

WitnessKit 3
God and Religions
Integrating the Worldviews of the Old and New
Testaments,
Guided by the Book
Letter to the Hebrews

Class 16
Hebrews Chapter 3:
OUR HEAVENLY CALLING,
IMPORTANT CONTRASTS

I Thessalonians 5:21

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

We have a heavenly calling.

Exodus 19:6a says “And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

I Peter 2:4-11 applies that calling to us, who believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.

“And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, ...But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

Exodus 19:1-6

¹ In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came *to* the Wilderness of Sinai. ² For they had departed from Rephidim, had come *to* the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain.

³ And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "**Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel:**

Exodus 19:1-6

¹⁴ 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. ⁶ And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel." Exodus 19:1-6 (NKJV)

What did priests, in the Old Testament, do?

1. They prayed for other people as well as themselves.
2. They proclaimed the truths of God to each generation.
3. They discerned between the holy and the profane, and between what was consistent with God's law and what was not.
4. In the Old Testament they practiced the rituals of the temple, involving the covenant by sacrifice, so that atonement was made for the sins of the people. This portion of the priestly duty was **restricted** to the priests of the lineage of Levi and **restricted** within that lineage, to the family line of Aaron.

What were the requirements?

- In Exodus 19:4-6, what were the requirements to qualify as a **kingdom of priests before God**?
- In 1 Peter 2:4-11, what did this special type of priest do? How does the idea of the **New Covenant** fit the New Testament calling?
- Everyone has a sphere of influence and responsibility. Everyone influences other people for good or not for good. Take a little time to consider your own sphere of influence, and whether you meet qualifications described in these passages.

Proclaim and Pray.

- If you have this heavenly calling, and no one is exempt who has given their own heart to the LORD, consider those whom you are influencing, and for whom you should pray. Intercede for them, and for yourself, for God's help to fulfill your calling.
- Think about your responsibility to influence them toward God, through your words and actions.

We who have partaken of a heavenly calling MUST understand

Contrasts

These contrasts:

1. The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ
2. The difference between a hardened heart and a good heart
3. The difference BELIEF makes.

Hebrews Chapter 3

This chapter begins by comparing Jesus and Moses. Why do you think such a comparison would be helpful?

Moses and Jesus were

- Founders of Biblical Judaism and Biblical Christianity. Both are tremendously important to subsequent generations. Moses received the Law, and he wrote the foundational documents of both religions, the first five books of the Bible.
- Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law and opened the truths of the Bible to the entire world—as predicted in Isaiah 49:6—so that God’s salvation would reach to the end of the earth.

Moses and Jesus

- Jesus was the promised *Seed of the Woman* in the third chapter of Genesis (Moses' writing) who defeated the Serpent and who defeated death. Moses wrote about Him—John 5:46. In fact, calling Messiah the *Seed of the Woman* in Genesis 3:15 refers to the Virgin Birth of Jesus. The bruise in His heel refers to the nails of the cross. So in this introductory passage of Moses' writing, we already see clues to help us identify Jesus as the Christ—the Messiah.

Moses' Writings

- Moses' writings are the oldest section of the Bible, and are the easiest to attack with skepticism because of their age.
- Jesus' sayings are from the Roman Empire era, a time with more and varied historical records that have survived to the present. For instance, we have confidence in the New Testament writing within 99% regarding the correct wording of the whole because so many manuscripts have survived.
- But much of Moses' writing establishes the foundation for the rest of the Bible, so it is still very important.

Moses' Writings

- By studying the amazing coherence of Moses' writings with the rest of Scripture, the doubts pointed out by the skeptics can be put to rest.
- But often people will take an educated skeptic's word as true, and will not study the books for themselves. Equally problematic is reading only the points the skeptics present, without reading the books as a whole.

The Original Skeptics of the 1800s

- The skeptics of the 1800s started a trend. The science of archaeology was in its infancy. The skeptics decided that no evidence of writing existed in Moses' time, so he could not be the author of the early books.
- They built an elaborate theory about how the books were created hundreds of years later, after writing was known. However, their basic assumption has proved false, and their elaborate theory unnecessary and unreasonable. We studied this in detail in the first WitnessKit course, and will briefly review it here.

Finds from Archeology

Validate the Torah.

- The Nuzi Tablets describing Hurrian culture validate the descriptions in Genesis of daily life and legal practices. The names of the kings who fought Sodom in Genesis have been found on an inscription from the proper era.
- Earlier writing has been found in Egypt, Assyria, Canaan, and Crete, so writing DID exist in Moses' time.
- The law code of Hammurabi is earlier than Moses' law code, so law codes were possible in his time.
- Joseph's tomb was found with a mummified body and Egyptian sword, amazingly preserved.

The New Testament

- The New Testament validates the writings of Moses, and Jesus Christ treats them as true. If the earliest books are true, and the remaining books are consistent with them, which they ARE, then we can trust the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the New Testament.
- Hebrews 3 treats Moses' writings as fact. It treats our heavenly calling as fact, too.

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

Hebrews 3:1-4 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. ...

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

Both Moses and Jesus Christ were faithful to God who appointed them in God's house, God's family. Moses was faithful to write what God inspired him to write. His followers were faithful to preserve it. Moses was faithful to lead his people out of Egyptian slavery and to the edge of the Promised Land. In one way, Moses' faithfulness to God's calling established the nation of Israel as a nation, and not just a tribal family.

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

Jesus validated Moses' writings in several passages, such as Luke 16:31. "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.'"

Sometimes Moses' writings are called "The Law."

Luke 16:16-17 ¹⁶ "The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

¹⁷ And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the law to fail."

Jesus On the Road to Emmaus After the Resurrection.

- ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and with all the Prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. Luke 24:27
- After healing a leper in Matthew 8:4 “And Jesus said to him, ‘See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest, and present the offering that Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.’”
- Other references: Matthew 19:8, Mark 10:3,

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

Hebrews 3:1-4 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house.

For He has been counted **worthy of more glory than Moses**, by just so much as the Builder of the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but the Builder of all things is God.

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

- Jesus Christ is worthy of more honor than Moses because Jesus Christ is the Builder of God's house—the Builder of all things—because He is God. This is a clear message of His Divinity and His eternal existence from eternity past.
- Here we see a similar argument for God's existence as Aristotle's *Prime Mover*. In this case we see the **Prime Builder**. “Every house is built by someone. The Builder of all things is God.”

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

Hebrews 3:5-6 Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later. But Christ was faithful as a Son over His house, whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

The first readers of the Letter to the Hebrews believed Moses' Writings.

They held Moses in high esteem, and his writings were foundational to all their other beliefs.

Because Jesus Christ is Messiah, His words are even more important than Moses' words. He is the builder of all things, being *God-with-Us, Immanuel*. John 1:3 says that *He created all things, and without Him nothing was made that was created*. He was faithful as a Son. Psalm 2 says Messiah is God's Son, begotten long before the Virgin Birth, reported around 1000 BC. Begotten is in contrast to being adopted—as God adopts ordinary humans into His family. Jesus Christ has ALWAYS been God's Son.

We Are His House.

- We are His family. He has adopted us into His family, and the word *house* was used to mean family. We are His temple on earth as well, because we are the locations for His indwelling Holy Spirit, just as the temple of the Old Testament was the local place of His Presence. We are His house a third way, by being His creation. God creates human beings individually, according to Psalm 139.
- The proof of being members of His adopted family is in our faithfulness to Him—holding fast *to our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.*

Review of Reasons to Believe in Moses as Author of the Torah

- In the intervening 2000 years, and especially since the late 1800s, critical scholars have cast doubts upon Moses' writings. We have good reasons to believe Moses is the author of the first five books of the Bible, however, and that the books are trustworthy. The source for this information is Josh McDowell's *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*.
- The facts support Moses as author. The things mentioned in the books fit the conditions of Moses' time of writing.

The Facts Support Moses As Author

- The setting of the books describes desert conditions, correct for the time of writing during the wilderness wandering.
- The author mentions Egyptian cities as known.
- Many borrowed Egyptian words appear in the text.

The Facts Support Moses As Author

- Certain Hebrew words are archaic, and do not appear in later texts— so the texts are very old.
- The author was well educated and familiar with Egypt and the desert, unfamiliar with Canaan, and from Moses' time. In a population of slaves with a leader who was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, who does that description fit?
- Much scroll space was given to construction of the tabernacle—unnecessary for later writings.
- All of these facts are consistent with Moses as author and an early date of writing.
- The remaining population were former slaves, unlikely to be as educated as Moses.

There is more.

Facts from Archeology support the time of Moses for the writing rather than the late date of the skeptical documentarians.

- A form of treaty involving emperors called a suzerainty treaty from the Anatolian-Syrian area—modern day Turkey and Syria—dates from 1400BC to 1200BC and matches the format of Deuteronomy.
- A type of movable shelter used by royalty from even more ancient Egypt matches the construction method of the tabernacle. Moses was Egyptian royalty, so who in the Israelite group would be likely to know this construction method?

The Critics Who Debunked Moses Were Wrong!

Their arguments were based upon faulty assumptions that have either been disproved or are philosophical faith statements.

They broke the Torah into bits based upon various names for God.

Wellhausen used the **Hegelian dialectic** to put the portions together. He **assumed** the Pentateuch was begun around 800 BC and completed around 400 BC. The large amount of scroll space given to tabernacle construction disproves this idea, because a later era would focus on the temple instead.

The Critics Who Debunked Moses Were Wrong!

They built their case upon faulty assumptions:

1. Philosophic Naturalism—no miracles are ever considered historical—this is like saying Moses could not write the Bible because God does not exist.
2. Opinion counts as much as fact—archaeology not referenced—but archaeology disproves assumptions 5 and 6.
3. Religious evolution: multiple spirits to ancestor worship to fetishism to totemism to mana to magic to polytheism to monotheism—random progression of deities based on opinion alone.
4. Environmental conditioning—that polytheistic neighbors convinced Israel to be monotheistic—denying all the historical evidence.
5. No law code possible in Moses' time
6. No writing existing in Moses' time.

Construction details—

Not the most exciting reading in the world.

Twelve chapters out of 40 in Exodus are construction details for a moveable tabernacle. And the population revered this message as from God, so they kept all the details for thousands of years. This does not fit a book of fiction written hundreds of years after the fact.

It does fit the idea of God who is GOOD, who wants us to be confident in Him. He made His message to us testable as true.

The People Who Received the Letter to the Hebrews Could Trust Moses' Writing.

We can too.

Because Jesus Christ really is Messiah, His validation of Moses' writing counts for us.

Because Jesus Christ really is Messiah, His message is even more important than Moses' message. It does not contradict Moses' central message: the importance individually to choose God's Covenant.

Rather, Jesus' message enlarges upon it, explains it, and extends it to the whole world.

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

- Moses was God's servant, for the purpose of testimony. Jesus validated Moses' words.
- **Jesus Christ is God's Son, with the purpose of making us His house.**
House can mean both building, or temple, or family. We are His house because we are the temple of His Holy Spirit on this earth, and because we are His family.

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

Hebrews 3:5-6 Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later. But Christ was faithful as a Son over His house, whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ

- Jesus Christ is God's Son, with the purpose of making us His house. We demonstrate that we are His house by holding firm to our confidence and our boast of hope throughout our lives. So what should we do if beset by doubts? Choose to TRUST.
- Bear in mind that the era of writing the Letter to the Hebrews was a time of severe persecution. Jesus Christ's power enables us to hold firm to eternal confidence.
- A good heart, in God's sight, holds firm under persecution.

We who have partaken of a heavenly calling MUST understand

Contrasts

These contrasts:

1. The difference between Moses and Jesus Christ
2. The difference between a hardened heart and a good heart
3. The difference BELIEF makes.

The difference between a hardened heart and a good heart

Hebrews 3:7-11 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tried Me by testing Me, and saw My works for forty years. Therefore I was angry with this generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; and they did not know My ways; As I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest.’”

The difference between a hardened heart and a good heart

A hardened heart provokes God to anger.

Example: the forefathers who refused to believe that God would give them the land of promise. They tested God and He was not happy about that. They saw His rescue from slavery and His provision of manna and water and clothes that did not wear out—and yet they refused to believe He would keep His promise.

Evidence rejected makes God angry.
Evidence rejected hardens hearts.

The difference between a hardened heart and a good heart

The commands? Do NOT harden your hearts. Persevere in belief. Encourage one another to persevere.

The deceitfulness of sin hardens hearts. Encourage one another to both kinds of faithfulness: the faithfulness of belief—being full of faith—and the faithfulness to principle of doing what is right.

Faithfulness includes belief, commitment, and perseverance.

The difference between a hardened heart and a good heart

Hebrews 3:12-13 “Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an **EVIL** unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called today, lest any one of you **BE HARDENED BY** the deceitfulness of sin.”

Sin deceives. Sin hardens.

UNBELIEF IS SIN. Unbelief goes away from God, who is **GOOD**. Unbelief is evil. Once we know God is good, we must choose the **GOOD** of belief—of trusting Him.

But NOBODY calls unbelief evil, anymore!

Think about this. God showed you that He loves you in the most costly way possible—by sending His Son to pay for your wrongs. He didn't just spend some of heaven's gold on you; He spent His own life to save you. He spent about 1500 years sending His message little by little so that you could verify that it is true—so you are not dependent upon blind faith and a random selection of religious beliefs. You can get this right, and you can KNOW it is true, and you can experience a new life. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation! 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Unbelief is a choice.

- How can it be remotely good to choose unbelief instead of faith?
- How can it be good to choose other worldviews that say you are no more than a puppet on a string, or a cog in a cosmic machine? When God says you are a being of infinite, eternal value? How you see yourself makes so much difference in the choices you make.
- The Letter to the Hebrews helps us begin to see God's perspective, and He says some shocking things, like "unbelief is evil." Because He says things that are not the way we think, we need to really pay attention and understand.

The difference BELIEF makes.

- Hebrews 3:14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end; while it is said, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me.”
- Belief makes us partakers of Christ. We receive Him into our lives by faith. We demonstrate our faith by perseverance, by holding fast to our assurance **NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS** in this temporary life. Eternal life awaits.

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The difference BELIEF makes.

If you hear His still, small voice speaking to your heart and mind today, **do not harden your heart.**

If He speaks to you about receiving Him into your life, take that step. Pray about it TODAY.

If He speaks to you about trusting Him with your future, take that step. Place your future in His hands TODAY.

Today is the time to commit. Today is the time to trust.

The difference BELIEF makes.

Hebrews 3:16-19 For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?

And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

The difference BELIEF makes.

We have a heavenly calling.

Unbelief keeps us from entering that heavenly calling.

To be effective, and to find and succeed in God's perfect plan for our lives, we must persevere in faith. We must trust Him.

Other people's eternity depends upon it, because...

Our specific heavenly calling is...



To proclaim His excellencies—

His perfect goodness,

His power to transform lives,

His generosity in giving us eternal life through
Jesus Christ our Lord.

We must TRUST HIM to be able to do that. “He has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.”—II Timothy 1:7-9

This is a heavenly calling in more than one way.

- It is a calling FROM heaven. It is a calling from God who is totally GOOD, first to escape hell and get on the path toward heaven, and then to proclaim His excellencies in a world of need and corruption. The world needs His GOODNESS.
- It is a heavenly calling because it can have an impact on heaven for all eternity. We can invite people to go with us to that heavenly city that Jesus is preparing for us right now. We can invite others to escape the gates of hell. We can invite them to leave the realm of eternal darkness. We can invite them into God's light-filled future.

All of us

- Every individual among us has “a rendezvous with death,” as the old poem by Alan Seeger* says. Every one of us faces the darkness of death, but the other side of death does not have to be dark. Jesus opened the gate into the light of God’s eternal Presence when He came back to life.
- *I Have a Rendezvous with Death,” from *Poems by Alan Seeger*, copyright 1916.

If we fulfill our calling...

- Jesus said “Upon this Rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Matthew 16. Imagine a fortress surrounded by walls and gates atop a high mountain, with the darkness of hell filling the landscape all around it and the castle full of light and music.
- We can proclaim His Excellency, to allow others to escape through the gates of hell into the city of light and life. His word and His Spirit are calling people to find the gates and escape.

We have a heavenly calling.

Exodus 19:6a says “And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

1 Peter 2:4-11 applies that calling to us, who believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. “And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, ...But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

We see in Hebrews chapter 3

That Biblical Judaism and Biblical Christianity both consider the priesthood of the believer—that individuals have a heavenly calling from God as teaching priests, to proclaim His excellencies.

Every believer has a responsibility as a teaching priest within his or her own family. Believers have additional similar responsibilities beyond their own family—to reach those in their sphere of influence.

Present Application



The deliverance from Egyptian slavery and the need to trust God for the promised land were written down for us today. The faithfulness of Moses and Joshua and Caleb are our examples of persevering faith, and we should follow their good examples. The faithfulness of Jesus Christ is our example, and we should follow Him.

We must continue in faith, just as the ancient Israelites wandering in the wilderness needed to continue in faith in their circumstances. Then we can accomplish God's good purpose for our individual lives.

The danger of a hardened heart

MUST be avoided. Continuous trust in God, and continuous receptivity to His righteousness are necessary. We must BELIEVE Him on an ongoing basis.

He took away our sins, and continues to remove our sins as we continue to repent and ask forgiveness.

Otherwise, sin deceives and hardens hearts.

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.”

Isaiah 63:8-9

For He said, "Surely they *are* My people, Children *who* will not lie." So He became their Savior. ⁹ In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old. (NKJV)

Hebrews 2:18 and Isaiah 63:8-9

- God experienced the suffering of His people as they wandered in the wilderness. “In all their affliction, He was afflicted.” He became their Savior.
- In all our affliction, Jesus was afflicted on the cross, as He suffered for the entire world. His suffering includes each one of us in our suffering. He became our Savior.
- This is possible because Jesus Christ truly is Immanuel, God-with-us.

Homework

In 3 sets

These homework sets work ahead of the lectures in the Letter to the Hebrews. If you find the homework difficult, give the best answer you can, and then wait for the lectures to catch up. The answers in the lectures may create more questions at that point. The Bible has an inexhaustible supply of answers.

Homework Week 16 Day 1

- Read Chapters 3, 4, and 5 in Hebrews.
- In the Old Testament, the priesthood was from the family of Levi, one of the sons of Jacob, and the High Priest came from the family of Aaron within the tribe of Levi. The priests had several responsibilities, such as the temple service, the preparation of sacrifices, and the teaching of the Law of God.
- Jesus Christ was of the tribe of Judah, from King David's family, as Messiah was promised to be.

Homework Week 16 Day 1

- The High Priest of the law of Moses -- Leviticus 8:9 - - had a gold crown attached to his turban. In Zechariah chapter 6 verses 11-15, the meaning of the crown is explained. What is that meaning?
- Hebrews chapter 5 enlarges upon the explanation. In Hebrews 5 verses 1-4, what attitudes were required of high priests?

Homework Week 16 Day 1

- ❑ Psalm 2 and Psalm 110 both report the call of Messiah as Son of God and as Priest. How, according to verse 7, did Christ express His priesthood while upon the earth?
- ❑ What did He become, as a consequence of completing the requirements of His Priesthood?
- ❑ What differentiates the mature from the immature, according to verse 14?
- ❑ How are the concepts of good and evil related to moral Universals?

Homework Week 16 Day 2

- Read Chapter 6 in Hebrews.
- What does Hebrews 6:1-6 imply for those who cannot seem to stick with the faith? Does continuing to teach just the basics, as listed in the first three verses, solve their problem? (This is one of the most controversial passages in the Bible. Our later class will explain it in the context of its metaphors.)
- Compare verses 7 and 8 to 1 Corinthians 3:10-17. Works that are of eternal good will be revealed by the fire of judgment and those good works that remain will receive a reward at the judgment of the righteous. Those persons whose works do not survive the fire shall suffer loss, but they shall be saved so as by fire.

Homework Week 16 Day 2

- At least three sets of people are in view in Hebrews 6: 1-6. One set is made of people who are true Christians, who want to go on to maturity, but who are being held back by the immaturity of others in the group.
- One set is made of people who are barely Christian, who are not going on to maturity, and who will be saved so as by fire.
- The third group is people who never seem to make a real commitment and are lost.
- What do verses 9-12 encourage the individuals to do?
- What characteristics of God are used as a basis for encouragement, in verses 10, 13-14, and 17-18?

Homework Week 16 Day 2

- We have hope because of God's good character. How is that hope described?
- What do you think is the meaning for Christ's having entered within the veil as our High Priest?

Homework Week 16 Day 3

- Read Chapter 7 in Hebrews. This chapter deals with the meaning of Messiah as a Priest after the order of Melchisedek, as predicted in Psalm 110. Chapter seven of Hebrews serves as an example of going on to mature thinking in Bible study, as contrasted to just sticking with the basics. It exemplifies what Hebrews chapter 6 verse 1 was encouraging.
- Read Genesis 14:1-24 to set the scene. Foreign invaders had captured Abraham's nephew, Lot, after warring against the city where he lived. The city, Sodom, had a terrible reputation as well, and would be severely judged later. Abraham gathered his allies and his servants, and went to rescue Lot, traveling a very long way in the process, and defeating the invaders.

Homework Week 16 Day 3

- Abraham brought back all the captives and their goods. On the way to meet the king of Lot's city, Abraham met a priest of God Most High, named Melchizedek, who was himself the king of a city named Salem. Melchizedek thus held both offices of king and priest.
- Abraham gave Melchizedek a tenth of the spoils brought back from the battle. Abraham also refused to take any of the spoils for himself from the battle, and he restored the captives.
- Why did Abraham refuse the spoils for himself?

Homework Week 16 Day 3

- Consider how much this passage sounds like the American wild West, with Abraham and his employees forming a posse to go after the bad guys.
- Think about how the rule of law was expressed or not expressed in both those situations. Think about how moral universals were expressed in both situations.
- Do you see that, even though cultural differences exist in the varied times and places thousands of years apart, that a core of universal moral standards is known by both sets of people?

Homework Week 16 Day 3

- The major question for discussion in Hebrews 7 is “Why did God describe Messiah as a Priest after the order of Melchizedek?” What is the first possible reason, in verse 1?
- In verse 2 of Hebrews 7, what two reasons are given for describing Messiah as a Priest after the order of Melchizedek?
- What reason does Hebrews 7:3 give for describing Messiah as a Priest after the order of Melchizedek?
- What point is being made in verses 4 through 10 of Hebrews 7, regarding a comparison of Melchizedek’s priestly order with the Levitical priesthood?

Homework Week 16 Day 3

- What further implications are brought to light in verses 11 through 16?
- Why did Hebrews 7:18-19 say the change of law would be needed?
- Why does the fact that God promised with an oath (in Psalm 110) give us a better hope?
- In Joel 2:28-29 how is the New Covenant described?
- In Jeremiah 31:31-40 how is the New Covenant described?

Homework Week 16 Day 3

- In Hebrews 7:22-25, why does Jesus become the guarantor of a better covenant? Why would the New Covenant be described as better? What are some ways it is the same and what are some ways it is different from the earlier covenant?
- In Hebrews 7:26-28, what difference is described between the two orders of priesthood, and what does that imply for us?
- In this discussion about Melchizedek, do you notice that the author of Hebrews treats details from all over the Scriptures as TRUE and coherent with each other?