page 322.*

#### **10. What responsibility rests on those who do His work today? 1 Peter 5:2-3.**

NOTE: 'We are to reveal the tenderness shown by the great Shepherd as He gathers the lambs in His arms and carefully guards His flock from harm, leading it in safe paths. Christ's followers are to show His tenderness and sympathy, and they must also show His intensity of desire to impart the truths that mean eternal life to the receiver.' *Christ Triumphant, page 46.*

'The great Shepherd has under-shepherds, to whom He delegates the care of His sheep and lambs. The first work that Christ entrusted to Peter, on restoring him to the ministry, was to feed the lambs. [See John 21:15.] This was a work in which Peter had had little experience. It would require great care and tenderness, much patience and perseverance. It called him to minister to the children and youth, and to those young in the faith, to teach the ignorant, to open the Scriptures to them, and to educate them for usefulness in Christ's service. Heretofore Peter had not been fitted to do this, or even to understand its importance. The question that Christ put to Peter was significant. He mentioned only one condition of discipleship and service. "Lovest thou Me?" He said. This is the essential qualification. Though Peter might possess every other, without the love of Christ he could not be a faithful shepherd over the Lord's flock. Knowledge, benevolence, eloquence, gratitude, and zeal are all aids in the good work; but without the love of Jesus in the heart, the work of the Christian minister will prove a failure.' *Gospel Workers, pages 182-183.*

### **'The God of peace make you perfect'**

#### **11. What is God's purpose for His people? Hebrews 13:20-21. Compare 1 Peter 5:10.**

NOTE: 'When the truth is received, it will work radical changes in life and character; for religion means the abiding of Christ in the heart, and where He is, the soul goes on in spiritual activity, ever growing in grace, ever going on to perfection. Are you growing up into Christ, your living head? Is the grace of Christ manifested in your life? God gives His grace to men, that they may desire more of His grace. God's grace is ever working upon the human heart, and when it is received, the evidence of its reception will appear in the life and character of its recipient. The grace of Christ in the heart will always promote spiritual life, and spiritual advancement will be made.' *God's Amazing Grace, page 324.*

#### **12. What counsel may we take from Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews? Hebrews 3:1. Compare Hebrews 12:3 and think about Hebrews 10:24.**

NOTE: "'Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" (Hebrews 3:1). Study Christ. Study His character, feature by feature. He is our Pattern that we are required to copy in our lives and our characters, else we fail to represent Jesus, but present to the world a spurious copy. Do not imitate any man, for men are defective in habits, in speech, in manners, in character. I present before you the Man Christ Jesus. You must individually know Him as your Saviour before you can study Him as your pattern and your example.' *Selected Messages, book 3, page 170.*

'Christ is our pattern, and those who follow Christ will not walk in darkness, for they will not seek their own pleasure. To glorify God will be the continual aim of their life. Christ represented the character of God to the world. The Lord Jesus so conducted His life that men were compelled to acknowledge that He had done all things well. The world's Redeemer was the light of the world, for His character was without fault. Though He was the only begotten Son of God, and the heir of all things in heaven and earth, He did not leave an example of indolence and self-indulgence. Christ never flattered any one. He never deceived or defrauded, never changed His course of straightforward uprightness to obtain favour or applause. He ever expressed the truth. The law of kindness was in His lips, and there was no guile in His mouth. Let the human agent compare his life with the life of Christ, and through the grace which Jesus imparts to those who make Him their personal Saviour, reach the standard of righteousness.' *That I May Know Him, page 156.*

Throughout this series of lessons, passages have been quoted from M. L. Andreasen's *The Book of Hebrews*, published by Review & Herald, 1948, in the 'Christian Home Library' series. The compiler has no hesitation in recommending this book to those who study these lessons.