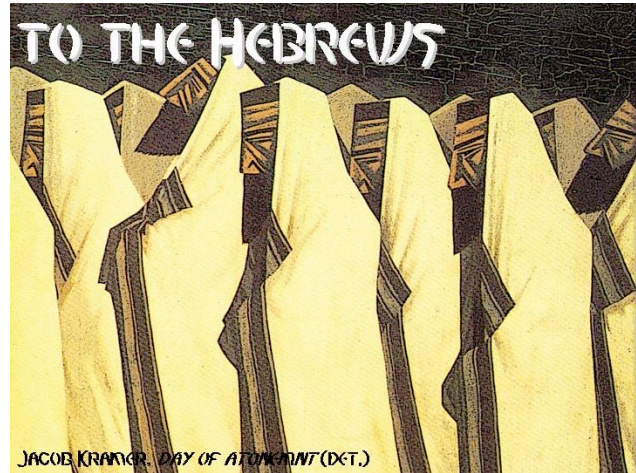
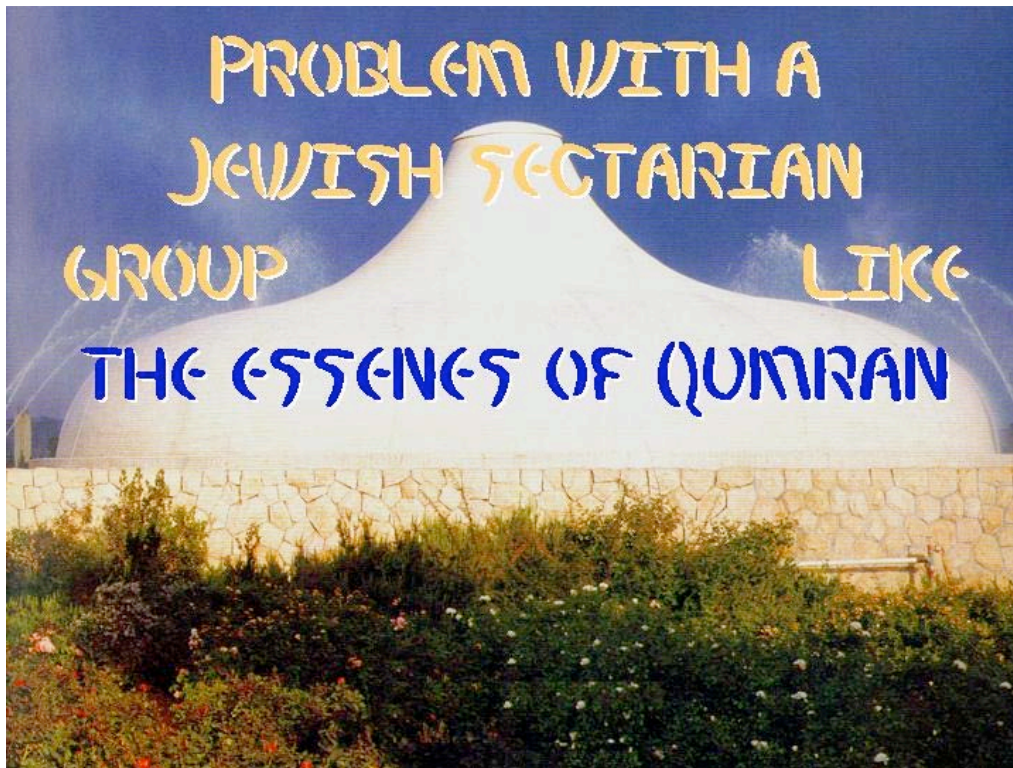


**“The Supremacy of Christ”
or
“There’s No Turning Back!”
or
“Further Up & Further In!”**



- I. The Son, the Superior and Final Word (1:1-4).
- II. The Son Superior to the Angels (1:4-2:18)
 - A. Old Testament Proof (1:4-13)
 - B. 1st Warning: “Pay Attention” (2:1-4)
 - C. The Pioneer of Salvation (2:5-18)
- III. Christ Superior to Moses and Joshua (3:1-4:13)
 - A. Jesus Superior to Moses (3:1-6)
 - B. 2nd Warning: “Don’t Copy the Wilderness Israelites” (3:7-19)
 - C. A Sabbath Rest for the People of God (4:1-13)
- IV. Christ the Superior High Priest (4:14-7:28)
 - A. Christ’s Qualifications (4:14-5:10)
 - B. 3rd Warning: “Don’t Fall Away” (5:11-6:12)
 - C. God’s Sure Promise (6:13-20)
 - D. Jesus and the Melchizedek Priesthood (7:1-28)
- V. Christ the High Priest of a New & Superior Covenant (8:1-10:18)
 - A. The New Covenant (8:1-13)
 - B. Worship in the Earthly Sanctuary (9:1-10)
 - C. Worship in the Heavenly Sanctuary (9:11-28)
 - D. The Final Sacrifice (10:1-18)
- VI. Faith the Superior Way (10:19-13:19)
 - A. Encouragement and 4th Warning: “Don’t Spurn the Son of God” (10:19-39)
 - B. Faith Defined and Illustrated (11:1-12:4)
 - C. God Disciplines His Sons (12:5-13)
 - D. 5th Warning: “Don’t Sell Out” (12:14-17)
 - E. 6th Warning: “Listen to the Heavenly Voice” (12:18-28)
 - F. Service Well-Pleasing to God (13:1-19)
- VII. Benediction and Final Greetings (13:20-25)



HEBREWS: “The Supremacy of Christ”

- I. Christ Superior to the Prophets (1:1-4)
 - A. Structure of the Introduction
 - a. Son over prophets
 - b. Appointed heir of all things
 - c. Creator of the universe
 - d. Radiance of God’s glory
 - d. Exact representation of His being
 - c. Sustainer of all things
 - b. Sat down at Right Hand after purifying sins
 - a. Son over angels
 - B. Discontinuity with Prophets
 - C. Continuity with Prophets
 - D. Introduced as Prophet, Priest and King
-
- II. Christ Superior to the Angels (1:4-2:18)
 - A. Old Testament Proof (1:4-13)
 - 1. Qumran Teaching as Direct or Indirect Background
 - a. Teaching on eschatology
 - 1. Two messiahs: kingly subordinate to priestly
 - 2. Both messiahs subordinate to Michael the archangel
 - 3. Age to come to be ruled by angelic beings
 - b. Readers of Jewish background seeking *compromise* between Judaism and Christianity (would be more than Jewish but less than Christian).
 - 2. Seven Quotations
 - a. Psalm 2:7
 - 1. Son by Incarnation (conception, Lk 1:32; Baptism, Mk 1:11; Transfiguration, Lk 9:35; Resurrection, Rom 1:4)

- 2. Son by Resurrection - Col 1:18; Rev 1:5; Acts 13:32f
- b. 2 Sam 7:14 - David's Son
- c. Deut 32:43 (LXX) Worshipped by Angels
- d. Psalm 104:4 While Angels are merely servants
- e. Psalm 45:6,7...the Son is *God*!!
 - 1. His Throne
 - 2. His Character
 - 3. His Anointing Acts 2:33; Psalm 16:11; Isaiah 61:3
- f. Psalm 102:25-27...the Son is *Eternal*!!
- g. Psalm 110:1...the Son is *King*!!
- 3. The Angels' Ministry (Heb 1:14)
- B. 1st Warning: "Pay Attention" (2:1-4)
 - 1. The Danger of Neglect
 - 2. Why the Neglect?

The Old Covenant is apparently being viewed by the addressees as an *angelic* message (& therefore one to be reckoned with), while the New Covenant is being treated as a *merely* human message (which can therefore be treated less seriously).
 - 3. The Two Messages:

a.	Through angels	Through the Lord
b.	Was spoken	Was spoken
c.	Was binding	Was made binding
d.	Penalties (great)	Penalties (greater) (See on 10:26-31 below)
 - 4. The Succession of God's Speech
 - a. The Lord
 - b. Those who heard him
 - c. We receive God's simultaneous testimony
 - 5. The Point: The gospel of salvation is not a matter of merely human speech. So, listen up!! (See also 12:12-28, the 6th Warning.)
- C. The Pioneer of Salvation (2:5-18)
 - 1. A Matter of Dominion (2:5-9)

(What's wrong with the focus on angels? It demeans humans!!)
 - 2. Psalm 8 and Man in Sin (v.8)

(The irony of an elusive destiny)

- b. A servant *in* the house, as opposed to the builder who is *over* the house.
 - 1) The deity of the Son, cf., 1 Chronicles 17:10,12
 - 2) What was the house? (Zech 6;12f; 1 Chronicles 17:10ff; 1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:21)
 - c. The Son receives greater glory (2 Cor 3:7-18)
- C. Second Warning: “Don’t Copy the Wilderness-Israelites” (3:7-19)
- 1. The Wilderness was no picnic! Quotes Psalm 95, recalling the rebellion at Meribah and Massah, Exodus 17 (cf. also, Numbers 14; 20:2-5).
 - 2. The Wilderness Experience is not an ideal example to follow, *rather* it is a strong reminder of the danger of disobedience.
 - a. The identity between disobedience and unbelief (3:16-19; 4:2,6,11).
 - b. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints (3:14,6; 4:1,9-11; 10:35-39).
- D. A Sabbath-Rest for the People of God (4:1-13)
- 1. Three Rests in Scripture
 - a. The Sabbath-Rest of Creation
 - b. The Sabbath-Rest of Palestine
 - c. The Sabbath-Rest of the Consummation
 - 2. What’s the point?
 - a. Joshua’s Palestinian Rest *Not* the Final Rest
 - b. Why?
 - 1) David mentions another in Psalm 95. Part of logic of writer is to find rationale for the New Covenant in the Old!!
 - 2) The Palestinian Rest was earthly rather than *heavenly*, cf., 10:1; 11:8-11,13-16; 12:22-24; 13:11-14).
 - 3) The Palestinian Rest did nothing for the problem of the human heart, cf., 4:14 through Chapter 10
 - c. Don’t look for the wrong rest! Your hope doesn’t lie in a return to Jerusalem any more than did the real hope of the wilderness-children lie in the conquest of Canaan! (13:11-13)

IV. Christ the Superior High Priest (4:14-7:28)

A. Christ's Qualifications (4:14-5:10)

1. Summary Statement (4:14-16)

- a. *Heavenly* High Priest ... the Son
- b. A Sympathetic *Man*
- c. Our *Confidence*

2. *General* Statement of Qualifications of a High Priest (5:1-4)

- a. "From among men" (5:1-3)
 - 1) To represent people before God.
 - 2) To offer sacrifices and gifts.
 - 3) To minister to the ignorant and wayward with sympathy.
 - 4) His ministry grounded in his own sinfulness, therefore he must offer sacrifices for himself.
- b. "Called by God" (5:4)

3. Jesus Fulfills the Qualifications (5:5-10)

- a. "Called by God" (5:5,6)
 - 1) By resurrection ... Psalm 2:7; Acts 13:32,33
 - 2) By ascension ... Psalm 110:4
- b. "From among men" (5:7-9)
 - 1) Learns the perfection of obedience ... therefore qualifies as self-sacrificing priest, the "Lamb of God."
 - 2) Prays for his resurrection *ek thanatou* ("ek," out of death), *not apo thanatou* ("apo," from death); i.e., Heb 5 is not referring to the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.
 - 3) Dies as a human being.

B. Third Warning: "Don't Fall Away" (5:11-6:12)

- 1. Priesthood set aside until Chapter 7.
- 2. Their lack of growth makes this difficult teaching even *more* difficult (5:11-14).
- 3. "Don't stay at the beginning of the race!" (6:1-3). Beyond the simple gospel. Its elements:
 - a. Repentance and Faith
 - b. Washings and Laying on of Hands. Numbers 8:7; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Hebrews 9:9ff
 - c. Resurrection and Judgment

4. “Either forward or backward. There’s no standing still!” (6:4-6). The gravity of apostasy. Problem of doctrine: In Christ eschatology is realized in large measure. They had already been enlightened, they had already tasted the heavenly gift, enjoyed the power of the future age. To go back (with the Essenes? certainly with some sort of Judaism) to a *Not Yet* orientation would be to renounce the excellence of the work of the Messiah which has *already* occurred!! To say the New Age has not already begun is to undo Calvary, to recrucify the Risen Lord!! A no-brainer, for sure.
- a. Must understand this section in light of the writer’s understanding of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints:
- 3:12ff
- 10:26ff
- 12:25ff
- b. Some examples of those who appeared to enjoy the benefits of redemption, but who nonetheless failed to possess them:
- 1) Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
 - 2) Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9-25)
 - 3) Demas (2 Timothy 4:10; cf., 2:19)
 - 4) Judas Iscariot
5. “Learn from creation” (6:7,8)
- a. Genesis background.
 - b. The Vineyard background (Isaiah 5; John 15).
 - c. The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-23).
6. “But I’m confident you’ll move ahead!” (6:9-12)
- a. Verses 4-8 do *not* describe a *saved* person ... v.9 does!
 - b. The writer *has* seen in the Hebrews the things that characterize a saved person.
 - 1) Work
 - 2) Love for God’s name
 - 3) Evidenced by past and present ministry to the saints (see 10:32-34, p. 14 below).
 - c. Saving faith is diligent to the end, not lazy.
 - 1) Negative example of the Wilderness ... Chapters 3&4.
 - 2) Positive example of Abraham ... 6:13-19; 7:4-9; 11:8-19.

C. God's Sure Promise (6:13-20)

1. Sure by virtue of promise and oath.
2. The nature of saving faith ... hope and strong encouragement.
 - a. Its future-orientation ... "patience" (v.15)
 - b. Its heavenly-orientation ... anchored in the heavenly ministry of Jesus (vv. 18-20)

D. Jesus and the Melchizedek Priesthood (7:1-28)

1. Continuing from 5:10
2. Melchizedek the Type ... "The Advance Presentation" (7:1-10)
 - a. Both Priest and King (Essene background)
 - b. Weds Righteousness and Peace
 - c. *Made like* the Son of God. How?
 - 1) Genesis records no father, mother, genealogy, death. Silence on these is typological, pointing beyond the historical figure, Melchizedek.
 - 2) No successor to his priesthood.
 - 3) A picture therefore of the priest who would live forever.
 - 4) Was Melchizedek Christ? No! (OK, probably not.)
 - a. A mild prima facie consideration: One of the qualifications for being a priest is that he be a human (2:14,17). The 2nd Person of Trinity became a human being at Christmas, not at Genesis 14.
 - b. The language of the text: Melchizedek "became like" Christ (7:3, *aphōmoiōmenos* ... and Christ arose as a priest "in the likeness" of Melchizedek (7:15, *kata tēn homoiotēta*). The comparison implies differentiation.
 - c. Typological method: Aspects of the latter reality read back into the former shadow. Melchizedek a shadow, of which the reality is Christ.
 - d. Superior to Abraham
 - 1) Collects tithe
 - 2) Blesses the holder of the promises
 - e. Superior to the Levites
 - 1) No death recorded, cf., above
 - 2) Collects tithe from the one who will collect tithes.

3. Jesus the Antitype ... “The Reality of which Melchizedek was a Picture” (7:11-28)
 - a. Problems with the Levitical priesthood and therefore with the entire old covenant administration.
 - 1) Note: the relationship between the priesthood and the law (vv. 11,12).
 - 2) Weak and ineffective (v.18); unable to make people perfect (vv.11,19).
 - a) Evidenced by the fact that Old Covenant priests themselves subject to the law of sin and death (vv.23,27,28).
 - b) Evidenced by the fact that there were a great number of priests ... none able to attain a permanent priesthood (v.23).
 - c) Evidenced by the fact that the claim to office of Old Covenant priests was based merely on their genealogy (vv.16,19).
 - 3) Note: the need for a covenant and a priesthood that would transcend these problems is realized in the Old Covenant itself. The greater Melchizedekian priesthood is not invented by the New Testament; it is prophesied in Psalm 110:4. This is similar to the prophecy of “rest” in Psalm 95, quoted in Hebrews 3 & 4. Again, we are being shown that the OT sees its own limitations and weaknesses and itself points to the realization of perfection.
 - b. Christ’s Better Priesthood.
 - 1) His claim to office based not on genealogy, but on the power of an indestructible life (vv.16,24,25).
 - 2) Able to attain a permanent priesthood, therefore there is need for only one priest (v. 28, God appoints a Son).
 - 3) Because he is subject to neither sin nor death, but rather has overcome them on our behalf, he is able to offer us a better hope ... i.e., a perfection which enables us to draw near to God (vv.19,25-28).

V. Christ the High Priest of a New and Superior Covenant (8:1-10:18)

A. The New Covenant (8:1-13)

1. Remember the relationship between priesthood and law (7:11)
2. The superior high priest brings a superior covenant (8:6)
3. Contemporary expectations of a New Covenant ... Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 36, and the Qumran community
 - Davidic messiah on the throne in Jerusalem
 - Aaronic messiah at head of purified order of Levitical priests ministering sacrifices and offerings in the Temple (cf., Jeremiah 33:14-26; Ezekiel 40-48)

- Revival of the Theocratic Rule of God; the Law of Moses to become the law of the world, mediated through angels, the messiahs, and Israel
4. What exactly is *new* about the New Covenant?
- A change in people (v.8)
 - “I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.
 - “I will be their God, and they will be my people.
 - “No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.
 - “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” (Hebrews 8:10-12; Jeremiah 31:31-34).
5. What does the newness of the New Covenant mean for the first (the Mosaic) covenant?
- Obsolescence, aging, an imminent disappearing (v.13)
 - Remember: the Temple is probably still standing
6. What does this mean for Qumran-like expectations?
- the old order of the temple with its sacrifices is obsolete
- their hope lies in the cross, not in Jerusalem ... in the heavenly Jerusalem, the city with foundations, which lies ... irony of ironies! ... outside the camp (11:10; 12:22; 13:13)
7. The importance of Hebrews 8:8-13.
- a. OT promise fulfilled in a surprising way: a prophecy made concerning ethnic Israel fulfilled in the New Covenant people of God.
- ... cf. Paul in Rom 9:24-26 and Hosea 1:9,10; 2:23
- ... Abraham’s lineage is reckoned spiritually, not physically ... Rom 4:11,16; Gal 3:7,19
- b. OT cult (worship) is displaced, made obsolete, and is passing away
8. Modern lessons:
- a. Let the NT interpret the OT. Need NT perspective when reading OT, especially when looking at the promises.
- Many OT passages, when understood in their *literal*, historical context, will be found to have been applied in the NT to the church ... *in a way* that could not be expected from the OT text itself!

- OT did not see exactly how it would be fulfilled itself (remember the perspective of the prophets, according to 1 Peter 1:11: the prophets “sought out and inquired after” <because they could see only in dim shadow form> “what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.”

- b. The idea of a future Jewish millennium runs into a great deal of difficulty when it encounters Hebrews 8:13. To look now for a reestablishment of the temple and the reinstatement of a sacrificial system as part of the end times is a matter of turning back the clock on the history of redemption.

... dispensational premill position holds rebuilding of temple with
reinstatement of sacrificial system (“memorials” to Jesus’ death)
(Walvoord, *Millennial Kingdom*, 319)

B. Worship in the Earthly Sanctuary (9:1-10). Lessons from the first sanctuary

1. Earth-bound (vv. 1,8, cf., v.23)
2. Impermanent (vv.7,8,10, cf., v.25)
3. External (vv.7,9,10)
 - a. External to the priest (cf., vv.13,25)
 - b. External in its effect (v.13)

C. Worship in the Heavenly Sanctuary (9:11-28)

1. Heavenly (vv.11,23-25)
2. Permanent (vv.14,25-28)
3. Internal
 - a. Self-offering of the priest (vv.12,26-28)
 - b. A cleansed conscience and real forgiveness its effects (vv.14,26; see also 10:1-2,10,14,18)

- D. The Final Sacrifice (10:1-18). Summary and conclusion on the New Covenant
1. Note: once again the Old Covenant points beyond itself (Psalm 40:6-8 LXX)
 2. “Day after day, again and again”...versus...”once for all” (v.11)
 3. “Standing” (Dt 10:8; 17:12; 18:7) versus “Sat down (1:3; 8:1; 12:2; Ps 110; 2:7; Acts 2:34f; 3:13,21; 1 Cor 15:27f; Eph 1:22; Phil 2:9-11; 1 Pt 3:22) and waiting” (2:8; re: Ps 8:6 “do not yet see everything subject”) (vv.11,12). Work going on versus work completed.

VI. Faith the Superior Way (10:19-13:19)

- A. Encouragement and 4th Warning: “Don’t Spurn the Son of God” (10:19-39)
1. The Resources (“Therefore...having”)
 - a. Access to the Holy of Holies
 - b. A Great High Priest
 2. The Responsibility
 - a. Faith (v.22)
 - 1) Assurance
 - 2) Sprinkled hearts Exodus 29:4,21
1 Peter 2:5
 - 3) Washed bodies Ezekiel 36:25-27
Titus 3:5
 - b. Hope (v.23)
 - 1) cf. 3:6,14; 6:11,18f; 7:19,22; 11:1,13,39f
 - 2) Based on the faithfulness of God
 - c. Love (vv.24,25), cf. Proverbs 27:17
 3. The Danger of Apostasy (vv.26-31)
 - a. Unwitting versus “high-handed” sin (vv.26,27), with Numbers 15:27-31 as background
 - b. If there was judgment under the Old Covenant (Deut 17:2-7; 13:8), the Covenant of *promise*, how much greater judgment there is under the New Covenant, the Covenant of *fulfillment* (vv.30,31). The logic of the history of redemption is consistently *a fortiori* (from the lesser to the greater). The full

horror of the judgment to come is unveiled at the same time God reveals his final and perfect protection against his wrath.

- c. Thus, the horror of apostasy.
 - 1) Spurning the Son of God (Context of the epistle)
Person: Prophetic Scriptures ... Angels, Moses, Joshua
 - 2) Profaning the blood of the covenant (Again, context).
Work: High Priest, Work of Sacrifice
 - 3) Outraging the Spirit of grace who has born witness precisely to the person and work of the Son, cf. Heb 2:4; 10;15

4. Remember Your Strong Heart (vv.32-34)

- a. The situation in Palestine at the inception of the Church.
 - 1) Paul's example: Acts 8:3; 9:1f; 22:3-5; 26:9-12
 - 2) The poverty of the Jerusalem Christians.
- b. Strong evidence of faith in these folks' lives at that time.

5. "Don't Fall Back Now! Persevere!" (vv.35-39)

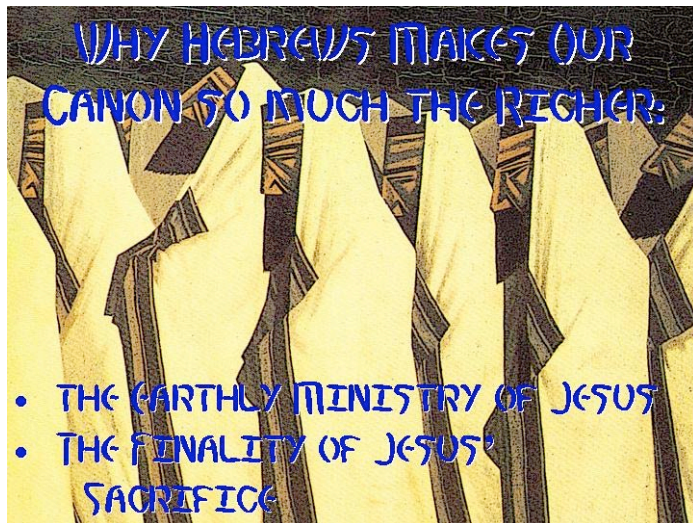
- a. There is a salvation *future* (v.36), cf. 9:28
- b. Habakkuk 2:3,4 equate *faith with perseverance*, and *unbelief with shrinking back*.
- c. One brings salvation, the other destruction.
- d. Faith, therefore, is oriented to the future as well as to the past (Paul would speak here of "hope"). Heb illustrates OT righteous ones who lived by faith, i.e., who lived in light of the promises, never receiving their fulfillment until now!

B. Faith Defined & Illustrated (11:1-12:4)

- 1. Defined in terms of certainty regarding:
 - a. The future, and
 - b. The unseen (or the heavenly)
- 2. Examples of "Righteous Ones Who Have Lived by Faith"
 - a. Note: Enoch breaks the death-cycle of Genesis 5
 - b. Note: Abraham did *not* look for an *earthly* Promised Land (vv.8-10,13-16)
 - c. Note: Moses served Christ (v.26)
 - d. All these lived in the age of promise, we in the age of fulfillment (vv.39,40)

- e. The Supreme Example of Faith: *Jesus* (12:1-4)
... Athletic imagery
- C. God Disciplines His Sons (12:5-13)
- 1. Athletic imagery continued (vv.11-13)
 - 2. A goal to God's discipline: our holiness (v.10)
 - 3. Need to read my circumstances correctly
- D. 5th Warning: "Don't Sell Out" (12:14-17)
- 1. The Negative Example of Esau
 - 2. Warning Against: Lack of peace, unholiness, bitterness, sexual immorality, ungodliness
- E. 6th Warning: "Listen to the Heavenly Voice" (12:18-28)
- 1. Mt. Sinai *versus* the *heavenly* Jerusalem
 - 2. Old Testament promises (cf. 11:8-10,13-16) fulfilled in the Church
- F. Service Well-Pleasing to God (13:1-19)
- 1. Note: Jewish background even here:
 - a. Entertaining angels ... Abraham
 - b. The sacrificial system:
 - 1) "Outside the camp"
 - 2) "The city that is to come"
 - 3) Sacrifices under the New Covenant
 - a) Praise to God
 - b) Doing good and sharing with others
- VII. Benediction and Final Greeting (13:20-25)

Why Our Canon Is the Richer Because Hebrews Is in It



Hebrews' Own Sort of Concern for the Earthly Ministry of Jesus

- ☞ His Humanity a Foretaste of the Glory of Glorified Humanity (ch. 2 ... connections with Paul's theology of the Last Adam)
- ☞ His Humanity the Basis of and Training Ground for His Priesthood

Emphasis on the “Once for All” Nature of Christ’s Sacrifice

Not Repeatable! An Insurmountable Problem for a Transubstantiation Mass, and for the Lord’s Supper Being Our Sacrifice to God

Corollary: The Believer’s Cleansed Conscience



The Irreversible Logic of the History of Redemption ...

There's No Turning Back (Individually to Judaism, Historically to Any Significance to a Restored, Purified Judaism)



Emphasis on Heavenly Reality

- ☞ Real Redemption in Heaven, Not on Earth ... impact on Reformers' worship ... revulsion at earthly grandeur
- ☞ Seeds for Christian Imagination ... Heavenly Types Has Given Encouragement to "Christian Platonists" from Clement of Alexandria to C.S. Lewis

Equation Between "Faith" and "Faithfulness"