

Sunday School Member Quarterly

Fall 2019

Hebrews

The Supremacy of Jesus Christ

Sunday School Lessons for Adults and Youth
Written by John O. Yates



Morningside

B A P T I S T C H U R C H

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Sunday School – 8:45 each Sunday Morning

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Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are taken
from the King James Version of the Bible.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Sunday School Lessons

September through November 2019

Hebrews

The Supremacy of Jesus Christ

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Daily Bible Reading Guide

Read the following scripture passages each day and complete the learning activities in this book each week. This will prepare you for Sunday School class, and God will bless you as you read, study, and memorize His Word.

Week of August 26 – 31

Mon: Hebrews 1; **Tues:** Psalm 2; **Wed:** Psalm 45;
Thurs: Memorize Hebrews 1:1-2; **Fri:** Psalm 102;
Sat: Hebrews 1

Week of September 2 – 7

Mon: Hebrews 2; **Tues:** Psalm 8; **Wed:** Psalm 22;
Thurs: Memorize Hebrews 2:9; **Fri:** Matthew 4:1-11;
Sat: Hebrews 2

Week of September 9 – 14

Mon: Hebrews 3; **Tues:** Psalm 95; **Wed:** Exodus 17:1-7;
Thurs: Memorize Hebrews 3:12; **Fri:** Numbers 14;
Sat: Hebrews 3

Week of September 16 – 21

Mon: Hebrews 4:1-13; **Tues:** Psalm 95;
Wed: Ephesians 2:1-10; **Thurs:** Memorize Hebrews 4:12;
Fri: Psalm 139:7-12; **Sat:** Heb. 4:1-13

Week of September 23 – 28

Mon: Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10; **Tues:** Psalm 2; **Wed:** Psalm 110;
Thurs: Memorize Hebrews 4:16; **Fri:** Genesis 14:17-21;
Sat: Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10

Week of September 30 – October 5

Mon: Hebrews 5:11 – 6:19; **Tues:** 1 Peter 2;
Wed: James 2:17-26; **Thurs:** 1 Corinthians 3;
Fri: Titus 1:1-4; **Sat:** Hebrews 5:11 – 6:19

Week of October 7 – 12

Mon: Hebrews 6:20 – 7:28; **Tues:** Exodus 29:1-25;
Wed: Romans 3; **Thurs:** Memorize Hebrews 7:25;
Fri: Romans 8; **Sat:** Hebrews 6:20 – 7:28

Week of October 14 – 19

Mon: Hebrews 8; **Tues:** Exodus 25:40; 31:1-11;
Wed: Jeremiah 31:31-34; **Thurs:** Memorize Hebrews 8:6;
Fri: Hebrews 9:11-22; **Sat:** Hebrews 8

Week of October 21 – 26

Mon: Hebrews 9; **Tues:** Exodus 25; **Wed:** Leviticus 16;
Thurs: Memorize Hebrews 9:12; **Fri:** Matthew 27:33-56;
Sat: Hebrews 9

Week of October 28 – November 2

Mon: Hebrews 10:1-18; **Tues:** Hebrews 10:19-37;
Wed: Psalm 40; **Thurs:** Memorize Hebrews 10:25;
Fri: Hebrews 10:1-18; **Sat:** Hebrews 10:19-37

Week of November 4 – 9

Mon: Hebrews 11:1-19; **Tues:** Hebrews 11:20-40;
Wed: Genesis 22:1-19; **Thurs:** Memorize Heb. 11:1, 6;
Fri: Hebrews 11:1-19; **Sat:** Hebrews 11:20-40

Week of November 11 – 16

Mon: Hebrews 12; **Tues:** Exodus 19; **Wed:** Ephesians 1;
Thurs: Memorize Hebrews 12:2; **Fri:** Ephesians 2;
Sat: Hebrews 12

Week of November 18 – 23

Mon: Hebrews 13; **Tues:** Proverbs 3; **Wed:** Psalm 118:1-14;
Thurs: 1 Corinthians 10; **Fri:** 2 Corinthians 5;
Sat: Hebrews 13

**Coming Next Quarter
(December 2019 – February 2020)**

1, 2, 3 John, Jude

Introduction to Hebrews

Author: Unknown

Date: Approximately A.D. 62-69

Author: The author of Hebrews has remained a mystery for more than 1,900 years. The book is unusual in that it does not clearly identify its author in the opening verse (the only other New Testament letter that omits the author's name is 1 John). Many scholars attribute Hebrews to Paul, based upon the style of its language and the references to Timothy (Heb. 13:23) and to Italy (Heb. 13:24). These facts indicate Paul may have written Hebrews, but do not provide conclusive proof. Regardless of who the human writer was, the Holy Spirit of God is its true author.

Date: Hebrews was evidently written in the A.D. 60s. We infer this because of extensive references to Jewish Temple worship, which abruptly ended when the Romans destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The references to imprisonment (Heb. 13:3), Timothy being set free (Heb. 13:23), and Italy (Heb. 13:24) also point toward this date, because persecution was common and the Gospel had reached Italy by that time.

Main Theme: The main theme of Hebrews is *The Supremacy of Jesus Christ*. The title of Hebrews comes from the book's focus on Jewish worship practices. It was evidently written to Jews who had accepted Jesus Christ, but were tempted to return to the Old Testament rituals and sacrifices. Throughout the book Jesus is shown to be superior to prophets, angels, creation, Moses, earthly high priests, the Levitical priesthood, the earthly tabernacle and its offerings, the old covenant established under Moses, and all the Jewish sacrifices.

Jesus Christ is Superior

Our world seems enamored with winning and with things that are the “best,” “newest,” and “greatest.” TV commercials say their products are better than their competitors. Athletes and sports teams are pressured to win at all costs, to the point that losing the championship game is viewed as utter failure.

Even kids get into this competitive scramble. Statements such as “Our team can beat your team,” “My dad is stronger than your dad,” and “Our car is a lot nicer than yours” may be heard on school playgrounds and in daycare facilities.

The book of Hebrews is about the supremacy of Jesus Christ. You probably believe Jesus is superior to other so-called “gods,” but could you prove it if someone challenged you? In **Hebrews 1** you will find specific descriptions of the superiority of Jesus Christ.

Heb. 1:1 Through whom did God speak in the past?

How & when did He do that?

Heb. 1:2 How has He spoken in these last days?

Note two things about Jesus that can't be said of a prophet: “Whom He hath appointed _____ of all things, by whom also He _____ the worlds.”

Heb. 1:3 Jesus is the _____ of God's glory and the _____ of God's person. What does Jesus do by His powerful Word?

What did He purge?

Where is He now?

Like the prophets, Jesus spoke for God; but unlike them He is the heir of all things, He created the universe, He displays God's glory and personality, He holds everything together by His power, He purged our sins, and He is now seated at the right hand of His Heavenly Father. **Jesus Christ is superior to all prophets.**

Heb. 1:4 Who else is Jesus superior to?

What does He have that is better than theirs?

The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers, so the writer used many quotes from the Old Testament (noted in parentheses).

Heb. 1:5 “Unto which of the _____ said He at any time, “Thou art my _____, this day have I begotten thee” (**Ps. 2:7**). What else did God say (**2 Sam. 7:14**) about His relationship to Jesus?

Heb. 1:6 Who did God command to worship Jesus?

Heb. 1:7 What are the angels (**Ps. 104:4**)?

Heb. 1:8 What did God call His Son (**Ps. 45:6**)?

How long will Jesus reign?

Heb. 1:9 Was Jesus anointed like others (**Ps. 45:7**)?

Verses 4-9 make it clear that **Jesus Christ is superior to angels.**

Heb. 1:10 What else did Jesus do (**Ps. 102:25**)?

Heb. 1:11 What will happen to the earth (**Ps. 102:26**)?

Heb. 1:12 What will Christ do with creation (**Ps. 102:26**)?

“But _____ art the _____, and thy years shall not _____” (**Ps. 102:27**).

Since He is Creator and eternal, **Jesus Christ is superior to creation**. Some people worship the earth, trees, and animals, but Jesus Christ made them all and is superior to everything He made.

Heb. 1:13 What did the Father say to His Son (**Ps. 110:1**), that He never said to any angel?

Heb. 1:14 The angels are ministering _____. To whom are they sent to minister?

Like verses 4-9, these two verses remind us that **Jesus Christ is superior to angels**.

Concluding Thoughts: This lesson is a good introduction to our study of Hebrews. We have learned three important truths:

1. Jesus Christ is superior to all **prophets**.
2. Jesus Christ is superior to the **angels**.
3. Jesus Christ is superior to **creation**.

Muslims, Mormons, and many others follow the teachings of their founding prophets, but the Bible clearly tells us Jesus Christ is superior to all prophets. The followers of false prophets claim they are superior to Christ, but the Bible says that's not true.

Many people today worship, study, and focus more on angels than on Jesus. Some believe angels are telling them new truths, but if that were true then angels would be superior messengers. This is a lie – the Bible says Jesus Christ is God's Son, the Creator, and the eternal King of the universe. Angels are merely God's servants.

Some folks worship the earth and created beings, such as trees or animals. Their goal is to preserve our fragile planet, but the Bible says one day Jesus will fold it up like a worn out garment. Christ created everything there is, so He is far superior to His creation.

Thank Jesus that He is superior to **prophets, angels, and creation**.

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 1:1-2**. Look for opportunities to tell others that Jesus is superior to prophets, angels, and creation.

Superior Humility

Get a dictionary and look up the word “superior.” The definition you found probably says something about being higher in rank, position, authority, or quality. Now look up the word “humble” (the root of “humility”). You probably found definitions like meek, modest, submissive, and low in rank, quality, or position. The words superior and humble have opposite meanings.

In last week’s lesson we learned that Jesus Christ is superior to prophets, angels, and creation. This lesson is about Christ’s superior humility. How can someone be both superior and humble at the same time? Jesus exhibited superior humility in that He humbled Himself from the highest position in the universe to the lowliest death imaginable. We will learn more about this later, but first let’s examine a serious warning.

Heb. 2:1 The word **Therefore** refers back to what you learned in chapter 1 about the superiority of Jesus Christ. Since Jesus is superior, what should we do?

What will happen if we don’t do this?

Heb. 2:2-3 Since the Word of God miraculously delivered through angels in the Old Testament proved to be true, and those who disobeyed received harsh punishment (v. 2), “How shall we _____, if we neglect so great _____; which at the first began to be spoken by the _____, and was confirmed unto us by them that _____ Him.”

Heb. 2:4 God’s Word was **spoken** by Jesus, **confirmed** by His hearers, and **authenticated** by miracles.

Heb. 2:5 What did God **not** give angels authority over?

Heb. 2:6 Verses 6-8 are quoted from **Psalm 8:4-6**. “What is _____, that thou art _____ of him? Or the son of man, that thou _____ him?”

Heb. 2:7-8 What is man lower than?

What did God give man authority over?

Let’s review: Man is lower than the angels, but Jesus is superior to angels. That means **Christ is far superior to man**.

Heb. 2:9 Jesus became a man, making Himself lower than the angels. Why did He do this?

Who did He die for?

Heb. 2:10 Jesus Christ made everything, possesses everything, and is the **captain** (leader, author) of our salvation. How did He bring “many sons unto glory?”

Heb. 2:11 Christ identified with us so He could sanctify us. What is He not ashamed to call us?

Heb. 2:12-13 These verses are quoted from **Psalm 22:22** and **Isaiah 8:17-18**. Jesus declared the name of the Lord and trusted in Him. Christians are God’s children.

Heb. 2:14 Why did Jesus have to take on flesh like ours?

What did He destroy through His death?

Heb. 2:15 What did He deliver us from?

Heb. 2:16 What nature did Jesus take on?

Heb. 2:17 “Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made _____ unto His _____, that He might be a merciful and faithful _____ in things pertaining to God, to make _____ for the _____ of the _____.”

Heb. 2:18 Why did Jesus have to suffer temptation?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus Christ is superior to prophets, angels, and every created thing. He is the highest and most exalted individual in the universe, seated at the right hand of His Father in heaven; yet He humbled Himself to come into this world as a lowly human being. But Jesus Christ humbled Himself even further – He took our guilt and our sin, suffering the agonizing, humiliating death of the cross.

No one ever demonstrated more humility than Jesus Christ. Occasionally we see pictures of the President or some other important person serving meals at a homeless shelter or handing out water to disaster victims, but we realize such scenes are really staged for the cameras and the activity lasts only a short time.

That’s not the way it was with Jesus. He wasn’t performing for the cameras – He really humbled himself, became a man, and died on the cross “*to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*”

An old gospel song says, “*He came down to my level, when I couldn’t get up to His.*” Because of His superior humility and love, Jesus came down to our level and died to pay for our sins.

If you are a Christian, thank the Lord for His superior humility. If you’ve never trusted Christ for salvation, read the verses printed on the back of this book, confess your sins, and ask Jesus to save you.

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 2:9**. Thank the Lord daily for humbling Himself so He could purchase our salvation.

Believe or Grieve?

Imagine for a moment you are driving along a country road approaching a deep gorge. Nearing the gorge you realize the bridge has been destroyed, and the cars ahead are plunging over the edge to certain death. Would you follow those cars, or would you turn around and go another way?

You would quickly pull off the road, so as not to make the same mistake as those ahead. Not only that, you would probably try to flag down other cars, to keep their occupants from death.

Wise people learn from the mistakes of others. In this lesson you will learn the sad story of some people who grieved the Lord with their unbelief. They forfeited great blessings by not believing God. We face the same choice – to **believe** God or to **grieve** Him.

Heb. 3:1 The Bible addresses us as _____ brethren and _____ of the heavenly _____. The word **consider** means to fix one's mind upon something. Who should we fix our minds upon?

Heb. 3:2 To whom is Christ compared?

Heb. 3:3-4 Who is superior – Moses or Christ?

What makes Him superior?

Heb. 3:5-6 Moses was faithful “as a _____,” but Christ was faithful “as a _____ over His own _____.”

Moses was the greatest leader, prophet, and teacher the Jews ever had, but these verses tell us **Jesus Christ is superior to Moses**.

Verses 7-11 are quoted directly from **Psalm 95:7-11**. They remind us that the children of Israel stubbornly rebelled against Moses as he led them through the wilderness.

Heb. 3:7 Who spoke these words?

Heb. 3:8 What are we warned not to do?

The Israelites put the Lord to the test and provoked His wrath when they demanded water and attacked Moses (**Ex. 17:1-7**). Another incident was when they listened to negative reports and refused to enter the Promised Land (**Num. 14**).

Heb. 3:9 The Israelites continued their rebellious ways. How long did they witness God's mighty works?

Heb. 3:10 How did God feel about that generation?

Heb. 3:11 What did He swear in His wrath (**Num. 14:22-23**)?

The ancient Israelites refused to believe and obey God, so the adults died in the wilderness without entering the Promised Land. After describing those mistakes and their consequences, the writer turns his attention to us.

Heb. 3:12 "Take _____, brethren, lest there be in any of you an _____ heart of _____, in departing from the living _____."

The rebellious Israelites were still God's people, but they lost the blessings they would have received **IF** they had believed God. The same can happen to us if we carelessly doubt and disobey God.

Heb. 3:13 When should we exhort one another to believe God?

Heb. 3:14 The ancient Israelites were to follow Moses as he followed God, but "we are made _____ of Christ."

Heb. 3:15 What are we warned not to do?

Heb. 3:16 Did all the Israelites rebel?

Heb. 3:17 Which Israelites grieved the Lord?
What happened to them (**Num. 14:32**)?

Heb. 3:18 Why couldn't they enter God's rest?

Heb. 3:19 "They could _____ enter in because of _____."

Concluding Thoughts: The ancient Israelites faced a choice. They could believe God and obediently follow the leader God set over them, or they could listen to the murmuring voices of unbelief, resulting in disobedience and rebellion. Sadly, they chose the latter course. They hardened their hearts and forfeited the blessings God had for them in the Promised Land.

We face the same choice today. We can believe and obey God (resulting in blessings), or we can murmur, complain, and rebel (causing us to lose God's blessings). We can mindlessly follow others to destruction, like cars plunging off a destroyed bridge, or we can believe God and enjoy the blessings He has promised us. We have a choice to either **believe** God, or to **grieve** Him.

That is an important choice, but it is also an **urgent** choice. The word "**TODAY**" appears three times in the verses you studied today (v. 7, 13, and 15). We cannot delay; we must decide now.

Look for areas of unbelief and disobedience in your life, and confess them as sins. Commit yourself anew to believing God and to faithfully obeying Him. Do it right now.

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 3:12**. When you detect any unbelief or rebellion in your life, confess it and turn from it right away. Look for opportunities to warn others that the bridge is out on the road of unbelief. Don't forget to do the **Daily Bible Readings** (pages 4-5) each day.

Superior Rest

Two brothers were the last surviving relatives of Uncle Robert, who lived reclusively in another state almost 3,000 miles away. They only met Uncle Robert once, and knew very little about him.

One day a certified letter arrived from a lawyer in Uncle Robert's hometown. The letter informed them their uncle had died, leaving his estate to the brothers, provided they came in person to claim it. One brother scoffed, "Uncle Robert was just an old nut. His estate probably isn't worth the airline ticket to fly out and claim it."

The other brother believed there was an estate worth claiming, so he made the trip. The lawyer informed him that since his brother did not come in person, the entire estate was his. Uncle Robert had invested wisely throughout his long life, and his estate was actually very valuable. One brother got it all, because the other didn't believe the report and claim his share.

God offered the Israelites rest in the Promised Land, but many of them refused to believe Him or claim that rest. In this lesson we will learn that Jesus offers superior rest to those who believe.

Heb. 4:1 God still has a promise of rest available to us. What should we fear?

God promised to give the ancient Israelites rest in a new, abundant, Promised Land. You learned last week that many of them failed to enter that rest because they did not believe God. While the promised rest for the Israelites was a new land, for us the promised rest is the peace and security that comes from trusting the Lord Jesus Christ, including a new home in heaven one day.

Heb. 4:2 Why didn't the Israelites believe God's Word?

In other words, **God's Word + faith = a changed life.**

- Heb. 4:3** Who enters into rest?
When were the works that bring salvation finished?
- Heb. 4:4** When did God rest?
- Heb. 4:5** “If they shall enter into _____ rest” (**Ps. 95:11**).
- Heb. 4:6** Will anyone enter God’s rest?
Why didn’t the ancient Israelites enter in?
- Heb. 4:7** When should we respond to Christ’s offer of rest?

Jesus is the Greek version of the Hebrew name Joshua, which means “*Jehovah is salvation.*” Commentators and modern translations replace the name “Jesus” in verse 8 with “Joshua.”

- Heb. 4:8** If that generation of Jews had entered into the rest provided by Joshua in the Promised Land, the Lord wouldn’t have spoken of future rest (**Ps. 95:7-11**).
- Heb. 4:9** What still remains?
- Heb. 4:10** If we have entered into God’s rest, from what have we ceased?

Salvation comes by **grace**, not by **works** (see **Eph. 2:8-9**). If you are still working to earn your salvation (trying to work your way to heaven), then you don’t have genuine salvation and rest.

- Heb. 4:11** The word **labor** here means to make haste and be diligent. What should we do with haste and diligence?
- Heb. 4:12** “For the _____ of God is _____, and _____, and _____ than any two-edged _____, piercing even to the dividing asunder of _____ and _____, and of the

joints and marrow, and is a _____ of the thoughts and intents of the _____.”

Heb. 4:13 Can any action, word, or thought be hidden from God?

Concluding Thoughts: The book of Hebrews is about the superiority of Jesus Christ. We have previously learned that Christ is superior to prophets, angels, creation, Moses, and He is superior in humility. Chapter 4 tells us **Jesus Christ provides superior rest for His people.**

If you are a genuine believer, then the Lord Jesus has given you that superior rest. The Lord chose you for salvation before the foundation of the world (v. 3), and He gave you faith to believe His Word (v. 2). You were saved by the work Christ did for you on the cross, so you don't have to try to earn salvation by doing good works (v. 10).

The Israelites who followed Moses out of Egypt failed to enter in the rest God had for them, because they refused to believe God and claim by faith what He had prepared for them.

The Lord Jesus Christ has purchased salvation for those who believe in Him (**John 3:16; Rom. 10:13**). It is available to anyone who will believe.

Are you one of those who know about Jesus, but have never truly trusted Him for salvation? If you want to be saved, ask the Lord to give you faith to believe His Word. Read the verses printed on the back of this book. Honestly confess your sins and ask Christ to save you. He will give you superior rest – better than anything the Old Testament Israelites ever experienced!

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 4:12**. Thank the Lord every day for His superior rest and for giving you faith to believe.

September 29, 2019

Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10

Our Superior High Priest

Some people are supposed to be above reproach. Among these are religious leaders and law officers. We expect them to be honest and to remain untainted by the sin and crime to which they are often exposed. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

We are saddened to learn on occasion that an officer on a drug task force has been secretly stealing some of the drugs he confiscated, and selling them on the street for his own profit. From time to time we hear of preachers and priests who are involved in various forms of sexual immorality.

Such stories shatter our confidence. We feel betrayed and unsafe when we learn that those who are supposed to set an example for the rest of us are actually corrupt sinners. In this lesson we will learn that we have a great high priest who has never committed a single sin. That's the kind of leader we can trust!

Heb. 4:14 Who is our great high priest?

Where is He now?

What should we hold fast?

The ancient Jewish high priest was the chief mediator between God and the Israelites. He was the only person ever allowed inside the Holy of Holies, where he placed the blood of a sacrificial animal on the mercy seat to atone for the sins of the people. These verses tell us **Jesus Christ is superior to the earthly high priests.**

Heb. 4:15 Was He tempted like we are tempted?

Why is that important?

Did Jesus Christ ever sin?

Heb. 4:16 Where can we boldly go?

What will we get there?

Christ is our **superior** High Priest, who gives us **superior** access to Almighty God, from whom we receive **superior** mercy and grace.

Heb. 5:1 From whom are the earthly high priests chosen?

Heb. 5:2 Why do they understand the faults and failures of their people?

Heb. 5:3 Why did they offer sacrifices for themselves?

Earthly high priests were sinners, just like the people they served and represented.

Heb. 5:4 Men were not to seek the honor of the high priest's office for themselves. How did they get it?

Heb. 5:5 Did Jesus glorify Himself (**John 8:50; 17:5, 22**)?

What did God call Him (quoting **Ps. 2:7**)?

Jesus Christ is our superior high priest, because He is sinless.

Heb. 5:6 Quoting **Psalm 110:4**, the Lord says, "Thou art a _____ for ever after the order of _____."

Melchizedek was the priest-king of Salem (ancient Jerusalem), to whom Abraham gave a tenth of his possessions (**Gen. 14:17-21**). You will learn more about Melchizedek in chapter 7, but Jesus Christ is the subject of the remaining verses.

Heb. 5:7 What did Jesus offer up while He was in the flesh?

Did His Heavenly Father hear Him?

Heb. 5:8 Jesus is God's Son, but what did He "learn" experientially through His suffering?

Heb. 5:9 "And being made perfect, He became the _____ of eternal _____ unto all them that _____ Him."

Heb. 5:10 What was Christ called to be?

Concluding Thoughts: For centuries the Israelites had priests who served in their Tabernacle or Temple. They were chosen from among men, specifically from the tribe of Levi and the descendants of Aaron (Moses' brother). They offered regular sacrifices for the nation several times each day, and they offered sin offerings on behalf of their countrymen. They understood the sins of the people, because they were sinners, too. They continued serving until they became too old, when younger priests replaced them.

The Bible tells us **Jesus Christ is our superior high priest**. He experienced temptations like we do, but He never sinned. He gives us access to His Father, where we find mercy and grace. Christ didn't take this honor upon Himself, but His Father chose Him to be our high priest. Rather than temporarily serving as a priest, the Lord Jesus Christ is our eternal high priest. He is the author of eternal salvation to everyone who believes and obeys Him. What a magnificent high priest!

Just as learning about the corruption and sin of a law officer or religious leader disappoints us and shatters our confidence, realizing we have a great high priest who never sinned should give us great comfort and confidence. Thank the Lord for being your great high priest, and purchasing your salvation.

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 4:16**. When you have a need this week, go boldly to God's throne of mercy and grace. Jesus has given you access.

Superior Salvation

Baby bottles and anchors.

Who drinks from baby bottles and why do they use them? We feed newborns and little babies from bottles because they can't eat solid food. Babies don't have teeth to enable them to chew a steak and their digestive system is not ready for such "grown-up" foods.

What are anchors used for? Ships drop anchors to secure them to a fixed position, so they don't drift away. A ship without an anchor is at the mercy of the tides, currents, and winds. It cannot settle in one position, unless it crashes onto the shore.

What do baby bottles and anchors have to do with one another, and why would we think of them when studying a lesson on superior salvation? Read the following verses to find out.

Heb. 5:11 Who do the words "*Of whom*" refer to (the answer is found in verses 5-10)?

The writer of Hebrews had many more things to say about Jesus. What did he say about his readers?

Heb. 5:12 What did he say they ought to be?

What did they need?

These persons had been saved long enough that they should have been teaching others the truths of God's Word. Instead, they were immature and needed someone to teach them the foundational doctrines again. They should have been mature enough to eat steak, but instead they still needed a baby bottle.

Heb. 5:13 How does this describe the one who uses milk?

Heb. 5:14 Strong meat is for whom?

What can mature believers discern?

Immature believers are sometimes fooled by things that seem good on the surface, but really aren't. As believers mature, they become more discerning.

Heb. 6:1 The word **leaving** in this verse doesn't mean to abandon something, but to move ahead. What should we go on toward?

Repentance and faith are the foundations of salvation. Once a building's foundation has been laid, there is no need to lay it again. These immature believers were trying to repent and trust Christ for salvation again and again, but that is not necessary. Once a person has experienced Christ's superior salvation, he can never lose it and does not need to repeatedly ask to be saved.

Heb. 6:2 These were the elementary doctrines.

Heb. 6:3 Those who are truly saved will grow in grace.

Heb. 6:4 "For it is _____ ..."

Verse 4 says something is impossible, and verse 6 tells what that something is. Verses 4-5 describe people who are truly saved.

Heb. 6:4 "For it is impossible for those who were once _____, and have tasted of the heavenly _____, and were made partakers of the Holy _____,"

Heb. 6:5 "And have tasted the good _____ of _____, and the powers of the _____ to _____,"

Heb. 6:6 **IF** someone could "*fall away*" from salvation, it would be impossible "to renew them again unto _____; seeing they _____ to

themselves the Son of God _____, and put Him to an open _____.”

If a saved person could ever lose his salvation, the only way for him to be “saved again” would be for Jesus Christ to die on the cross again. This would put Jesus to open shame, by proving that His original death on the cross was not good enough to save sinners and keep them saved. The truth of the matter is that **those who are genuinely saved can never lose their salvation**, because **Jesus Christ provides superior salvation**. It is sufficient to cover all our sins, keep us to the end, and it cannot be improved upon.

Heb. 6:9 Did the writer of Hebrews believe his readers were truly saved?

Heb. 6:10 Is God aware of our work and service for Him?

Heb. 6:11-12 The writer wanted his readers to move on to maturity.

When the President of the United States takes the oath of office, he places his hand upon a Bible and closes that oath with the words, “So help me God.” In other words, he swears in the name of God that he will fulfill that oath.

Heb. 6:13 Who did God swear by when He made promises to Abraham?

God made promises to Abraham (v. 14). He kept those promises.

Heb. 6:17 How did God confirm that He would keep His promises?

Heb. 6:18 What is impossible for God (see also **Titus 1:2**)?

God has promised to save anyone who sincerely calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (**Rom. 10:13**). He has promised to prepare a place in heaven for His children and to take them to live with Him there forever (**John 14:1-3**). This is our **hope**.

Heb. 6:19 “Which hope we have as an _____ of the _____, both _____ and _____, and which entereth into that within the veil.”

God is trustworthy. His faithfulness to fulfill His promises is our anchor, making us sure, certain, and unmovable.

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus Christ is our **superior Savior** and He gives us **superior salvation!**

Because of His superior salvation, we don't have to remain spiritual babies the rest of our lives. We can and should move on toward maturity. Christ's superior salvation is a one-time event. If you are genuinely saved you can never lose your salvation and you don't ever need to “get saved again.” Christ's superior salvation gives us hope that anchors our soul. A person who belongs to Jesus Christ can't be shaken loose or cast adrift, because the superior Savior is holding onto him.

What about you? Are you truly saved? If so, are you still a spiritual baby drinking from a bottle? Have you been saved long enough that you should be teaching others? Are you moving on toward maturity or are you drifting spiritually, like a ship without an anchor?

If you are truly saved, thank God for saving you and then confess your sins and shortcomings. Ask the Lord to help you get off the spiritual milk and move on to maturity.

If you have never truly received Christ as your Savior – but **you want to**, read the verses printed on the back of this book, confess your sins, and ask the Lord Jesus to save you.

Project: You can't move on to maturity without reading the Bible and attending church. Get busy doing those things this week.

Superior Priesthood

Shortly after Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, God told him to ordain his brother Aaron and Aaron's sons as priests. Only descendants of Aaron could serve as Jewish priests. Since Aaron was from the tribe of Levi, this was known as the Levitical priesthood. The Levitical priests served the Jews for 1500 years.

In A.D. 70 the Romans sacked Jerusalem, utterly destroyed the Temple, and scattered the Jews. There is no longer a Temple in Jerusalem and there are no Levitical priests; but at the time the book of Hebrews was written, the Temple was still standing and the priests were busily offering endless sacrifices.

In our study of Hebrews, we have learned that Jesus Christ is superior to the prophets, angels, the created universe, and Moses. Jesus exhibited superior humility, He is our superior high priest, and He provides us superior salvation. In this lesson we will learn about Christ's superior priesthood and more about that mysterious fellow named Melchizedek (**Heb. 5:5, 10**).

Heb. 6:20 Who is our forerunner?

How is He described (**Ps. 110:4**)?

Heb. 7:1 “For this Melchizedek, _____ of _____, _____ of the most high _____, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and _____ him.”

Genesis 14:17-21 tells of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek.

Heb. 7:2 What did Abraham give Melchizedek?

Melchizedek was King of _____, and King of _____, which means King of _____.

Heb. 7:3 We know nothing of Melchizedek's family, birth, or death. The Bible says he was "made like unto the _____ of _____; abideth a priest continually." Some people believe Melchizedek was actually a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ.

Heb. 7:4 What demonstrated Melchizedek's greatness?

Heb. 7:5 The Levitical priests and the Jews who gave them tithes were all descendants of Abraham.

Heb. 7:6 What did Melchizedek receive from Abraham?
What did he give Abraham?

Heb. 7:7 Who was superior: Abraham or Melchizedek?

Heb. 7:8-10 In what way did Levi (the Levitical priests) pay tithes to Melchizedek?

Heb. 7:11 "If therefore _____ were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further _____ was there that another _____ should _____ after the order of _____, and not be called after the order of _____?"

In other words, if true salvation were possible through the Levitical priests and the Old Testament sacrificial system, there would be no need for another priest (Jesus Christ) to arise after the order of Melchizedek. Jewish priests came from the tribe of Levi.

Heb. 7:13-14 What tribe did Jesus come from?

While Jesus never actually served as a priest in the Temple, He is a **superior priest** in that He offered the final and ultimate sacrifice.

Heb. 7:19 Could the Old Testament Law bring salvation?

Heb. 7:21 Who made an oath declaring Jesus to be “*a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek*” (**Ps. 110:4**)?

Heb. 7:22 God’s oath made Jesus the guarantee of what?

Heb. 7:23-24 As old priests died, they were replaced by younger men. Why didn’t this happen with Jesus?

Heb. 7:25 What is Christ able to do?

Why?

Heb. 7:26 Jesus “is _____, harmless, _____, separate from _____, and made higher than the _____.”

Heb. 7:27 The Levitical priests offered sacrifices every day, for their own sins and for the sins of the people. How many times did Jesus offer Himself?

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus Christ is far **superior** to the old Levitical priesthood. The Levitical priests could not give anyone eternal life, but Jesus can. They were chosen by men, but Christ was ordained by Almighty God. The Levitical priests each served for a limited number of years, but Christ’s priesthood lasts forever. Finally, the Levitical priests repeatedly offered sacrifices for their own sins, but Jesus never sinned! He offered Himself once and never has to make that sacrifice again. **Christ’s superior priesthood has paid for our sins once and for all!**

Thank Jesus Christ for His superior priesthood, through which He purchased your salvation.

Project: If you see or hear anything about a priest this week, stop and thank God that Christ’s superior priesthood has paid for your sins forever! Memorize **Hebrews 7:25**.

October 20, 2019

Hebrews 8:1-13

A Superior Sanctuary and Covenant

Go outside on a sunny day and you will see your shadow. Do you have trouble distinguishing between yourself and the shadow? Of course not – you are a real flesh-and-blood person, while your shadow is just the image of your outline.

Look at yourself in a mirror. Is the image before your eyes really you? No, it is just a reflection of your appearance.

Can your shadow or reflection in the mirror do anything? Suppose you don't feel like going to work tomorrow. Can you send your mirror image or your shadow to take your place? Of course not, because they are mere visual images of the real you.

This week we will learn that the Jews worshiped in sanctuaries that were only representations of the real thing. You see, Jesus Christ is a minister of a superior sanctuary and a superior covenant.

Heb. 8:1 “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the _____ hand of the throne of the _____ in the _____.” Who is that high priest?

Heb. 8:2 Jesus is a minister of what?

Who pitched this true tabernacle?

After Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, they journeyed into the wilderness and camped at Mount Sinai. God called Moses up into the mountain, and told him how to construct the Tabernacle (**Heb. 9:23-24**), the portable sanctuary the Jews used until King Solomon built the permanent Temple in Jerusalem.

Heb. 8:3 Since the earthly high priests offered gifts and sacrifices, what did Jesus (“*this man*”) need to do?

Heb. 8:4 Why wouldn't Jesus be a priest if He were on earth?

Heb. 8:5 Human priests "serve unto the example and _____ of _____ things." What did God tell Moses (**Ex. 25:40**)?

Heb. 8:6 "But now hath He obtained a more excellent _____, by how much also He is the _____ of a better _____, which was established upon better _____."

Jesus' ministry is **superior** to that of earthly priests. A "mediator" is a go-between or intercessor, and a "covenant" is a contract or agreement. His covenant is **superior** to the old covenant.

Heb. 8:7 Would we have needed a New Covenant if the first one (the Old Testament Law and sacrificial system) had been without fault?

Heb. 8:8 Verses 8-12 are quoted from **Jeremiah 31:31-34**. What did God promise?

Heb. 8:9 Is the New Covenant just like the old one?

God lovingly led the Israelites out of Egypt and gave them His covenant. Did they continue in it?

Heb. 8:10 Where did God promise to put His laws?

"I will be to them a _____, and they shall be to me a _____."

Heb. 8:11 All those included in this New Covenant know the Lord.

Heb. 8:12 What did He promise to do about our sins?

The old covenant was the system of sacrifices and offerings described in the Old Testament. The Lord Jesus Christ established the New Covenant when He came into the world, lived a sinless life, and then offered Himself as the final, complete sacrifice for our sins. If you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, then you are part of that New Covenant.

Heb. 8:13 “In that He saith, A _____ covenant, He hath made the first _____. Now that which _____ and waxeth old is ready to _____ away.”

Concluding Thoughts: The Old Testament sanctuaries were mere shadows of the true, heavenly Tabernacle (**Heb. 9:11, 23-24**). **Jesus Christ ministers in a superior sanctuary**, not made by human hands.

The old covenant, with its rituals and sacrifices, was merely an image foreshadowing the New Covenant. **Jesus Christ is the mediator of a superior covenant.**

Would you rather trust in the real thing, or an imitation? If you were going into the hospital for open-heart surgery, do you want a real, highly trained surgeon at the operating table or a cardboard cutout of a man in a doctor suit?

The Bible tells us the old covenant was a “cardboard cutout,” designed to show us our sin and our need for a Savior. The Old Testament sanctuaries and sacrifices pointed toward Jesus, but when He came they vanished away. There is no Jewish Temple tended by earthly priests today, because Christ has already come.

Thank God for sending His Son into the world, and thank Jesus for saving you and making you a participant in His New Covenant.

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 8:6**. When you look in a mirror or see your shadow this week, try to remember that the old covenant was merely an image of the real thing – Jesus Christ.

Superior Sacrifice

Old Testament Judaism was a religion based upon animal sacrifices. Each time an animal was sacrificed, its blood was sprinkled or poured out, and some or all of its flesh was burned on the altar. Every offering meant the death of an innocent animal.

There were sacrifices every morning and evening, as well as special offerings on the Sabbath. Sacrifices were offered on the new moon and on special holy days such as Passover, Pentecost, and the Day of Atonement. At Passover each household brought a lamb – as many as 250,000 lambs were killed on that one day! In addition to these regular offerings, when a faithful Jew committed a sin, he was required to bring an animal sacrifice to cover that sin.

The Jewish sacrificial system continued like this for 1,500 years, during which literally millions of animals died. All of this was done to cover sin, but none of those sacrifices actually **paid** the final **penalty** for man’s sin. In this lesson you will learn about the one sacrifice that ultimately paid that penalty.

The Old Testament Sacrifices Foreshadowed Christ’s Superior Sacrifice

Heb. 9:1 The following verses describe the Tabernacle, the Jews’ worship facility made up of 2 compartments.

Heb. 9:2-3 What was in the first compartment?

What was the second compartment called?

Heb. 9:4 The “*Holiest of All*” (also known as the “Holy of Holies”) held the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the items listed in this verse.

Heb. 9:5 The **cherubims** were statues of angels. What did they overshadow?

Heb. 9:6 Where did the priests minister?

Heb. 9:7 Who went into the second compartment?

How often did he do this?

What did he take with him?

The high priest was the only person allowed in the Holy of Holies, and he could only enter on the Day of Atonement, when he brought animal blood to cover his sins and the sins of the people.

Heb. 9:9 All these rituals were “*a figure for the time then present.*” Could they truly make anyone **perfect** (righteous, redeemed, free from the penalty of sin)?

Heb. 9:10 Ancient Judaism consisted of rules and regulations governing foods and ceremonial washings. How long did these things last?

Christ's Superior Sacrifice Purchased Our Eternal Redemption

Heb. 9:11 “But _____ being come an high _____ of good things to come, by a _____ and more perfect _____, not made with _____, that is to say, not of this _____.”
Jesus ministered in the heavenly Tabernacle.

Heb. 9:12 Did He bring animal blood? _____
Whose blood did He bring? _____
How many times did He do this? _____
What did He obtain for us?

Heb. 9:13-14 Which is more effective – the blood of an animal or the blood of Jesus Christ?

Heb. 9:15 “And for this cause He is the _____ of the _____, that by means of _____.”

Verses 16-21 explain that a testament (such as a will) is not in force until the one who makes it dies. They also tell us Moses used blood to dedicate and establish the old covenant.

Heb. 9:22 What is necessary for **remission** (forgiveness, pardon) of sins?

Christ's Superior Sacrifice NEVER Needs To Be Repeated

Heb. 9:23-24 Did Christ enter the earthly Tabernacle? _____
Where did He go? _____
Why did He appear in God's presence?

Heb. 9:25 Did Christ have to offer Himself often?

Heb. 9:26 How many times did Jesus sacrifice Himself?

What did His sacrifice accomplish?

Heb. 9:27 How many times will we die?

What comes after our death?

Heb. 9:28 "So Christ was _____ offered to bear the
_____ of _____."

Concluding Thoughts: Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. He offered Himself **once** as the final, supreme sacrifice for sin. There is no longer any need to bring animal sacrifices to worship God. In fact, God let the Romans destroy the Temple less than forty years after Jesus' death, putting an end to the Jewish sacrificial system forever.

Jesus Christ is the superior sacrifice, because He offered His own blood, rather than the blood of an animal. He lived a completely sinless life, so He was the pure and spotless sacrificial lamb. He offered Himself once and never has to do it again.

Christ has paid the price for your sin once and for all. He took on Himself the penalty for **all** of your sins – past, present, and future. He forgave your sin completely, so there's not anything you need to (or can) do to add to His superior sacrifice. Christ's death on the cross purchased your **eternal redemption**, so you can never lose your salvation.

Have you ever accepted Christ's free gift of salvation? Imagine someone purchasing a wonderful gift for you, but you refused to accept it. That would be foolish. It would deprive you of the gift and offend the one who purchased it for you.

Jesus Christ has paid with His blood for the wonderful gift of your eternal redemption. **Do you want to accept that gift?** If so, read the verses printed on the back of this book, confess your sins, and ask Jesus to save you. Place your trust for all eternity in Jesus.

Do you already know Christ as your Savior? If so, thank Him for dying to pay the price for your salvation. Thank Him for loving you. Thank Him that He purchased your **eternal** redemption and you can never slip out of his loving, sustaining hand.

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 9:12**. Try to tell someone this week about Christ's superior sacrifice and what it has done for you.

Christ's Superior Sacrifice

- Offered in the heavenly Tabernacle
- Made with His own blood
- Never needs to be repeated
- Purchased our eternal redemption

Superior Motivation

A wayward son visited his dying mother. Touched by her suffering, he asked what he could do for her. “The best thing you could do for me is to clean up your life and stay out of trouble.” The mother died shortly thereafter. Her son remembered that dying request, and it moved him to change his ways.

A soldier who often got into trouble was counseled by his sergeant to straighten up and quit goofing off on his tasks. When they came under attack, the soldier took a bullet in the leg, leaving him helpless in clear view of enemy gunners. His sergeant rushed to the rescue, but in the process of getting him to safety, the sergeant was killed. From then on the soldier took his work much more seriously, eventually becoming a model for others to imitate.

What made the difference? What motivated these individuals to change their ways? The son was moved by his mother’s dying request, and the soldier was moved by his sergeant’s sacrificial sense of duty. In this week’s lesson you will learn about the superior motivation we have to live for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Heb. 10:1 Could the Law and the Old Testament sacrifices make people right with God?

Heb. 10:2 What proves that they couldn’t do this?

Heb. 10:3 What did the sacrifices remind the Jews of?

Heb. 10:4 “For it is _____ that the blood of _____ and of _____ should take away _____.”

Heb. 10:5-8 Is God pleased and satisfied with animal sacrifices?

Heb. 10:9 What do you think Christ took away, and what did He establish?

The point of the verses you've just read is that **the Law and the Old Testament sacrifices could not take away sin.**

Heb. 10:10 What **sanctifies** (purifies) us?

Heb. 10:11 The Jewish priests offered the same sacrifices day after day. Could they truly take away sin?

Heb. 10:12 How many times did Jesus sacrifice Himself for us?
What did He do afterward?

Heb. 10:14 "For by _____ offering He hath perfected _____ them that are sanctified."

Heb. 10:15-16 Verses 16-17 are quoted from **Jeremiah 31:33-34**.
Where did God promise to put His laws?

Heb. 10:17 What did He promise to do with our sins?

Heb. 10:18 Do we need more offerings and sacrifices for sin?

The point of these verses is that **Christ's superior sacrifice purges our sin and places God's Laws in our heart.**

Heb. 10:19 How do we get boldness to enter the holiest place?

Heb. 10:20 A **veil** (curtain) separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the sanctuary. Christ made a new way of access through His flesh (His death on the cross).

Heb. 10:21 What else do we have?

Since Christ's superior sacrifice (v. 10-18) has provided all this (v. 19-21) for us, the next verses tell us how we should live.

Heb. 10:22 “Let us _____ with a true heart in full assurance of _____.” The ancient sacrificial rituals involved sprinkling blood on the altar and many ceremonial washings. In Christ, our hearts are sprinkled and our bodies purified.

Heb. 10:23 “Let us _____ the profession of our faith without _____.” Why can we do this?

Heb. 10:24 “And let us _____ one another to _____ unto _____ and to good _____.”

Heb. 10:25 “Not _____ the _____ of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but _____ one _____: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

Let’s review. Based on the fact that Christ’s one-time sacrifice is superior to all the Old Testament animal sacrifices (v. 1-18), we have been given boldness to enter God’s presence (v. 19), a new way into His presence through the body of Christ (v. 20), and a new High Priest over the household of God (v. 21). Because we possess those things, we should **draw near** to God (v. 22), **hold firmly** to our profession of faith (v. 23), be **mindful** of other believers and **encourage** them to practice love and good works (v. 24), and remain **faithful in our church attendance** (v. 25). These are clear instructions based upon our new standing in Christ Jesus. The next verses tell about the consequences of disobeying them.

Heb. 10:26 Is there any sacrifice that can cover willful sin?

Heb. 10:27 What do we face if we sin willfully?

Heb. 10:29 Those who sin willfully have (1) “trodden under foot the _____ of _____,” and (2) “counted the _____ of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an _____ thing,” and (3) “hath done _____ unto the _____ of grace.”

Heb. 10:30 What has God promised?

Heb. 10:31 “It is a _____ thing to fall into the hands of the living _____.”

Verses 32-37 urge us to recall our commitment when we were first saved, and encourage us with the fact Jesus is coming back soon.

Concluding Thoughts: Why is it some who claim to be Christians don't seem to care if they ever attend church? Some only attend sporadically, and others never attend Sunday night or Wednesday night services. If you are a believer and your health permits, you should attend church faithfully. Not only that, you should also draw near to the Lord, hold fast to your profession of faith, and encourage other believers in their loving and faithful service.

Why should you do those things? Because Christ's superior sacrifice has given you a new position and new blessings. In other words, **the things Jesus has done for you should motivate you to faithfully worship and serve Him.**

Do you remember the stories that introduced this lesson? The men in those stories were motivated to change their behavior by a dying mother's request and a comrade's self-sacrifice. If things like that can motivate people, then Christians have **superior motivation** to obey Christ, because of all the things He has done for us.

Is that sufficient to motivate you to serve the Lord?

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 10:25**. Write the following phrases on slips of paper or note cards, and place them where you will see them often this week:

Draw near to the Lord

Hold fast to your profession of faith

Encourage other believers to love and good works

Attend church faithfully

Superior Faith

The Pro Football Hall of Fame is located in Canton, Ohio. The National Baseball Hall of Fame is in Cooperstown, New York. There is a College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Indiana, and the Basketball Hall of Fame is located in Springfield, Massachusetts. Most sports have a “hall of fame” somewhere, where the very best of its athletes are honored.

Why do we have these halls of fame? Obviously they honor the “greats,” but there is another reason – to inspire and encourage others to follow in their steps and do their very best. Young athletes often aspire to make it to the hall of fame one day.

In this lesson we will visit God’s “hall of faith,” and learn about some of His followers who exhibited superior faith.

The Necessity of Faith

Heb. 10:38 “Now the just shall live by _____.” Is that an option or a command?

The Definition of Faith

Heb. 11:1 “Now faith is the _____ of things _____ for, the _____ of things not _____.”

Faith is believing things we can’t see with our eyes. We all exercise faith in our daily lives. When we fly in an airplane, we have faith that the invisible air will create sufficient lift to carry us safely to our destination. When we turn on the light switch, we have faith that the invisible electrons will flow through the wires and provide power to the light bulb, so we will have light.

Heb. 11:3 What truth do we understand by faith?

Faith teaches us that **God made the universe out of nothing**. The evolutionists have never really explained the origin of matter.

Examples of Faith

- Heb. 11:4** What did **Abel** do?
- Heb. 11:5** What happened to **Enoch**?
- Heb. 11:6** What is it impossible to do without faith?

What must we believe?

- Heb. 11:7** How did **Noah** exhibit faith?

- Heb. 11:8-10** Name some ways **Abraham** lived by faith?

Heb. 11:11-12 How did **Sara** exhibit her faith?

- Heb. 11:13** Did these ancient heroes of faith receive the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises?

They realized they were strangers, and they looked forward to their future home in heaven.

Heb. 11:17-19 What else did **Abraham** do by faith?

- Heb. 11:22** What did **Joseph** say that showed his faith in God?

- Heb. 11:23** What faithful action did **Moses' parents** take?

Heb. 11:24-27 What did **Moses** do by faith?

Heb. 11:28-29 What else did Moses do?

- Heb. 11:30** How did **Joshua** exercise faith?

The writer of Hebrews mentioned many other heroes of faith, through whom God demonstrated His great power. Please note that **faith does not always free God's people from suffering** – some escaped fire and sword (v. 34), while others perished (v. 37), but **all** of them were faithful to Almighty God.

Heb. 11:39 What did they obtain by faith?

What did they **NOT** receive?

God Has Something Even Better For Us

Heb. 11:40 “_____ having provided some _____ thing for _____, that they without us should not be made perfect.”

The people listed in this chapter were the “superstars” of faith. How could we possibly have something better than them? What is this “better” thing God has provided for us?

He has given us salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. None of those Old Testament saints experienced salvation as we have. They did not have God’s Holy Spirit living in their heart, their sins covered by the blood of Christ, or the New Testament Word of God. They looked forward to those things, but they didn’t receive them during their earthly lives.

Concluding Thoughts: The Old Testament heroes of faith were great men and women who put their faith in God above their personal comfort, convenience, their desire for the approval of others, and even their lives. God worked mightily through them because they were willing, obedient, and they believed.

Just as a sports hall of fame can inspire a young athlete to great achievements, faith’s “hall of fame” should motivate and inspire us to live faithfully for the Lord Jesus Christ every day of our lives. After all, if those Old Testament people who did not have the Holy Spirit in their heart or the Bible in their hand could be faithful to the Lord, we certainly ought to be, as well. Confess your sins of faithlessness, and ask Jesus to make you a hero of faith.

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 11:1, 6**. Look for opportunities to exercise your faith this week.

Our Supreme Goal

Where we focus our attention makes a difference. Coaches urge their players to “Keep your eye on the ball.” A batter will quickly strike out if he focuses on the first baseman rather than the ball. The same is true for driving. If you don’t keep your eyes on the road, you will soon drift off in the direction you are looking.

There is truth in the old expression, “If you aim at nothing, you’re sure to hit it every time!” We simply must focus on our goal, or we will never be able to reach it.

In last week’s lesson we visited the “hall of fame” of faith. The Old Testament characters we learned about can inspire and motivate us to live by faith, but our goal is not to live in a way that pleases Moses or Abraham. In this lesson we will learn about our supreme goal, on which we must focus.

Heb. 12:1 The heroes of the faith described in chapter 11 left behind a good witness and example of how to faithfully live for the Lord. Since they did this, we should do two things:

1. “Let us _____ aside every _____, and the _____ which doth so easily beset us,”
2. “Let us _____ with _____ the _____ that is set before us.”

Runners sometimes train with extra weights on their legs to strengthen their muscles, but when it comes time for the race to begin they remove all hindrances so they can give their best effort.

Heb. 12:2 Who should we focus on? _____
He is both the _____ and the _____
of our faith. Why did He endure the cross?

Where is He now?

Heb. 12:3 What else did He endure?

What does focusing on Jesus prevent?

Heb. 12:4 Have we suffered as much as Jesus did?

Verses 1-4 tell us to focus on Jesus. Verses 5-11 tell us to accept God's **chastening** (corrective discipline).

Heb. 12:5 What should we not despise?

Heb. 12:6 Who does the Lord chasten?

Heb. 12:7-8 Chastening proves we are God's _____.

Heb. 12:9-10 Since we accepted our parents' punishment, we should also accept God's.

Heb. 12:11 Chastening is no fun, but what does it yield?

Verses 12-15 contain instructions for **focused living**.

Heb. 12:12 Be encouraged!

Heb. 12:13 Straighten out your _____.

Heb. 12:14 **Follow** (pursue) _____ and _____.

Heb. 12:15 Who should we look diligently upon (**Heb. 12:2**)?

What might happen if we don't?

Failure to do these things will get your eyes off the goal. **Esau** is a sad example of someone who lost focus and lost everything.

The rest of this chapter refers to Moses and the children of Israel at Mount Sinai (described in **Ex. 19**). The Lord told Moses to warn the people not to touch the mountain, upon penalty of death. They witnessed a terrifying display of God's power.

The writer of Hebrews reminded the Jews who had accepted Christ as Savior that their new relationship did **not** involve going back to the terrifying sights and deadly warnings their ancestors experienced at Mount Sinai (verses 18-21).

Heb. 12:22 “But ye are come unto Mount _____, and unto the _____ of the living God, the heavenly _____, and to an innumerable company of _____.”

Heb. 12:23 “To the general assembly and _____ of the firstborn, which are _____ in heaven, and to God the _____ of all, and to the spirits of _____ men made perfect” (complete).

Our goal is not the old covenant, represented by Mount Sinai, but Jesus Christ, “the mediator of the _____ Covenant” (v. 24)

Heb. 12:28 Since we have been made part of a new everlasting kingdom, how should we serve God?

Heb. 12:29 “For our _____ is a consuming _____.”

Concluding Thoughts: We can easily become distracted and get our eyes off the goal. The Jewish believers to whom Hebrews was written were focusing again on the old covenant. Likewise, we can easily focus on the heroes of the faith or even fellow believers.

The message of this chapter is that we must focus all of our attention on Jesus Christ. Don't focus on the past, because you can't do anything about it. Don't focus on other people, because they will surely let you down. Don't focus on circumstances, because they can change at any moment. We must focus on Jesus!

Do you need to adjust your focus? Tell the Lord about it now.

Project: Memorize **Hebrews 12:2**. Keep your eyes on Jesus!

Superior Living

Turn back to page 3 and read the list of lesson titles. Over the last twelve weeks we have learned much about **the superiority of Jesus Christ**. We've studied His superior sacrifice, sanctuary, and salvation. We've learned about His superior humility, rest, and priesthood. He gives us superior faith and a superior future. Jesus Christ is the focus of the entire book of Hebrews.

What difference does that make? Does understanding these truths about the superiority of Christ and the superior salvation He gives us really have any impact on the way we live?

Christ's supremacy and unchanging character should motivate us to live exemplary Christian lives. We should strive to imitate His consistent, unchanging, superior behavior. In this final lesson from Hebrews, we will learn about the superior living that should mark those who belong to the superior Savior.

Heb. 13:1 "Let brotherly _____ continue."

Heb. 13:2 What should we not forget?

Heb. 13:3 Who should we remember and pray for?

Heb. 13:4 What is honorable?

Who will God judge?

Heb. 13:5 How should we feel about our things?

Why?

Heb. 13:6 What can we say **boldly**?

Heb. 13:7 Who are we supposed to remember and imitate?

Who do you think these who rulers are?

Heb. 13:8 “Jesus Christ the same _____, and _____, and _____.”

Heb. 13:9 What should we **not** be carried about by?

The word **meats** here refers to the old covenant (represented by its many dietary laws), while **grace** refers to the New Covenant. The writer of Hebrews wanted his readers to leave behind the old laws and rituals of Judaism, so they could wholly follow Jesus Christ.

Verses 10-14 remind us about Jesus Christ’s superiority to the Old Testament sacrificial system.

Heb. 13:10 Do those who hold onto Old Testament rituals have any right to participate in our superior worship?

Heb. 13:11 On the Day of Atonement, the bodies of the sacrificial animals were burned outside the city wall.

Heb. 13:12 Where did Jesus suffer?

We must leave behind the Old Testament sacrifices and go forth to place our faith solely in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice (v. 13).

Heb. 13:14 Since we don’t have a permanent home here, what do we seek?

Heb. 13:15 God doesn’t want animal sacrifices from us. What should we offer Him?

Heb. 13:16 What else should we do?

Heb. 13:17 Who should we obey?

Why?

The closing verses contain requests, blessings, and greetings.

Heb. 13:18-19 What did the writer ask, and why?

Heb. 13:20 “Now the God of _____, that brought again from the _____ our Lord _____, that great _____ of the sheep, through the _____ of the everlasting _____.”

Heb. 13:21 What did he ask the Lord to do for them?

Heb. 13:22 What did he ask them to receive?

Heb. 13:23 Who had been set free?

Heb. 13:25 “_____ be with you all. Amen.”

Concluding Thoughts: Those who belong to Jesus Christ should live better than other people. Our lives should be marked by:

- **Love** (v. 1)
- **Hospitality** (v. 2)
- **Prayer** (v. 3, 7, 18)
- **Sexual purity** (v. 4)
- **Contentment** (v. 5)
- **Dependence** upon the Lord (v. 6)
- **Following** and **obeying** godly leaders (v. 7, 17)
- **Sound doctrine** based upon God’s grace (v. 9)
- **Praise** and **thanksgiving** (v. 15).

How does your life measure up? If you’re falling short in some area, confess that as sin and ask the Lord to enable you to live a superior life, like one who belongs to Jesus Christ. Do it now.

Project: Commit yourself to superior living every day this week. Pick up a *Sunday School Member Quarterly* for the new quarter, and begin the **Daily Bible Reading Guide** on Monday.