

Sunday August 28th 2011
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Fourteen

1). Heb 4:12 *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. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. 14 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. 15 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. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

a). Before we move on from Chapter 4 of Hebrews I would like to take a small detour to look at the picture presented to us through the imagery of the High Priest and the Tabernacle that we see introduced here.

b). Now we will remember that the Tabernacle built in the wilderness was patterned after the Tabernacle in the Third Heaven and was a shadow of that which God showed to Moses while he was on Mt. Sinai - Ex 25:8 *"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. 9 "According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.*

c). Heb 8:4 *For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."*

d). And of course the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness looks forward to that Day which will follow the Millennial Kingdom, when there will be a new heaven and a new earth; when God's Tabernacle will be on the new earth and He will, for the endless ages of eternity, dwell amongst His people ruling the universe from that very location - Re 21:1 ¶ *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with*

them and be their God. 4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

2). Now, this is somewhat the end of the story as far as the scriptures go, but is incredibly exciting nonetheless – however, as we know, before we can get to this point of a new heaven and a new earth we have to pass through the time of the Millennial Kingdom, as all things must be fulfilled – 1Co 15:24 *Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.*

a). And the coming of the Millennial Kingdom, the coming of the 7th Day, must bring with it the revelation of the companions of Christ, those who will be joint heirs with Christ, who will be a part of the Bride, who will be adopted as firstborn sons - Ro 8:19 *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.....23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

b). And this must be so as that which is presented in the type in foundation must be brought to fulfillment in the antitype - Ge 1:28 *Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

c). Re 19:6 *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! 7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

d). So, let's hold on to the thought of Christ's companions ruling with Him during the Millennial Kingdom, and let's focus for a moment on that which the scripture teaches about Christ during this time - Heb 6:19 *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. 7:1 ¶ For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness,"*

and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," 3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

e). Christ then, during the Millennial Kingdom, will be the great King/Priest after the order of Melchizedek – and what of His companions during this time? *Re 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

f). Not surprisingly then those who are Christ's companions, those who make up the Bride, will also be kings and priests as they will both reign and minister with Him. And again, not surprisingly, the very mention of 'priests' brings into view the picture of ministry from the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

3). Before we go on, just a word about Christ and the Melchizedek Priesthood so that we should not be confused. Christ is at this time, until the close of this age, our great High Priest in the likeness of the priestly ministry of Aaron. Then during the Millennial Kingdom He is the great King Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

a). The priesthood that is begun with Aaron is taken from the tribe of Levi and was established under the Old Covenant and operated within the Tabernacle and later the Temple and dealt exclusively with the Children of Israel – *Ex 29:9 "And you shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and put the hats on them. The priesthood shall be theirs for a perpetual statute. So you shall consecrate Aaron and his sons.*

b). Jesus is of the tribe of Judah and therefore could not minister to the Children of Israel after the order of Aaron especially as there remained a high priest after His death until the destruction of the Temple in AD70.

c). We will also remember that with regards to the Kingdom of the Heavens Israel had been set aside and the offer of the Kingdom was to be made to a new nation - *Mt 21:43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

d). Christ then can minister as High Priest to this new 'nation' as they are neither Jew nor Greek, but a new creation – and He ministers not on the earth but in the Tabernacle erected by God and not man.

e). As we come to the close of this age and move into the age to come so Israel once again comes into the picture and Christ is then able to minister to them as Priest as there is the establishment of a new covenant – as the covenant changes, so the Priesthood changes – and it changes to a Priesthood that predates the nation of Israel, that which existed through Melchizedek in the days when the promises were made to Abraham.

f). Jer 31:31 *"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-*

32 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

g). Heb 7:11 ¶ *Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. 13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. 15 And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest 16 who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. 17 For He testifies: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."*

h). Simply put then, Christ is our great High Priest at the present because He is ministering to a people other than Israel, who are not under the Old Covenant; and He does this from the heavenly and not the earthly Tabernacle.

i). In the age to come He is the great King/Priest after the order of Melchizedek which is established through a new covenant with Israel and His ministry will be both in the heavens and in the earth.

4). So then, let's now return to Christ's companions and their designation as kings and priests - *To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

a). As we look at this let's please note the order here – He has 'washed us from our sins in His own blood' and 'has made us kings and priests'. First comes the washing, then comes the role of priest.

b). And we should note that the washing from our sins refers to the sins of the saved with respect to the salvation of the soul and not the free gift.

c). This is the very thing that the Lord taught His disciples on the night of the Last Supper through the washing of their feet - Joh 13:3 *Jesus, knowing that*

the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, 4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" 7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." 8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." 9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."

d). The events that take place here are drawing from the commandments given to the Levitical Priesthood, thereby using their example as an illustration of what must take place if we are to find ourselves in the role of priest in the age to come - Ex 30:17 ¶ *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 18 "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it, 19 "for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it. 20 "When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, lest they die. 21 "So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them-to him and his descendants throughout their generations."*

e). No doubt we will see the importance of washing here as failure to do so results in death – this is exactly what Jesus meant when he said, ‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.’

f). Also, keep in mind especially that washing must take place at the Bronze Laver before entering into the Holy Place.

g). And this is the very same thing that the Apostle John references in – 1Jo 1:6 *If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 ¶ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

5). And so, in order to try to put this together, let's go once again to our drawing of the Tabernacle.

a). To walk in the light as He is in the light would place us inside the Holy Place where the light is given from the golden candlesticks.

b). In order to have access to the Holy Place we must pass by the Bronze Laver washing our hands and feet – It is in this process that we see the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleansing us from all sin.

c). This is the same truth that we see in - Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

d). Let's now trace our progress through the Tabernacle so that we can see how this is another picture of our progress towards maturity and the salvation of our soul, beginning by remembering what we have studied in - Eph 4:11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ—*

e). If we lay the cross over our drawing of the Tabernacle we can see that each of the elements represent a place from which Jesus bled –

The Brazen Altar – His feet - Re 1:15 *His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace,*

The Bronze Laver – His side - Joh 19:34 *But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

The Golden Candlestick – His right hand - Joh 8:12 ¶ *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

The Table of Showbread – His left hand - Joh 6:35 *And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.*

The Altar of Incense – His heart - Isa 53:12 *Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death,*

The Mercy Seat – His head - Mr 15:17 *And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head,*
Heb 2:9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.*

f). And we will remember that Jesus said - Lu 9:23 *Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.*

g). 1Co 1:18 *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

h). If we desire 'to come after' Him and be where He is, then there is no other way than the way of the cross, and of course the cross always speaks of death and sacrifice. If we follow the direction of the cross to the presence behind the veil then we can see how we *may grow up in all things into Him who is the head-- Christ—*

6). Romans Chapter 12 begins - Ro 12:1 ¶ *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

a). We are to be a living sacrifice, and where does sacrifice take place? At the Brazen Altar. And who performs the sacrifice? The High Priest. And how is the sacrifice performed? By bending back the head and cutting the throat of the sacrifice so that the blood drains out - Le 17:11 *'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'*

b). And what did we learn last week? - Heb 4:12 *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. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*

c). The sacrifice made by the high priest in the Tabernacle in the wilderness becomes then a metaphor for the work of our High Priest through the sharp two-edged sword of the Word, that can expose and drain out of us the sins of our flesh. As a result we can choose to allow His work in us now so that we may die now so as to have life for the age to come.

d). We must then be continually in the process of dying to self through the work of the Word of God [Brazen Altar], and continually allowing ourselves to be washed by the water of the Word [Bronze Laver] so that in that Day we may literally be in the light as He is in the light, and that in that Day we will have fellowship with Him as one of His companions - Ps 24:3 ¶ *Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive blessing from the LORD, And righteousness from the God of his salvation.*

7). However, this is what the Lord said of Israel - Ex 32:9 *And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people!*

a). And the trouble with a stiff neck is that you can't bend back the head to expose the throat.

b). The solution though is obvious - De 10:16 *"Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.*

c). Col 2:11 *In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,*

d). And then we find this exhortation in - 2Ch 30:8 *"Now do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the LORD; and enter His sanctuary, which He has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of His wrath may turn away from you.*

e). So then in order to enter His sanctuary we must yield ourselves to the Lord, symbolized in the washing of the hands and feet at the Bronze Laver.

f). Let's now go back to the thought we were hanging on to from earlier with regards to the Levitical Priesthood. If the priest entered the sanctuary, the Holy Place without first washing his hands and feet at the Bronze Laver, what would happen to him? He would surely die.

g). Now hang on to this just a bit longer and let's think about the resurrection/rapture of the church - Re 1:10 *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." 12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, *clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; 15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; 16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.**

h). When John turns around to see the voice that spoke to him, where is the location? – Inside the Holy Place in the heavenly Tabernacle.

i). Now supposing some of the eternally saved standing there have not washed at the Laver during the course of their Christian life, what must await them? They must surely die – they will experience death for the age to come – *Php 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the [out] resurrection from [amongst] the dead.*

j). *Mr 8:35 "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.*

k). We are going to die one way or the other – we can choose to die now so that we can have life then, or we can choose to live now and experience death then – the choice is ours.

l). But for those who have chosen to expose the throat and allow the work of the sharp two-edged sword, they will have nothing to fear in that Day and they will stand in the presence of God the Father in the Holy of Holies as a companion, a joint heir, as the Bride of God the Son.

m). *Heb 6:19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*