

Sunday March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2013  
The Letter to the Hebrews  
Part Seventy Seven

1). Heb 13:1 ¶ *Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. 3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them--those who are mistreated--since you yourselves are in the body also. 4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

a). We had recognized last week the importance of the verses that make up Chapter 13 with respect to the process of the saving of the soul. The saving of the soul has been the central subject of the whole of this Book and our ready writer does not abandon this subject in the concluding verses.

b). And most particularly we had noted the enormous significance of letting 'brotherly love' continue as part of that process.

c). This love we will remember is 'phileo' love, a love to do with human fondness and affection, a love that is expressed in pleasure and joy over the object of that love.

d). Now clearly such a love as this could be either a positive thing or a negative depending on that which we take pleasure in – in this context though this is a very positive thing as we take pleasure in, have joy over, and affection for our 'brothers and sisters' - Ps 133:1 ¶ <<A Song of Ascents. Of David.>> *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!*

e). And we will of course remember that the Greek word for 'brother' literally means those 'of the same womb' – those then who have been [and continue to be] brought forth from above – those then who we could classify as having the same spiritual DNA, who are presently being dealt with us sons.

f). In this we must be careful though to remember that this would not necessarily include all Christians and nor does it automatically include everyone who claims to be engaged in the race of the faith for the purpose of receiving their inheritance – Php 3:17 ¶ *Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things.*

g). Clearly here we see a sharp distinction between those who 'walk' following Paul's example - 1Co 11:1 ¶ *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.* And those who 'walk', who give the outward appearance of being in pursuit of the Kingdom, but who really are the enemies of the cross of Christ because they 'set their minds on earthly things'.

h). Within this context then those who would be of the 'same womb', who would be counted as brothers, would be those who follow Paul's example as he imitates Christ's example.

i). This would be exactly the same idea that we have seen previously from a slightly different perspective in Hebrews Chapter 12 - Heb 12:7 *If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.*

j). This idea of having a correct pattern to follow is one that we come across just a few verses on from where we are in Hebrews Chapter 13 - Heb 13:7 *Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.*

k). And as we shall find when we get there, that this verse will bring all that we have just seen Philippians and 1 Corinthians into our own week by week experience within this local body.

2). So then, considering all these things there are 2 intriguing questions that arise that would be good to address - Firstly, if not everyone who claims to be in pursuit of the Kingdom is from the 'same womb' - just as we saw in Philippians Chapter 3, then how are we to know who we are to have 'brotherly love' for?

a). And, secondly, how do we become as the 'church' in Philadelphia [brotherly love] that we see in the Revelation, the only Church which receives no condemnation but only promise?

b). Well our questions are interrelated and really have the same answer.

c). And the answer we have already previously found without realizing it in the Book of 1 Peter.

3). 1Pe 1:13 ¶ *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." 17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work,*

*conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you 21 who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. 22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 ¶ because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.*

a). So what do we see here? 'Obeying the truth through the Spirit' brings about purification of the 'soul' – and this 'purification' we should understand as choosing to walk in the spirit and not in the flesh as our consistent practice.

b). And the reason for our faithful obedience is seen in being 'born again....through the word of God', 'by the gospel [that] was preached to you' – this has nothing to do with eternal salvation, but with the continuous process of being brought forth from above through the word of God by the Spirit – it is the metamorphosis of Romans Chapter 12 and the renewal of - Col 3:9 *Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,*

And being continually filled with the Spirit in Ephesians Chapter 5.

c). It is being brought forth from above within the process of the metamorphosis as a result of being continually filled with the spirit and this alone that produces in us the 'sincere love of the brethren'.

d). There are 2 things to note here – if there is a sincere love of the brethren then there must also be an insincere love of the brethren – this is a pretense, a lie, a manufactured 'fondness' out of a sense of religious duty. But if we are laying aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness and receiving with meekness the implanted word of God being transformed into the image of Christ then the fondness and affection we have for one another will be there and will be genuine as it will come out of the new man and not the old man.

e). And also, to state the obvious, without the proper scriptural engagement with the Word that we have been talking about there can be no metamorphosis, and therefore there can be no sincere brotherly love.

f). And so, how are we to recognize those for whom we are to have brotherly love? - They will be self-evident as a result of the metamorphosis taking place within them - 1Jo 3:10 *In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.*

g). Again before we move on – brotherly love is only manifest through faith to the saving of the soul and so the children of God are those who have faith, whose faith leads them to practice righteousness, whose faith results in brotherly love – the children of the devil on the other hand can be identified through one word, ‘unbelief’ – it really can be said as simply as that.

h). Mr 3:33 *But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?"* 34 *And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!* 35 *"For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."*

Ga 3:7 *Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.* 8 *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."* 9 *So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

i). And as we had seen last week, the brotherly love that comes out of faith will naturally extend to those called ‘strangers’ – those who we have not met before but recognize as having the same spiritual DNA as ourselves, whom we take in as our homes as our own and it also extends to those who are suffering persecution as we have empathy with them and compassion for them, ‘as if chained with them’. And of necessity all of this would be found within the experience of the Church in Revelation that has the name Philadelphia – literally, ‘brotherly love’.

4). Now, as we have seen, it is the Church in Philadelphia that receives no condemnation from the Lord at His Judgment Seat, but only promise – this being the case it would be good to know how we can become this ‘Church’?

a). Well to set our minds at ease this would have nothing to do with group hugs and singing, ‘Kumbya’.

b). In fact we must see brotherly love in this context in Revelation for what it points to rather than its practice per se.

c). 2Co 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

d). Now this we know – and that which is judged at Christ’s Judgment Seat are our works of faithful obedience – faith to the saving of the soul is the sole issue here – and so we must see the Church in Philadelphia within this context and that which the Lord speaks to this Church he speaks within this same context – having faith to the saving of the soul for the purpose of rulership.

e). Simply then Philadelphia is the Church of brotherly love, because this is the faithful Church, the Church which has faith to the saving of the soul and as the natural outworking of this faith brotherly love is manifest amongst them. No one can have faith to the saving of the soul and not walk in brotherly love.

f). And so it is not so much the brotherly love itself, but that which has made brotherly love the watchword of this Church that is in view here.

g). So, how do we become like the Church in Philadelphia? Through our faithful obedience to the Word of God – and our faith is comes we will remember according to - Ro 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

5). Let’s just look at what the Lord says to the Church in Philadelphia one more time - Re 3:7 ¶ *"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens": 8 "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 9 "Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie--indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. 10 "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. 12 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. 13 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

a). How incredible to see here that for those who have faith to the saving of the soul the Lord has opened a door [into the Millennial Kingdom] which no one can shut – ‘you have kept My word and have not denied My name’.

b). This would be the same as we see in - 2Pe 1:11 *for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

c). Mt 25:10 *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*

d). And then we have the intriguing v10 - *"Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

e). For the faithfully obedient then there is the promise of being kept from the hour of trial, which shall come upon the whole world.

f). Being kept from or delivered from this hour of trial is a promise exclusively to faithful Christians and consequently it would be Christians alone who are referenced as ‘the whole world’ – all those in view within this limited context – not all the inhabitants of the earth. This hour of trial then does not refer to the coming Tribulation for very obvious reasons.

g). Trials within scripture can be seen as being of 2 sorts – there are those trials that God uses in connection with the child training to bring us to maturity - Heb 12:5 *And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."*

h). And then there are the trials that Satan brings in order to try and bring about defeat in the Christian’s life - Jas 1:14 *But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*

i). And it is Satanic trials that are in view here in ‘the hour of trial’ in our verses from Revelation.

j). The deliverance out of these trials as seen in Revelation Chapter 3 would be the same as that which we see in - 2Pe 2:9 *then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly [faithfully obedient] out of [Satanic trials] temptations and to reserve the unjust [those in unbelief] under punishment for the day of judgment, 10 ¶ and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority.*

k). And it is the same ‘deliverance’ that we see in what we know as ‘The Lord’s Prayer’ –Mt 6:13 *And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.*

l). This verse does not deal with 2 separate things, but with the same thing – the Lord is petitioned not to allow us go into the time of Satanic trial, to remember then that which He promised in Revelation 3:10 and 2 Peter 2:9, and so instead of leading us ‘into temptation’, He will deliver us out from the evil one. And this of course is a petition that can be answered only in response to our faith not through the mere speaking of the words.

m). Hence - Mr 14:38 *"Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

n). So then, if we would be delivered from Satanic trial, which could result in our defeat in the spiritual warfare then we must remain faithfully obedient to the Word – we must have faith to the saving of the soul.

o). And if we do this then we can know for certain that whatever trial we go through is of the Lord for the purpose of training us to be firstborn sons.

p). 1Pe 1:5 *who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

6). And of course a part of our faith to the saving of the soul can be seen in the verses from Hebrews 13 that follow - Heb 13:4 *Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*

a). And here in v4 that which we have just learned from the Church in Philadelphia concerning faithful obedience is carried over into the marriage relationship - 1Co 7:4 *The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Do not deprive [lit. defraud] one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

b). The subject of Hebrews 13:4 is marriage in general and our own marriages in particular, both being held in honor among all, or in all things and the means by which this accomplished in this verse is given through the contrast between marital sexual purity, ‘the bed undefiled’, and sexual immorality, ‘fornicators and adulterers’.

c). Sex within the marriage relationship is presented here as a positive purity, whereas sex outside of the marriage relationship, whether it is sex before marriage – fornication, or sex with someone other than our spouse whilst being married, adultery, destroys the sanctity of marriage and brings dishonor on the relationship that God has ordained as the Divinely perfect expression of Christ’s relationship with those who will rule with Him in the Millennial Kingdom.

d). And those who destroy the sanctity of marriage and bring dishonor on this relationship 'God will judge'.

e). The seriousness of this we can see from remembering the 5<sup>th</sup> part of the warning in Hebrews - Heb 12:16 *lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.*

f). And the weight of God's judgment in this can be felt in –  
1Th 4:3 *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 **that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such**, as we also forewarned you and testified. 7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. 8 Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.*

g). 1Co 6:9 ¶ *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.*

h). However, within the marriage relationship if both spouses are living by faith then sexual immorality should never be a temptation as both spouses sexual needs are always met to the full - *The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.*

i). 1Co 7:2 *Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.*

j). The only reason that there is to be a cessation in providing for our spouse's sexual needs is if both spouses agree to this for a set period of time, for a specific purpose - *Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

k). And at the end of the set period of time both spouses are to 'come together again' – and please note the reason for all this, 'so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control'.

l). This then is a facet of the same Satanic trial referenced in Revelation Chapter 3, and remember the purpose for this trial is to bring defeat in our lives that we should not receive our inheritance, but the faithfully obedient will be delivered from it.

m). It may need a shift in our thinking here to realize that sex within marriage is entirely a matter of faith. Do we believe what God has said or not?

If not we find ourselves in unbelief and Satanic testing will be close on our heels or worse still, on the heels of our spouse.

n). Just as brotherly love is the natural outcome of the metamorphosis working within us so is the way we conduct ourselves within the marriage relationship.

o). As the word of God brings about the change within us then more and more will we hold our marriages as something of great price and live them out according to faith and the more we do this the more marriage must be seen as honorable among all.

7). But if we are not allowing the Word to change us then it becomes impossible to live by faith with respect to our marriage, and most likely sexual immorality will be a manifestation of this.

a). However, there is another spiritual dimension in this that we need to take note of. We have already seen today in 1 John the distinction between the children of God and the children of the devil, a distinction which is contingent upon the practice of righteousness, righteous acts, acts emanating out of faith.

b). The simple fact then is, that as those in pursuit of the Kingdom, if we should engage in sexual immorality through unbelief, we don't just betray our spouse in the natural, but also our Spiritual Spouse - 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.*

c). 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.*

d). Sexual immorality either outside of marriage or within marriage is the hallmark of the darkness of this age and to engage in it is to enter into an illicit and deadly relationship with the god of this age thereby betraying our 'one husband'.

e). This then betrays the sacrifice our 'husband' has made for us and denies the power of His blood shed in doing so, invalidating His Word and betraying our transference from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of light - Col 1:13 *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

f). 1Co 5:9 ¶ *I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. 10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. 11 But now I have written to*

*you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person. 12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? 13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."*

g). Heb 10:29 *Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?*

h). Re 21:7 *"He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

i). This is no small thing.

8). We will however need to carry on with this next time, if the Lord is willing.