

Sunday August 19th 2012
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Fifty Six

1). Heb 11:28 *By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. 29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.*

a). Within the context of the Book of Hebrews v30 gives us additional commentary on v29, something we shall look at in detail later – and then within an historical context v30 takes us from the Red Sea passage under Moses to the second generation of Israel, under the leadership of Joshua, entering the land that had been promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

b). Historically then we have some 40 years between the events of v29 and v30.

c). And we have seen that the events of these 40 years are of enormous importance to us because that pictured in the Passover and the passage through the Red Sea describes the beginning of the Christian's experience; they are of enormous importance because Israel was to exercise faith as they were led by God to the earthly portion of the inheritance promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and we are to exercise faith as we are led by God to the heavenly portion of that same inheritance, the Kingdom of the Heavens; because Israel exercised faith to the saving of the soul just as we do and yet they drew back from that faith to perdition; because God has given us the detail of their experience in the scriptures to teach us great spiritual truth with respect to our own journey - 1Co 10:1 ¶ *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 ¶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of*

them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

d). We had seen that God had provided all that Israel needed in the way of spiritual food and spiritual drink in order to sustain them on their journey and yet we saw in v6 that, despite God's provision, they 'lusted after evil things' - Nu 11:4 ¶ *Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: "Who will give us meat to eat? 5 "We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 "but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!"*

e). That which they lusted after, that which God calls evil, was something other than the manna that God had provided, specifically meat in this instance, but they also remembered all the things they used to eat before God had provided the manna for them.

f). What we see then is that the manna pictures for us the word of God, and this event constitutes an attack on that word – an attack that has to do with an intense craving for that associated with Egypt, that associated with the world – which within the picture here would be the wisdom of man; in essence then to elevate man's wisdom to a position of comparability with the wisdom of God. – Not necessarily to replace it but to see it as of equal value.

g). We then saw the golden calf incident, which ostensibly is another attack on the word of God, as they sought to recreate God, who is the embodiment of His word, in an image that appealed to their fleshly desire and in this we would see the manipulation of the scriptures within Christendom during this dispensation so as to give justification for the very same thing - 2Ti 4:3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;*

And this of course has been a process that has continued since the tares were placed amongst the wheat at the beginning of this dispensation.

h). The next example we saw, in 1 Corinthians 10:8, took us to the work of Balaam and the harlotry he caused Israel to commit with the women of Moab – And that which he taught we find to be alive and well as the Church stands before Christ in judgment - Re 2:14 *"But I have a few things against you,*

because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

i). Just as Israel was betrothed to God the Father so we are betrothed to the Lord Jesus Christ - 2Co 11:2 *For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

And just as Israel entered into relationship with the world around them believing that their covenant relationship with God gave them license, so Christians embrace the world around them believing that grace offers the same protection. But what does the scripture say? - Jas 4:4 *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

j). What we are seeing here of course is yet another attack on the word of God.

k). And this is exactly what we see once again in the next example – *9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;*

l). Nu 21:4 ¶ *Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." 6 So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.*

m). The manna, which pictures the word of God, which is God Himself is described here as ‘worthless’ – that which they crave is for the gratification of their flesh, not the nourishment of their spirit.

n). The symbolism contained in these verses is easy to see – In order to get to the land of promise, to receive an inheritance, we must circumnavigate ‘the land of Edom’, which speaks of the realm of man of the flesh – the world’s wisdom, the world’s values, the world’s systems - and to do this we must go ‘by the way of the Red Sea’ – by dying to the flesh and walking in the Spirit – Ro 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

o). However, we see that Israel ‘became very discouraged on the way’ – an idea that speaks of impatience. In common parlance they got fed up with doing it – And this example, as with all the others we should take very

seriously, especially as this is the subject of Royce's message a few Sundays back - Ga 6:9 *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

p). Losing heart would be the same idea as becoming very discouraged.

q). And if we do this then this will be the time when our eyes will start to wander.

2). These 4 examples then, that we dealt with in detail last week, bring us to the fifth example that we find in 1 Corinthians Chapter 10 - *10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.*

a). And this reference takes us to the borders of the land of promise at Kadesh Barnea - Nu 14:1 ¶ *So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2 And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 "Why has the LORD brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4 So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."36 ¶ Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land, 37 those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the LORD.*

b). And it is here, at Kadesh Barnea, that we see a cataclysmic rejection of God and His word – here is where the attack on the word of God reaches its apex and fulfills its purpose; where the lie has fully replaced the truth and the wisdom of man imparted through the false report of the 10 spies, that God classifies as evil, has been embraced to the end that there is nothing for them but overthrow in the wilderness.

c). Set over against this 'evil report' let's remember what God had told them while they were still in Egypt -Ex 6:6 *"Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 'I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'"*

d). Let's remember the promise He made to Abraham that the Children of Israel would have known - Ge 15:13 *Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly*

that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.....18 On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates- 19 "the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, 20 "the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21 "the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

Ge 22:17 "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

And let's not forget the bones of Joseph - Ge 50:24 And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25 Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."

The very bones that were still in their midst as they wept and complained.

e). All they had to do was to remain steadfast in the faith, to patiently endure, but instead.....Heb 3:16 *For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

f). And I hope we will see in these 5 examples from Israel's wilderness journey how they begin by craving something other than that which God has provided and end with the rejection of their birthright – there is a definite interrelated progression – And as we consider this does it remind us of anything?

g). It surely should – where did our 5 warnings begin in Hebrews? Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,*

h). And although we haven't studied this yet within our present study, where does our 5th and final warning take us? Heb 12:16 *lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.*

i). It takes us to Esau who through his actions despised his birthright and once lost he could not get it back.

j). Then if we look at the 7 churches in Christ's presence in the Revelation, what do we see with regards to the first church? –

Re 2:4 *"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

k). And where does the ultimate conclusion bring us with the 7th of the 7 churches? Re 3:16 *"So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—*

It brings us to the despising of the birthright, the so great a salvation, through a focus on the worldly attributes of success; by allowing man's wisdom to supersede scripture.

l). Can we see then that the 5 examples given to us of Israel in 1 Corinthians Chapter 10 teach the same thing as the 5 warnings we find in Hebrews and the same thing that we find with the 7 churches in Revelation; which is the same thing we see in the Matthew 13 parables; which would take us back to the foundation point in the Garden - Ge 3:1 ¶ *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said....."*

m). And we would do well to remember that the wisdom of man, even when it purports to be 'Christian', at its essence is no more than the seductive hiss of the serpent to draw away the elect to destruction.

n). We would do well to have God's perspective on this kind of 'wisdom' 1Co 3:18 ¶ *Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; 20 and again, "The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." 21 ¶ Therefore let no one boast in men.*

o). Jas 3:15 *This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.*

p). Joh 8:44 *"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

3). In contrast to this let's go to the words of Christ recorded in –

Joh 6:48 *"I am the bread of life. 49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 "This is the bread which comes down from heaven,*

that one may eat of it and not die. 51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." 52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" 53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal [age lasting] life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 "For My flesh is food [lit. meat] indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. 58 "This is the bread which came down from heaven--not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

a). And let's put this together with - Joh 1:1 ¶ *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God.....*

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

b). Here then we clearly see the direct correlation between the spiritual provision for the wilderness journey of Israel and our own pilgrim journey – they ate the manna and are dead for the very reasons we have looked at in these past weeks and perhaps we should note that they did not stop eating the manna and God did not stop providing it for them until the second generation entered the land, but because of the choices of the first generation, to the lust of their flesh, it did them no good at all – And this is exactly what we saw in - Heb 4:2 *For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.*

c). So, what is the deciding factor here? The faith – believing that which God has said from Genesis to Revelation concerning the 7th Day – And if we do truly believe that which He has said, if we have faith to the saving of the soul, then we will realize the absolute necessity of restricting our diet with respect to that which governs our lives.

d). We must live our lives solely by faith in response to the scriptures, irrespective of what man thinks or man says about anything. And this must be in every area of our lives, on all occasions, in every circumstance – there is no other way. And what is truly remarkable is that what governs our choice is not our geography, or culture, or gender, or politics, or socio-economics, but believing the unalterable, unequivocal, glorious Word of God.

e). And in these days of fat free, sugar free, gluten free, taste free the thought of a restricted diet always sounds negative and that would be exactly what our enemy would like us to think – *"We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 "but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!"*

However, the Word of God is a banquet unsurpassed – and we might still only be on the hors d'oeuvres as the spiritual food He has provided for us is beyond quantifying.

f). Finally then, let us remember what the scriptures say about themselves – *Jas 1:16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. 18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. 19 ¶ So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*

e). There is no spiritual food and no spiritual drink apart from the scriptures – there is nothing that can facilitate the salvation of our soul apart from the scriptures – absolutely nothing.

4). *11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition [warning], upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

a). These are matters of such seriousness and such importance that we need to take heed to them and not allow ourselves to become complacent.

b). *Heb 10:35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*