

The Just shall live by Faith

Volume 1 - Study 5 Galatians 3 and 4; Jesus, our Promised Spiritual Mediator, is our Justification by Faith, so that Heirs can Put on Christ.

C. Ronald Johnson, Christian Wilderness Press: Hebrews 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 12; The Seed of Abraham, our Merciful and Faithful High Priest is the Mediator of a New and Better Covenant. Much more, then, shall the Blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works to serve the Living God.

Studies - Jesus is the Blood of the Passion: the Bridge, the only Mediator, the Intercessor for Believers in Christ.

We study Galatians 3 and 4; Hebrews 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 12.

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These are brief studies, not
“teachings” or “doctrines”.

Volume 1, Study 5

Christ came to Replace the Mediating Law

Jesus is our promised spiritual Mediator as we are justified by faith (and heirs) so as to ‘put on Christ’. Volume 1, Study 3 towards the end of it Paul informed the Galatian Christians that the Mosaic Law - given to the nation of Israel - had been *a mediator between the people and God*. I now quote from Study 3, and in the following Paul will give us the reason for God giving the Mosaic Law to Israel:

Galatians 3:19) Wherefore then serveth the law [to Israel]? It was added [unto the new nation of Israel] because of transgressions [i.e. all such ‘transgressions’ are against God], till the seed [i.e. the Seed] should come to whom the promise was made...

Who are those ‘**...to whom the promise was made**’? In the Old Testament account of the promise, it was to Abraham and his seed. This has to do with family lineages down through the ages, which seems to leave out most peoples and people groups. However, within the promise made by Almighty God was hidden just how it would become worked out ‘to all the nations’ (see Genesis 22:16-18).

Indeed, God’s Promise regarding the Seed and how it would be worked out ‘to all the nations’ was far greater than was understood by men. Not only was it given of God as a promise to Abraham, but it was mysteriously inferred down through the ages by the prophets of Israel. Much as the Church in its history, Israelites selfishly and egotistically assumed that the Promise was primarily and perhaps only for them and so they could not understand even its little understandable bits and pieces to them from the prophets.

Paul is the man whom God has used to explain it in the light of the Seed, Jesus Christ. Yet, in this passage Paul is explaining it even while imploring Christians to continue with the Promises of the Seed and not turn to the lesser Mosaic Covenant given by God to Israel... which for them was only meant to be a lesser substitution of a Mediator between God and His people until the Seed would come to be the Ultimate Mediator.

...and it [i.e. the law] was ordained by [means of] angels [i.e. messengers, for the law to be used] in the hand of a mediator.

The last part of the verse means that the law, as given through Moses, was to be a tool in the hand of a mediator, which mediator according to the law would be a priest. That is, people having a problem between them were to go to the priests who would use the law as the standard for mediation. Though the priest would work in the mediation, actually it was the Mosaic Law that was the true mediator. Indeed, the Righteous Law would become the Mediator both between person and person and between person and God.

3:20) Now [i.e. but] a mediator is not of one, but God is one.

A mediator called in to settle a disagreement is to mediate between at least two people. And ‘**a mediator is not of one**’ (i.e. the mediator does not belong to, and is not connected to, one of the disputing persons). Moreover, the word ‘**one**’ more fully means ‘a primary one’ (which in this context is explained by ‘**but God is one**’) which meaning points to *the higher person in the dispute*.

Further, the verse makes it clear that the ‘**mediator is not of**’ (i.e. it does not belong to nor is it connected to) God in that God is one of the disputers. This would be like you having a dispute with a (high) official of a bank and your lawyer has arranged with the court to bring in an independent mediator to work out a settlement.

Also, ‘**...but God is one**’ infers, “No human could possibly *mediate* between God and His people.” Paul explains that the Mosaic Law was given for such *mediation*. God set up the Righteous Law to represent neither Him nor the people. Therefore, the Righteous Law was *non-aligned*. This means that neither the people nor God nor the priest (who would be acting in the mediating process) could or would modify (for any reason or occasion) the law’s requirements, judgments, and commandments. The Law stood between God and the people as a legal Covenant. Each party to the Covenant was responsible for his part of the legal Covenant. Thus, there was no man (not even Moses) effecting any decisions...only the Law.

However: If the people (or a person) broke the legality of the Covenant which stood as the Mediator, then in the Mosaic Covenant there was a special addendum, which was *the sacrificial part of the Law*. By means of this addendum, if the people (or a person) would humbly turn unto the sacrifices for forgiveness, then they (he) would automatically be forgiven. Our Compassionate God incorporated this addendum knowing that this Mediating Covenant would be broken continually (due to the fall of Adam) by fallen people of the nation of Israel. The addendum, the sacrificial part of the law, is very lengthy...taking up the entire Book of Leviticus and major portions of Numbers and Deuteronomy.

The Mediating Covenant, then, removed man from dealing directly with God in regards to both mediation and the forgiveness that was contained in the addendum. And this is why Paul states that the Mosaic Law ‘is not of faith’; rather it is of ‘the (mediating) letter of the Law’. Yet, God smiled in pleasure upon the Israelites that faithfully followed and earnestly tried to obey the law and took advantage of *the sacrificial part of the law*.

The Mosaic Law (the Mediating Covenant) was written down and continually taught year by year so that the commandments and the penalty were before all the people. Yet, there was the means of forgiveness *so that a person might not experience the penalty*.

Now consider this: God-given faith between a person and God had always been in play from the earliest of days, God-given faith being the Prime Factor between man and God. But with the Israelites becoming a nation, there came a need for a national law, the Mosaic Law. Just as God expects every Christian today to be obedient to ‘the law of Christ’ (and in lesser degree be obedient to the law of the land), so God expected the Israelites to be faithful to Him as their God (and faithful to the Mosaic Law). The Israelites failed continually regarding the Mosaic Covenant and so do Christians fail continually regarding ‘the law of Christ’. This is why we focus on Christ our Forgiveness far more than upon Christ our Mediator, even as Christ Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father.

To escape the penalty for their sins, the Israelites had *the sacrificial part of the law* for forgiveness. Thus, they need not go personally and directly to God; instead they needed to do the requirements of the Law faithfully. *All too soon* the nation as a whole became somewhat impersonal in their relationship to God; that is, the nation became “religious”.

The people became more personally connected to the workings of the Law and less personally connected (almost a disconnect) to the workings of God. It is like Christians today that work hard at their church doctrines and work even harder in the programs of their church. It is like we evangelicals who emphasize ‘saving souls’ even while we fail to put first our own personal walk with the Master. It is easier for fallen men and women to look more to our work for God than to look up to the One for whom we work.

To remain pleasing to God they needed to believe in Him (i.e. ‘faith’) and faithfully walk by the letter and spirit of the Law; leaving out either displeased God. Faith has always been the essential element in a relationship with God, even if it was to be mostly faithful as a people to the Mediating Law. Here is the distinction between faithfully being religious in church doctrine and

faithfully walking in a personal relationship with God. In the epistles, the apostles were always trying to get this message across to Christians.

Christ's coming, death, and resurrection made effectual the early *Covenant with Abraham pertaining to the Seed*. It contained a personal *Covenant walk with God* as portrayed in Abraham's personal walk with God. And Jesus made such a personal *Covenant walk with God* even more accessible to the greater number of Israelites (and to the greater number of Christians).

But understand, even during the time of the Law, that the *Covenant walk* was always accessible by means of God-given faith. The Abrahamic Covenant has always superseded the Mosaic Covenant. "Why then do you turn back from the greater Abrahamic Covenant with its Promise of the Seed and personal *Covenant walk* in faith, which you have received in Christ? Why do you prefer to walk by the lesser letter of the Mosaic Law?" This was Paul's agonizing and repeated question to Christians. "Why *religiously* walk when you can walk in faith in a *personal relationship* made possible by Jesus.

3:21) Is the law then against the [earlier] promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life [for 'life' see the next verse], verily righteousness should have been [given] by the law.

We cannot get away from the fact that 'righteousness' and 'being accounted righteous' (so as to become 'just' before God) is Paul's prime quest for all of God's people. The preceding studies dealt with it. Righteousness (the kind acceptable to God) is possible only in the kind of 'life' that is of God. This kind of 'life' comes by means of the kind of 'faith' that God gives. The Biblical account of Abraham portrays this kind of 'faith' long before Moses arrived on the scene; and therefore this 'life' by 'faith' always existed for those who would accept it.

Some (most likely many) 'walked by faith'. But when God led Israelites out of Egypt they became a nation (no longer a small group of individuals) separated uniquely unto Him. Therefore, they needed (because of 'transgression' verse 19) a national Law. This Law became the Mediator between the people and God...until the time chosen of the promised Seed. (Sorry if this is repetitious, but it is Paul who repeats these things.)

3:22,23) But the scripture hath concluded [that] all [are] under sin, [so] that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given [even] to [all] them that believe [i.e. faith]. But before [life' in] faith came [to overshadow the law], we [Israelites] were kept under the law, shut up unto [and waiting for] the [life' in] faith which should afterwards be revealed.

Paul explains that the promise is still by faith; the promise is in Jesus Christ; and the promise is to all that receive it in faith. However, Paul makes clear that the Mediating Law is a Keeping Tool used of God to keep His people Israel until 'life' in 'faith' arrived for the masses of the Israelite people. And this will happen when Jesus Christ comes again to Complete the Promise to Abraham. His first Coming made the Promise *effectual*. His second Coming *completes* the Promise in all of its aspects, for at that time God will put His New Covenant Law in their hearts (which to Christians is 'the law of Christ').

The giving of 'life' is mentioned in verse 21, but not given by the Law. 'Life' is altogether connected with 'faith' which is why I have italicized them together. So let us consider, '...that the promise (in the Abrahamic Covenant) by faith, of Jesus Christ (the Seed), might be given to them that believe.' It means that 'the promise' is 'by faith' and entirely *about faith*; and it has been fulfilled and made effectual and available 'of Jesus Christ'. Moreover, the 'promise...might be given to [all] them that believe'.

3:24,25) Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us [Israelites] unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith [when finally the season of faith arrived]. But [then] after that [the promise regarding] faith is come, we [Israelites] are no longer under a schoolmaster [if we accept justification by faith alone]...

Paul points out that the Moderating and Righteous Law was also given to Israel as a 'schoolmaster' to prepare them and 'bring them to Christ' that they might be 'justified

by faith' which is a higher justification than by Law, and that they '**no longer need be under the schoolmaster**'.

3:26) For ye [Galatians] are all the children of God [also] by [means of] faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ [thereby acknowledging him as Lord and Master] have put on Christ.

The wonderful mystery in the Old Testament comes to the light of day as Paul, led of the Spirit, makes it clear to Israelite and Gentile Christians alike...all brothers in Jesus.

3:28-29) [Therefore] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all [i.e. Paul is speaking to Gentile Christians] one in Christ Jesus. And if ye [Gentiles] be Christ's, then are ye [also] Abraham's seed [i.e. of the earlier Covenant based upon 'life' by 'faith'], and heirs according to the promise.

Here the mystery of the '**heirs according to promise**' is opened up and that it was not only of the physical lineages but was for 'all the families of the nations'. God's promise having to do with '**life**' by '**faith**' was always for all mankind; for is not Jesus the savior of the world? Through the ages this was a mystery to Israelites as they thought that their relationship (thus any relationship) to God was through the Mosaic Law. Yet, by means of the prophets, God often told His people Israel that He had believers in all the nations.

4:1-4) Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we [Israelites under the law], when we were [as] children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4:4-5) But when the fulness of the time [for Israelites to walk by faith and no longer by the law] was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we [Israelites] might receive the adoption of sons.

...And because ye [also] are sons [through Christ], God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son [also] into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.



Here ends this part of our study, which is about Israel's need for the Mosaic Law as a Mediator between God and His people. I pray that Paul's explanation to the Galatians helps the reader. It seems that few Christians understand what Jesus said elsewhere, '**Not one jot or tittle of the law shall diminish until that all has been accomplish**'. All has not yet '**been accomplished**', as we await Jesus' coming again to complete what the Father began in His Son. Far too many Christians somehow think that the law "is bad and that God finally corrected Himself and sent Jesus to make things right". Yet, God is always the Same, and if He was wrong then...?

The Father and the Son are never wrong and are ever Mercy...but also Justice. Dear reader, if you stay in the Word then you will be amazed at how often, and how much, you will come to 'see'. And such 'seeing' will be between you and God (without my little interference with my little fallible concepts). May our Lord have Mercy on us all.

On the other hand, if you are "religiously" dependent upon *Christ our Mediator*...yet you are not partaking of the personal *Covenant Walk* promised in the Abrahamic Covenant and available in Jesus...then you are missing so very much. Paul tells us that it is similar to the Jews walking religiously in 'the letter of the law' (which letter is not of faith).



This part of our study regarding the Book of Galatians began in the previous study, and I quote: "However, in the Book of Galatians, Paul is dealing directly with the Jew's modern interpretation of the Mosaic law, to which he refers as 'their law' or in 1:13 as 'the Jews religion'. He is exposing how 'the Jews' interpretation differs from God's original intent of the law and how therefore it clearly differs from the gospel of Christ Jesus."

Paul went on to tell how the Mosaic Law was designed to work as a mediator between

God and His people. Then he explained how the ‘law of the Jew’s religion’ worked against the true Law, thus negating any true mediating between God and His people Israel. In this, Paul allowed the reader of scripture to see how God was very Good to His nation Israel...and how the nation rebelled against Him within their own law-modifications.

Paul then informs us about how strict men can be in their religions and about how men can be offensive against other men who are not inclined toward their religions and/or religious ideas. Paul saw it...and he experienced it...among the Christians of the early church...even to the point of church members not wanting Paul and the other apostles to visit them. We see it today among so many Christians as they “defend the faith” (i.e. as they envision it) and thereby they become caught up in varying degrees of offensiveness to other Christians and non-believers alike. Let us allow the scriptures and the Spirit which inspired the scriptures to inspire us toward the Son and the Father. If we do this then we will become so humbled in the scriptures that our offensiveness will be washed away...perhaps leaving love (agape) instead.

(In the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, forgiveness by the Law for Israelites [which functioned by means of the Aaron priesthood and the sacrifices] became unavailable.)

[[The end of quoting from Study 3 and continuing with Study 5]]

Christ our Mediator as in the Book of Hebrews

If the reader has read all of Volume 1 Studies 1- 4 then he might have come to the conclusion that I set out with an agenda of passages. This has not been the case. And just a few days ago I opened my Bible which fell to the Book of Hebrews and there the topic of *the Mosaic Law having been a mediator between the Israelites and God* was again before me in scripture. The Writer of Hebrews writes to Israelite Christians with much the same concern as was Paul’s concern in the letters to the Gentile churches in Rome and Galatia.

Israelite Christians were torn between loyalties. They had the ‘law of their fathers’ in the text written by Moses. But they also had a version of it being taught by ‘the Jews’ (see the preceding studies). On top of that they had new teachings by the Christian Apostles, who were themselves Jews and their teachings were from the Greek translation of the original text so as to reach more readers with their letters. Furthermore, the Apostle Paul was unraveling many mysteries of the original Law...using also the Psalms and the prophets.

The Writer of Hebrews, therefore, goes into great detail regarding the original Mosaic Law (as compared to its modification by ‘the Jews’). He explains to Israelites just how Christ Jesus, their Messiah, was not only the Seed promised in the Abrahamic Covenant, but also he was the Fulfillment of the Mosaic Law as well. In very fact, Christ Jesus is the new Mediator.

By comparing the teaching in this letter to the teachings of ‘the Jews’, the Israelite Christians could much better understand how better off they would be in giving up the teaching of ‘the Jews’...but also in giving up walking by the original Mosaic Law...to take on the new walk in the ‘law of Christ’...which is ‘life’ by ‘faith’ and not by letter.

From the time of Moses, the nation of Israel had been the primary people whom God used to reveal to the nations His desires and requirements of mankind. The result was that down through the ages the great mass of Israelites became very “religious” in their working of the Law. In turning from the old Mediation of the Law to the new Mediator which is Jesus Christ, then, the Israelite Christians were considered by all other Israelites (and especially by ‘the Jews’) to be “terrible sinners against the faith”. (The same pattern of *inclusion and exclusion of beliefs* has existed among Christians in the Church’s history and it still does.)

Hebrews 2:1-4) Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels [i.e. ‘messengers’, prophets] was steadfast [i.e. fixed by God], and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward [to us Israelites]; How shall we escape [when

Jesus comes again], **if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken [of] by the Lord [Jesus], and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him [i.e. the apostles]; God also bearing [through] them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his [i.e. God's] own will?**

2:5,6) For unto the angels hath he *not* put in subjection the world to come [i.e. Jesus' kingdom when he comes again], whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or *the son of man*, that thou visitest him?

We see here that the Writer has switched from mankind to 'the son of man', Jesus.

Moreover, he explains that God has *not* put *the world to come* into subjection of angels, but instead He has reserved it for *the son of man*.

2:7,8) Thou madest him [i.e. Christ Jesus] a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. *But now we see not yet all things put under him.*

As emphasized in the above section, Christ Jesus' first Coming made *effectual* the Promise of the Seed, and his second Coming shall *complete* the Promise within all of God's Intent. As far as this world is concerned, all that has been accomplished in God's making (i.e. in regards to His commitment of the Promise), it has yet to thoroughly jell; nevertheless in God's Time all men will see it.

2:9) But we [do] see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels *for the suffering of death*, crowned with glory and honour; that *he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*

We do not see the Completion of the Promise, but we do see the Promised One in whom all things shall be completed. And how do we see him? Bloodied on a cross; glorified in resurrection; and within revelation of scripture as the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Here the Writer emphasizes the *sacrificial* aspect of Jesus, which blood is greater than the blood of bulls and goats. Remember that the Writer is explaining these things to Israelite Christians.

2:10) For it became him [meaning God Himself did it], for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain [i.e. Jesus] of their salvation perfect [i.e. complete] through [the Son's own] *sufferings.*

2:11-13) For both he [i.e. God] that sanctifieth [i.e. makes holy] and they who are sanctified [by Jesus' sacrifice] are all of one [i.e. the Primary One - the Father - who is doing all these things]; for which cause he [i.e. Jesus] is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name [i.e. God the Father] unto my brethren, in the midst of the church [i.e. the assembly, Psalms 22:22] will I sing praise unto thee [God the Father]. And again, I will put my trust in him [i.e. God the Father, see 2Samuel 22:3]. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me [see Isaiah 8:17,18].

These words, which the Writer of Hebrews quotes from his Bible, are by means of King David and the prophets; yet, it was Christ who spoke them prophetically in the Spirit well before the season when He should come as the man Jesus. In other words, Christ spoke prophetically through others and then He arrived as the '**son of man**' in fulfilling the first part of the prophecies in His first coming.

2:14-16) Forasmuch then as the children [of the promise] are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him [self] the [promised and mystical] seed of Abraham.

All is as Promised in the Abrahamic Covenant and Thoroughly, but Mysteriously, Foretold by the prophets in the Old Testament...and then later thoroughly explained by the apostles (in their letters, of which many would become the New Testament).

2:17-18) Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation [unto God] for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted [or tested], he is able to succour them that are tempted [or tested].

3:1-5) Wherefore, holy brethren [see 2:11], partakers of the heavenly calling [see 2:11], consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him [i.e. God the Father] that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house [i.e. God's people Israel]. For this man [Jesus] was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house [that he built]. Christ the Son has Mystically built God's house (i.e. he has built all of God's people.)

For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his [i.e. God's] house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after [regarding Christ Jesus, the obedient Suffering Servant];

3:6) But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, *if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end* [i.e. unto Christ's kingdom].

3:16-17) For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all [i.e. not the greater number of Israelites] that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom [then] was he grieved [over the whole] forty years? was it not with them that [also] had sinned [at the spy incident], whose carcasses fell [during those forty years] in the wilderness?

The ten spies that gave an evil report (Numbers 14:36,37) then died at God's hand. A minority of Israelite warriors 'provoked' God by fighting the enemy even though Moses expressly warned them not to (Numbers 14:39-45) and all of these died in a battle that was heavily against them. This is the meaning of the first sentence.

'**But with whom [then] was he grieved [over the whole] forty years? was it not with them that [also] had sinned...**' Upon the return of the spies, all of the warriors became fearful and refused God's command to enter Canaan. (See the entire incident in Numbers 13 and 14.) But after, when Moses told the smaller group of warriors not to go up against the enemy, most were obedient and stayed with Moses and Aaron and the people while the smaller group stubbornly fought to their deaths.

The small group 'provoked' God. Even so, the greater part of the warriors 'grieved' God which was the reason that the new nation of Israel spent forty years in wilderness places before they could enter the Land. Over the next thirty-eight years the 'carcasses' of these men, when finally each would die, would be buried 'in the wilderness'. They died of old age and not by disease, sickness, or battle. And in those years their sons were maturing in God and in faith and they would enter the Land.

3:18) And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

This verse refers to the warriors who had 'grieved' God in the previous verse; but now the Writer of Hebrews emphasizes two important things. 1) They 'believed not' and therefore 2) 'God sware that they should not enter into his [i.e. God's] rest'. That is, 1) they refused to allow the faith that was in them to do its work while they heard God's word preached to them (see also 4:2) and therefore 2) due to their *un-faith* God would not give them victory over giants, being unworthy to enter into God's Victorious Rest.

3:19-4:2) So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left [to] us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

The Writer began with very similar words: 'Hebrews 2:1-4) Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.' Therefore, we should allow the faith that is in us to mix itself in (i.e. weave

its self into) with these words ‘lest at any time we should let them slip’.

4:5,6,8,9) And in this place [i.e. the passage of the spy incident] **again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: For if Jesus had given them** [i.e. the disciples and the many others that believed on him] **rest** [at the time that they believed on him], **then would he not afterward** [i.e. at the Lord’s Supper] **have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.**

The Writer is referring to Jesus speaking at the Lord’s Supper in John 14:1-4;16-18;25-27; etc. This refers to peace and rest in the midst of working the Father’s Will, which Jesus not only has provided for those who keep his commandments, but in some of his last words he reminded the apostles of this. And here the Writer tells Christians that such are available for them if they will allow God to fit them into Jesus’ peace and rest.

4:10-12) For he that is entered into his rest [i.e. provided by Jesus], **he also hath ceased from his own works** [for God], **as God did from his [work]. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest** [provided by Jesus], **lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**

‘The word of God’ not only is such a powerful divider of soul and spirit, it ‘**is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart**’. No wonder God’s people are so fearful and hesitant to become immersed into ‘the word of God’ in a manner that is personal and intense. The overwhelming majority of God’s people find every imaginable excuse to stay clear of the ‘word of God’...even setting up times of “group bible studies”, which usually amount to reading workbooks and answering questions while fellowshiping; or having early morning “communion with God”, which usually amounts to reading daily passages in devotional books before breakfast.

This is like an Israelite offering in sacrifice a scrawny pitiful lamb instead of the perfect lamb called for in the sacrifice. If an Israelite brought such a pitiful thing for sacrifice he would have been kicked out of the nation, if not stoned to death.

4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do [i.e. Almighty God, the Father]. **Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession** [instead of simply mouthing it].



8:1-2) Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

8:6-7) But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry [than the high priests of the Law], **by how much also he is** *the mediator of a better covenant*, **which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless** [i.e. complete], **then should no place have been sought for the second** [covenant].

8:8-9) For finding fault with them [i.e. His people working the Mosaic Covenant], **he saith** [in Jeremiah 31:31-34], **Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my** [mediating] **covenant, and I regarded them not** [as they worked ‘the covenant that I made with their fathers’], **saith the Lord.**

8:10-12 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will

be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

8:13) In that he saith, A new covenant [to Israel], he hath made the first [i.e. the Mosaic Covenant] old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away [though not yet gone, as Jesus said].

9:13-14) For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth [i.e. compare with 2:11 above] to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works [i.e. your “religious” works] to serve the living God [continually in spirit and in truth]?

9:15) And for this cause he is *the mediator of the new testament*, that by means of death, for the redemption *of the transgressions that were under the first [and now old] testament*, they which are called [i.e. Israelites first and then Gentiles] might receive the promise [of the Seed] of eternal inheritance.

9:24) For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true [tabernacle in heaven]; but into heaven itself, now to appear [as the Mediator] in the presence of God for us:

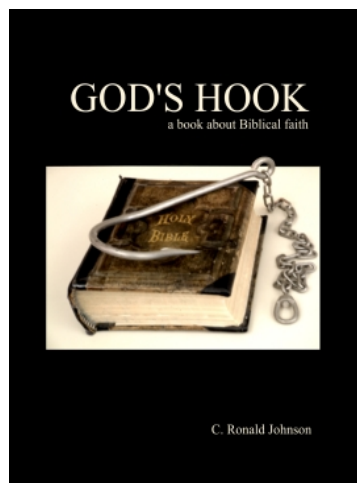
9:28) So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that [eagerly] look for him shall he appear the second time without [i.e. not in regards to] sin [, rather] unto [their] salvation.

12:24) And to Jesus *the mediator of the new covenant*, and to [his Fulfillment in] the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh [even] better things than that [which was sacrificed] of Abel.

Abel, the second born of Adam, was the first to offer a sacrifice to God acceptable to Him and He honored Abel, ‘accounting him as righteous’. Then Abel himself became an innocent sacrifice: an early symbol, pointing forward to the ages-long battle between *that which is righteous* and that which *opposes, oppresses, and kills everything that is righteousness*...even as the battle rages today. (Genesis 4:8-12 and Hebrews 11:4.)

Unrighteous men and women today continue transgressions against righteous men and women, but even the righteous have their transgressions against Almighty God. Therefore: Father ‘forgive us our transgressions as we forgive those who transgress against us’ and do so as we make request by means of Jesus Christ our Mediator.

These are short Bible studies by C. Ronald Johnson at Christian Wilderness Press



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