

A STUDY OF HEBREWS

Final Words of Encouragement - Chapter 13:1-25

I. Review of Chapters 1-12

A. Jesus Christ is the greatest and final Prophet and enthroned Son of God.

1. Therefore we must pay closest attention to His Gospel... (1:1-2:18)

B. Jesus Christ is infinitely greater than Moses and gives eternal, not just temporal, rest.

1. Therefore we must persevere in faith lest we fall like those in the wilderness... (3:1-4:13)

C. Jesus Christ is superior to Aaron and is our Great High Priest who sympathizes with us perfectly.

1. Therefore we who have profound needs must fly to God's throne of grace... (4:14-5:10)

D. [A short detour due to the dullness of hearers (5:11-6-20)]

1. Warning against apostasy (6:1-12) 2. Assurance of God's promise (6:13-20)

E. The mysterious Melchizedek, the OT priest-king, is a foreshadow, or 'type', of the coming Christ.

1. Therefore flee to the eternal, oath-sealed, Melchizedekian sinless human sacrifice for sin (7:1-28)

F. Jesus Christ's heavenly priestly ministry mediates a more glorious new covenant (8:1-13).

G. A clear conscience, access to God, and true forgiveness comes only through Christ's blood (9:9-28)

H. Christ's sacrifice once-for-all has secured the eternal new covenant; nor more sacrifices needed (10:1-18)

1. Therefore let us draw near to Christ with assurance, hold onto our confession, and meet together (10:19-39)

I. Faith in God's unseen promises is the legacy of past saints whose examples guide us today (11:1-40)

1. Therefore run the race with endurance in holiness, adoring Christ's suffering and God's discipline (12:1-17)

J. The trauma of God's holiness at Mt. Sinai leads, at our conversion, to the glory of Mt. Zion (12:18-24)

1. Therefore let us take heed, worship, and rejoice as members of God's unshakeable kingdom (12:25-29)

II. Text: Hebrews 13:1-25 – Divine Commands with Eternal Reasons

(1) *Let brotherly love continue.*

(2) ² **Do not neglect** to show hospitality to strangers,
for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

(3) ³ **Remember** those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated,
since you also are in the body.

(4a) ⁴ **Let marriage be held in honor** among all,

(4b) **and let the marriage bed be undefiled,**
for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.

(5) ⁵ **Keep your life free from love of money, and be content** with what you have,
for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

⁶ *So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"*

(6a) ⁷ **Remember your leaders,** those who spoke to you the word of God.

(6b) **Consider** the outcome of their way of life,

(6c) **and imitate** their faith.

⁸ *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

(7) ⁹ **Do not be led away** by diverse and strange teachings,

for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them.

¹⁰ *We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat.*

¹¹ *For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp.*

¹² *So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.*

(8a) ¹³ **Therefore let us go to him** outside the camp and **bear the reproach** he endured.

¹⁴ *For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.*

¹⁵ *Through him then*

(8b) **let us continually offer up** a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

(9) ¹⁶ **Do not neglect** to do good and to share what you have,

for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

- (10a) ¹⁷ **Obey your leaders and submit to them,**
for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account.
- (10b) **Let them do this with joy and not with groaning,**
for that would be of no advantage to you.
- (11) ¹⁸ **Pray for us,**
for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.
- ¹⁹ *I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner.*

²⁰ *Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, ²¹ equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

²² *I appeal to you, brothers, bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly. ²³ You should know that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom I shall see you if he comes soon. ²⁴ Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those who come from Italy send you greetings. ²⁵ Grace be with all of you. (Heb 13:1-25)*

1. How does God's adoption of us impact how we view community life with other Christians (see 1 Tim 5:1-2)? How did this take shape in the first century, according to v. 2? What about today?
2. What sin lies at the root of a craving desire for more money, according to the reason given for command (5)?
3. How does command (7) return to the familiar theme of setting Old Testament shadows/regulations in opposition to the fulfillment found in Christ? What will devotion to Christ entail for the New Testament Christian?

“And the bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. Their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be burned up with fire. ²⁸ And he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. (Lev 16:27-28)

4. What is implied about their 1st century “leaders” in command (10a) (see v. 7)? What is the reason given for the command?

“For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.” (1 Thess 2:19)

5. How does the author's final benediction both encourage the people to persevere in their faith AND give all the glory to God? How does this benediction summarize many of the themes of Hebrews?

“...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” (Phil 2:12-13)

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph 2:8-10)

“The revelation...of Christ...deserves the severest of our thoughts, the best of our meditations and our utmost diligence in them... What better preparation can there be for [our future enjoyment of the glory of Christ] than in a constant previous contemplation of that glory in the revelation that is made in the Gospel.”

- John Owen, Meditations on the Glory of Christ