

# WitnessKit 3

## God and Religions

Integrating the Worldviews of the Old and New  
Testaments,

Guided by the Book

*Letter to the Hebrews*

Class 18

Hebrews Chapter 5—Messiah's  
Priesthood

# I Thessalonians 5:21

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**But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good.**

# Hebrews 4:14-16

<sup>14</sup> Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession.

<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are, yet* without sin.

<sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (NKJV)

# Read these questions and look at the previous slide to answer them.

- Because “we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God,” what benefits do we have and why?
- What 2 things do these verses tell us to do because we have those benefits?
- How do they tell us to do these things?
- *Boldly* and *fearfully* are different attitudes. Which attitude is recommended here and why? Does that negate the fear of God?
- “Perfect love casts out fear.” 1 John 4:18 Whose love is perfect?

# We can appreciate the priesthood of Messiah if we internalize:

Promise

Contrast

Need

- **The promise of Messiah's priesthood from the Hebrew Scriptures.**
- The contrast between the historic Israelite priesthood and Messiah's priesthood.
- The need for spiritual maturity when connecting Scripture ideas together.

# The original readers of Hebrews

## chapter 5

Understood the Hebrew Scriptures better than we often do. Therefore, we should do a bit of Scriptural sleuthing to catch up with them.

The Hebrew Scriptures promised that **Messiah would be a Priest forever and King forever.**

That promise was written precisely in the Psalms.

It was implied in the crown on Aaron's high priestly turban, described in the Books of Moses.

It was expanded in Zechariah's prophecy.

# The promise of Messiah's kingly priesthood in the Hebrew Scriptures: **Eternal.**

<sup>1</sup> A Psalm of David. *The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."*

<sup>2</sup> *The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!* <sup>3</sup> *Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.* <sup>4</sup> *The LORD has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."* Psalms 110:1-4 (NKJV) (1000 BC)

Verses 1-3 establish that God is talking to Messiah, so Messiah is the Priest Forever.

# The promise of Messiah's priesthood in the Hebrew Scriptures: The Crown.

Exodus 39 <sup>1</sup> *Of the **blue**, **purple**, and **scarlet** thread they made garments of ministry, for ministering in the holy place, and made the holy garments for Aaron, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ...*

<sup>30</sup> *Then they made **the plate of the holy crown of pure gold**, and wrote on it an inscription like the engraving of a signet: HOLINESS TO THE LORD. <sup>31</sup> And they tied to it a **blue cord**, to fasten it above on the turban, as the LORD had commanded Moses. (NKJV)*

# Messiah is both Priest and King.

The High Priest in ancient Israel was never king, yet he had a gold crown on His ceremonial turban.

God explained the reason for the crown centuries later, in Zechariah's prophecies—after the return from Babylonian captivity.

{Here we see clues about Messiah given very early in Israel's history (Moses≈ 1400 BC & David≈ 1000 BC), explained much later(Zechariah≈ 500 BC), then to be fulfilled even later—priesthood now, kingdom still future, except in human hearts now.}

# The promise of Messiah's priesthood in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Zechariah 6:9-14 ( $\approx$ 500 BC) <sup>9</sup> *Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying:*

<sup>10</sup> *"Receive the gift from the captives--from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have come from Babylon—and go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah.*

<sup>11</sup> *Take the silver and gold, **make an elaborate crown**, and set it on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, **the high priest**.*

# The promise of Messiah's priesthood in the Hebrew Scriptures.

- <sup>12</sup> *Then speak to him, saying,*  
*'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying:*  
*"Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His*  
*place He shall branch out, And He shall build the*  
*temple of the LORD;*
- <sup>13</sup> *Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall*  
*bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne;*  
*So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of*  
*peace shall be between them both."*
- <sup>14</sup> *"Now the elaborate crown shall be for a memorial in*  
*the temple of the LORD. Zechariah 6:9-14 (NKJV)*

# The promise of Messiah's priesthood in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The crown was not for the current priest—  
Joshua, son of Jehozadak—to be both priest  
and king.

They actually had no king at that time, because  
they were vassals to the kings of Persia.  
Joshua would have been in serious trouble if he  
claimed to be king.

The crown was for a memorial—to remind them  
of the prophecy that **MESSIAH—the  
BRANCH**—would be both priest and king.

# Ezekiel 21:26-27 at the time of Babylonian Captivity

- <sup>26</sup> thus says the Lord GOD: "Remove the turban, and take off the crown; *Nothing shall remain* the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted.
- <sup>27</sup> Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no *longer*, Until He comes whose right it is, And I will give it *to Him*." 'Ezek 21:26-27 (NKJV)

This appears to say that the next King of Israel will be Messiah, Son of David, both Priest and King. Earlier in the chapter the scepter, representing the king, is described. Certainly no political king has been from the lineage of David in Israel since that time.

# We can appreciate the priesthood of Messiah if we internalize:

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# Hebrews Chapter 5

<sup>1</sup> For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. <sup>2</sup> He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. <sup>3</sup> Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer *sacrifices* for sins.

# Here we see...



That the ancient High Priests in Israel were human beings like the rest of us, and sinners just **like everyone else**.

They had to first offer sacrifices for their own sins before they could offer sacrifices for the sins of the people.

**Nobody is perfect—not even the most prominent religious leader.**

**EVERYONE** needs atonement for sins.  
Everyone must repent.

# The New Testament teaches the same thing.

The Apostle Paul spread the message of salvation throughout the Roman Empire. He did NOT claim to be perfect.

In Philippians chapter 3 he said he had **not** already attained the goal. He had not already become perfect—mature and fully integrating faith and action.

Rather, he was reaching forward to what lies ahead, **pressing on toward the goal of the prize of the upward call** of God in Jesus Christ.

**Only God is perfect.** We need the gift of His perfection in exchange for our inadequacy.

# The New Testament teaches the same thing.

- The Apostle Paul called himself the “chiefest of sinners” because he had formerly persecuted the church out of misplaced zeal. He repented and believed in Jesus Christ, and became one of the strongest leaders in the early church.
- **So we see two things: nobody is perfect and nobody is a hopeless case.** Repentance and faith are available to all. Transformation is required for all.
- **Human leaders are all sinners.**

# Jesus Christ As Our High Priest



In contrast, Jesus Christ was tempted in all points as we are, yet He never sinned.

Going through temptations for us gives Him sympathy for our weaknesses.

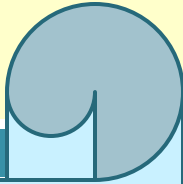
He did not need to offer sacrifices to atone for His sins, because He had none.

For that reason, His willingness to lay down His life for us made His death available to us. His death is payment for our sins. After He takes away our sins, we receive His righteousness by receiving Him into our lives. He sends His Spirit into our hearts.

# Hebrews Chapter 5

- <sup>4</sup> And no man takes this (priestly) honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron *was*.
- <sup>5</sup> So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, *but it was* He who said to Him: "*You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.*" (Psalm 2:7)
- <sup>6</sup> As *He* also says in another place: "*You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek*"; (Psalm 110:4)

# Hebrews Chapter 5



- <sup>7</sup> who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,
- <sup>8</sup> though He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.
- <sup>9</sup> And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,

These verses tell us that Jesus' emotions in the Garden of Gethsemane were not sinful.

Being both fully human and fully Divine, Jesus learned obedience by going through suffering. That suffering completed His perfection, because He did it for us. His perfection in facing such extreme temptation—

where He was tempted to give up the plan for making atonement for the sins of the whole world—

His perfection made Him qualified to take all sins upon Himself and die with those sins and rise victorious over death itself.

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# Hebrews Chapter 5: Jesus Christ was...

<sup>10</sup> called by God as High Priest *"according to the order of Melchizedek,"* <sup>11</sup> of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

<sup>12</sup> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

# We can know that Jesus Christ

Is valid as our Messiah and High Priest because of the prophetic word in Psalms.

The reference to the order of priesthood of Melchizedek requires the author of Hebrews to explain the Scriptures carefully. Melchizedek's priesthood is a topic in the next chapter of Hebrews. The question being answered is "How could Messiah from David's lineage be a priest?" Priests were from Aaron's lineage.

In preparation for that topic, the readers are urged to press on toward maturity.

# Pressing on toward maturity takes study.

- The readers of Hebrews, including ourselves, of course, need to study beyond first principles—so that we can understand the detailed references, and so that we can be equipped to be teachers, and so that we can discern the difference between good and evil.
- The two sets of Scriptures fit together in *amazing detail*. One of the demonstrations that the Bible is inspired by God is the remarkable fit.

# To have a perspective about that fit...

- I estimate that there are between 400,000 and 500,000 words in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- The name *Melchizedek* shows up twice.
- Hebrews chapters 5-7 discuss both.
- That tiny detail has an impact on our understanding of Messiah as our Priest forever.
- Notice that “solid food” involves fitting all the Scriptures together properly, even the tiny details.

# Hebrews Chapter 5

- 13 For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.
- 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (NKJV)

# Everyone has a sphere of influence.

We are each responsible for our spiritual growth, so that we can fulfill God's purpose within our sphere of influence.

- We need to avoid being “dull of hearing.”
- We need confidence in God's word, so that we will be motivated to study.
- We need to apply ourselves to that task—not just focus on the easy stuff all the time.

# Our sphere of influence NEEDS our study.

- Our nation is abandoning God's word as an authoritative voice.
- They are losing important principles **and opportunities for heaven** in the process.
- We have a responsibility to reach them with the truth.
- We have to know the truth and reasons to believe it is true.
- We have to be able to express those ideas.

# This passage in Hebrews Chapter 5 has given us

A Biblical view of religious leadership.  
Everybody sins. Everybody must repent.  
Everybody must study and seek spiritual maturity.

Only Jesus Christ is perfectly without sin,  
because He is both fully human and Divine.  
Therefore, we all need His righteousness and  
His intercession for us as our High Priest.  
He is merciful and **always** willing to help us.  
We can ask Him for help any time.

# Jesus Christ As Eternal King and Priest,

has the most important offices of anyone. He is the One who “has the name above every name.”

Philippians 2:8-11 <sup>8</sup> *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (ESV)*



# Jesus Christ is worthy of that Name!

Jesus Christ is worthy of the name above all names because of His moral perfection. He is the Ultimate Leader—The LORD.

Since the Bible tells us to study,

What should we study,  
and why?

# The Biblical view of the Bible.

The Bible claims to be a book from God.

“<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (principles), for reproof (recognizing wrong), for correction, (fixing the problem) for instruction (training) in righteousness,  
<sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

2 Tim 3:16-17 (NKJV)

# What did that passage tell us to study?

All Scripture.

Why?

It is all profitable for us, to grasp principles, to recognize and correct erroneous ideas, and to train us in righteousness. The world is a complicated place. We need training to make correct decisions.

The Bible claims to be truth, and therefore to be self-consistent. It is.

- **“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”** John 17:17 (NKJV)
- Jesus Christ called God’s word TRUTH when He prayed for us in John chapter 17.
- The Bible sanctifies us—It makes us better people than we can be in our own strength, set apart from the world to serve God.

# The Bible Is All True.

- Psalm 119:160 “The sum of Thy word is truth. Every one of Thy righteous ordinances is everlasting.”
- Psalm 119:140 “Thy word is very pure. Therefore, Thy servant loves it.”

# The Biblical view of the Bible.

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.--  
Hebrews 4:12.

# The Bible Teaches Us Right from Wrong.

**Hebrews 5:13** For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

# The Bible Stands Forever.

- Isaiah 40:6-8 <sup>6</sup> The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh *is* grass, And all its loveliness *is* like the flower of the field.
- <sup>7</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
- Surely the people *are* grass. <sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades,
- But the word of our God stands forever." (NKJV)

# The Bible Stands Forever according to Jesus Christ.

- Matthew 5:17-19<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.
- <sup>18</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot (smallest letter) or one tittle (part of a letter) will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

# The Bible Stands Forever according to Jesus Christ.

- <sup>19</sup> Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven;
- but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”(NKJV)

# Acts 17:26-28

- <sup>26</sup> *and He made from one*
- *every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,*
- *having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation;*
- <sup>27</sup> *that they should seek God, if perhaps they might reach for him and find him,*
- *though he is not far from each one of us:*
- <sup>28</sup> *for in him we live, and move, and have our being;*

# Ezekiel 18:4, 23, 32

- <sup>4</sup> *"Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die...."*
- <sup>23</sup> *Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live? ..."*
- <sup>32</sup> *For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live! (NKJV)*

# Romans 2:11

- *“There is no partiality with God.”*
- Acts 10:34, <sup>34</sup> So Peter opened his mouth and said: *“Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. (ESV)*

# *“There is no partiality with God.”*

- *Galatians 2:6, <sup>6</sup> And from those who seemed to be influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality...) (ESV)*
- *Colossians 3:25, <sup>25</sup> For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. (ESV)*

# *There is no partiality with God.”*

- *James 2:9<sup>9</sup> But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (ESV)*
- *Deuteronomy 1:17<sup>17</sup> You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. (ESV)*

# Core Issue

God does not show partiality.

God is a PERFECTLY FAIR Judge.

- If someone's view of God's call and choice of people is a view that shows partiality on His part, it is not correct. If someone's view makes us puppets on His string, that view violates this core issue. The truth is much more complicated than puppetry.

# Core Issue

God does not show partiality.

God is a PERFECTLY FAIR Judge.

- Example: Obadiah chapter 1 is incomplete without Ezekiel 35:5-15. God's rejection of people in the mentioned location is in response to their rejection of Him and of His law written on their hearts, and that rejection is their real choice. In the time of the Old Testament, most nations worshiped idols. The REAL God who could be known was the God of Israel—the true and living God. Rejecting Israel was also a rejection of Israel's God.
- We need to pay attention to this issue even today.

# Core Issue for God.

## God does not show partiality.

- Core issue for people: **Don't reject the real God.**
- Commandment 1 of 10: I am the LORD your God. You shall have NO OTHER GODS before ME.

# One reason we need to study God's word:

- We need to study the entire Bible to understand who the REAL GOD is.
- We cannot afford to operate based on assumptions and the ideas of other people. We need to study for ourselves. Many wrong ideas permeate the world.
- If we study superficially, we may jump to the wrong conclusions. It is always harder to UNLEARN errors than to learn the truth in the first place.

# Truth Matters

The truth about Who God really IS matters for all eternity.

It is vital to search for truth.

# Here is another reason to study the entire Bible.

- Hebrews 2:1-3 “For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” (NASB)

# The Whole Bible

- ❑ Over and over in the Scriptures, people had drifted away from the ideas that are central to the Book. The record of that drift is a serious warning to us, to keep US on track. It is possible to drift simply by reading only portions of the Scriptures rather than the entire book.
- ❑ Sometimes people drifted by way of compromise with surrounding nations. Sometimes they drifted by the drift of tradition. Traditions are good, but they must be truth-centered to stay good. Traditions drift.
- ❑ One of the important ideas in the Letter to the Hebrews is the idea of **faith** as the substance—the bedrock reality—of being able to please God.


# At the time of the New Testament, drift was underway.

- The Jewish people had formed three or four or five groups that we would describe as denominations. The Pharisees were the closest to the Word, because they tried very hard to obey every tiny detail according to the traditions of the elders. But traditions can drift so far that they miss the heart of the matter.
- The Sadducees and Herodians were the skeptics on board, who believed in this life only, and who also believed in accommodating the Romans. They were actually in power locally, because the Romans trusted them.

# First Century Denominations

- ❑ Other sects were following a tradition of separation from worldliness to the extreme of living out in the desert away from others.
- ❑ Other sects were involved in plans to drive the Romans out of the country, and were in constant danger politically, from both the Romans and from the Herodians. The Herodians clamped down on all dissent. They wanted to keep the Romans from destroying the nation.

# The concerns of the first century are still important.



Our understanding of the Word depends on being able to put it together properly. Knowing the ideas of the time of writing is a help.

The *Letter to the Hebrews* helps people with the background of the Pharisees, who studied the Word through the filter of tradition, to get back to the core issues and see them clearly.

Sometimes modern people read the word through the lens of issues like race and feminism. We are prone to misunderstand or improperly emphasize portions of the Word if we see it through the wrong lens.

# Galatians chapter 5:

- Galatians chapter 5 when read in modern churches, can be read either to build walls between people or to remove walls.
- Here is why. **Observation is external but the heart matters most.**
- In the world around us, we see people who lead undisciplined lives and who experience terrible consequences from that choice. Often they seem to be trapped in their choices. We also see people who live disciplined lives who make a success of their lives.

# Galatians chapter 5:

- The World War 2 generation, who were brought up in the Great Depression, were often advocates for the value of a disciplined life. They were more successful as a generation than previous generations in America. They were very strict parents. Many of their children ran away from the strictness because they did not find grace in that strictness.
- We see people who are brought up in an undisciplined environment who do things like join the military. The imposition of military discipline brings them the keys to earthly success. We see the same thing happen with people who join religions that emphasize a disciplined life. Discipline changes lives. We can observe that kind of change. But we cannot observe the heart.

# Are Changed Lives and Transformed Lives the Same?

- Galatians chapter 5 speaks against the value of a religion of disciplined good works and following the details of tradition. Galatians chapter 5 says a transformed life **MUST BE** transformed from the **INSIDE**, not just the outside.
- If Christianity goes in the direction of legalism, as the Pharisees did in the first century, it will miss the truth. It will miss the transforming power of God's Grace.

# Galatians 5

- Galatians 5 discusses the issue because the church in Galatia was integrating the Scriptures improperly. They were seeing the Old Testament through the lens of legalism, not through the lenses of faith and grace.
- They used the issue of circumcision as an example. Genesis chapter 17 established circumcision as the symbol of the everlasting covenant God established with Abraham.

# Galatians 5

- But circumcision was not the transformation. It was only the symbol. Symbols are important but they are not the real thing.
- Circumcision was a hindrance when the early church tried to reach the Gentile world with the news of salvation. It was an unnecessary hindrance because it was only a symbol.
- Faith and grace bring freedom. Faith and grace bring the freedom to keep Commandment 10 of 10: “You shall not covet.” Faith and grace transform the inside of the life, and not just the outside.
- Read Galatians 5:16-26 to see the difference.

# Galatians 5

- Galatians 5:3-4, taken out of context, makes circumcision sound WRONG. But the emphasis on freedom in the rest of the chapter negates that—Christians have the freedom to adopt circumcision for their sons for health reasons—just NOT for the purpose of eternal salvation. Transformation of the heart is required for eternal salvation, not outward symbols.
- Spiritual reality is complicated. We want everything to be simple, but it is important not to OVER-simplify. It is important not to choose symbol over substance.

# Here is another reason to study the entire Bible.

- Hebrews 2:1-3 “For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” (NASB)

# *The Letter to the Hebrews*

- *The Letter to the Hebrews* is all about integrating the entire Scriptures for the purpose of transformed lives. That transformation is real salvation and real freedom. We need to study so that we never neglect so great a salvation.

# Galatians 5:1

- It was for freedom that Christ set us free. Therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.
- Trying to obey every tiny detail of tradition can become another form of slavery. A disciplined life is good, but not if it becomes a form of slavery. So how do we find the freedom that Christ purchased for us?
- We must learn how to walk by the Spirit. He gives us His Spirit when we repent of sins and receive Him into our lives. We are like newborn babies who must mature and learn to walk by the Spirit.



# Homework:

In three sets

# Homework Class 18 Set 1

- Read Chapter 11 in Hebrews. This chapter demonstrates that faith in God's promises, and especially faith expressed in His covenant promises, was the vital element in the religion of the entire Old Testament, even before the giving of the Law. Verse one gives a mysterious definition of faith.
- What is that definition?
- The word *substance* is *hupostasis*, meaning the substratum, or what lies under and supports. The word *evidence* is *elegchos*, meaning a conviction, a proof, or something by which another thing is tested.
- What was the result of faith, as described in verse 2?

# Homework Class 18 Set 1

- Recognizing that this book was written long before the scientific age, what are things mentioned in verse three that we understand by faith?
- The remainder of this chapter gives a review of the entire Old Testament from the perspective of faith expressed by individuals. Summarize the kinds of faith that are mentioned.
- Abel
- Enoch
- What generality is drawn about faith in verse 6?
- Noah
- Abraham
- Sarah

# Homework Class 18 Set 1

- How do verses 13-16 indicate a belief in eternal life among these Old Testament individuals?
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph
- Moses' parents
- Moses
- The Israelite slaves in Egypt
- The Israelites in the time of Joshua
- Rahab
- What demonstrations of God's power followed the faith of individuals as mentioned in verses 32-35?
- What endurance of sufferings are listed in verses 36 - 38 without demonstrations of God's power to rescue? How is God's power demonstrated through their faith?
- What do verses 39-40 mean?

# Homework Class 18 Set 2

- Read Chapter 12 in Hebrews. I believe the great cloud of witnesses in verse 1 refers to the witness of all the people in the Bible about faith. Because of their witness, we should lay aside every encumbrance and sin, so that we can run the race God has set before each one of us.
- What does verse 2 tell us to do?
- What goal was so much joy to Jesus that He was willing to endure the suffering of the cross?
- In verses 3-4, Jesus is our example of endurance and confidence in the face of suffering. So long as we have life, and our blood has not been shed by the wicked, we have continuing confidence in God's purpose for our life. We must not lose heart under any circumstance. In verses 5-6, God will use the suffering for a good purpose for us, as a father disciplines his child. In verses 9-12, what are those good purposes?

# Homework Class 18 Set 2

- Verses 12-13 continue with the racing metaphor. We are to accept the necessities of **strength training** for the race God has set before each of us. Those requirements are to strengthen our limbs, and to allow healing when needed, and to make straight paths for our feet. In verse 14, what two goals are we to pursue?
- ***\*Please note that this is not talking about peace between countries as understood in pacifism, but rather about peace on a personal level between individuals. It is clear from looking at the Bible as a whole that the responsibility for waging war is delegated by God to human government, and that the personal responsibility to fight for one's country can be a calling from God, such as was seen in King David's life.***

# Homework Class 18 Set 2

- ***That is a separate issue not in view in this passage. In this passage, the issue of individual responsibility for peace was in the context of persecution for being a Christian, and finding a way to cope with that, maintaining a peaceful attitude while maintaining the courage to keep the faith. Paul and Silas in the jail in Philippi were an example of that kind of peace – Acts 16:16-40.***

# Homework Class 18 Set 2

- Verses 15-17 refer to two passages in the Old Testament. The first passage is in Deuteronomy 29:18, where Moses gave the Israelites important instructions about staying true to God and His covenant. The **root of bitterness** is hidden idolatry that would defile many. When someone abandons the faith, often many people are lost along with him. In particular, his own children will be likely to be lost as well, and even his entire future family line is in jeopardy. Our decisions are not made in a vacuum. They affect the future of many people besides ourselves.

# Homework Class 18 Set 2

- The second example is Esau, who sold his birthright for a bowl of bean stew. God was so offended by this callous disregard for matters of eternal importance that Esau was never able to recover what he lost.
- Thus, we must remain alert and try to recognize the importance of our spiritual opportunities, lest we lose them.
- Because this passage also stresses the importance of being at peace with other people, the root of bitterness can refer to a refusal to forgive other people, which is necessary in order to be at peace with them within one's own heart.

# Homework Class 18 Set 3

- Read Chapter 13 in Hebrews. This chapter focuses on how faith should work out in practice.
- What is the first characteristic of faith in practice?
- How should faith work out in the realm of human sexuality?
- How should faith work out in the realm of money, in verses 5 and 16?
- How should faith work out in the realm of fear?

# Homework Class 18 Set 3

- How should faith work out in the realm of church leadership, in verses 7 and 17 - 19?
- Grace focuses on spiritual essentials and has freedom of conscience about detailed decisions. What basis do we have for this freedom, according to verses 8 - 14?
- What blessings are promised to us in verses 20-25?

# A verse to read together:

## Hebrews 2:18

**“For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.”**