

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of January 1, 2023

THEME: "Letters to the Hebrews"

NEW COVENANT

Sunday Read Hebrews 8:6-8

"But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." God's new covenant is better than the old covenant because the new covenant depends on God's faithfulness alone. The old covenant depended on both the faithfulness of man and God. Man fell short! The old testament resulted in man again and again offering a sacrificial lamb on the altar. The new covenant is based on the sacrifice of the blood of Jesus on the cross at Calvary! That completely satisfied God's Holy Law! It was the culmination of what Jesus stated in Matthew 5:17-18: *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."* Never again would a lamb have to be sacrificed. Jesus paid it all! He did it for us!

GOD'S WORD

Monday Read Hebrews 4:9-12

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged 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 Bible is the most powerful book in the world. It explains life: the origin of life, the meaning of life, and the future of life. The Bible is divinely inspired! God, our Creator, chose people to put His thoughts into writing so we could know His thinking, His plans for His earth, and for all people. It is an instruction book for living as mentioned in II Timothy 3:16: *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."* One of the truly amazing portions of Scripture is prophecy, where God has revealed His plans for the future. So much of that prophecy written in the Bible has already been fulfilled exactly as God said it would, and much is being fulfilled now. God spoke of a virgin having a baby in Isaiah 7:14. No human writer would have ever come up with such an unbelievable idea, but we just celebrated it happening with Mary giving birth to our Savior, the Lord Jesus. In II Thessalonians 2:7, God tells us that there would be an increase in lawlessness at the time when the Holy Spirit would leave earth, which would mean the departure of true believers, in whose bodies the Holy Spirit dwells. God's Word is worth reading and sharing; it pierces the minds of the hearers! Psalm 119:105 tells us the Bible is a *"light to our path."*

GOD'S THRONE

Tuesday Read Hebrews 4:13-16

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." The throne of God is in heaven, His eternal home! He can view the whole earth from His throne in heaven, and He is vitally interested in what is going on here on His earth! He is particularly interested in the lives of those people who are committed to serving Him, according to what we read in II Chronicles 16:9: *"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."* In the current age in which we are living, God is completing the building of His Church, over which His Son, the Lord Jesus, is the Head. The building of the Church is called winning souls, convincing individuals to accept the Lord Jesus into their hearts to become part of God's family. Christians have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve God in this wonderful business of building the Church. That effort is described in I Corinthians 3:9: *"For we are laborers together with God."* Christians plant and water seeds of Scriptures into the hearts and minds of unbelievers, and the Holy Spirit convinces them to accept them as truth to become followers of the Lord Jesus! We stay connected to God by approaching His throne in heaven in prayers of intercession. Prayer is the high privilege of believers!

GOD'S SON

Wednesday Read Hebrews 1:1-3

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." The love of God compelled Him to send His Son Jesus to earth as a human Lamb to pay the penalty of sin for all mankind. After His death and victorious resurrection, Jesus returned to heaven and took His place at the right hand of God. While there, Jesus is still working on our behalf. We read this in Hebrews 4:14-15: *"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. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* God's Son, our Savior, is still working on our behalf to bring us God's blessings! He went to the cross to pay the penalty of our sin. Now He is at God's throne praying for us. What a Savior and Lord! He surely should have our complete loyalty!

TRUE FAITH

Thursday Read Hebrews 11:6-10

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." If we are going to be people of true faith in God, we should determine first thing every morning to live for His glory! That would give an eternal purpose in all that we do. Yes, we have to take care of our temporal physical needs, but in so doing they should never compromise our spiritual goals. The command in Colossians 3:17 is a good one to follow every day: *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."* Not only does that give special meaning to our lives, but it also brings eternal reward to which we can look forward when we finally get to heaven!

FAITH DEFINED

Friday Read Hebrews 11:1-3

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Faith is placing our trust in those things which we cannot actually see with our eyes. It is placing trust in explanations of others. Obviously, the most important exercise of faith is to place our trust in that which God has said. This is especially important because Satan has come up with a lot of falsehood by using people who have rejected the Bible as absolute truth. Satan began this war against God's truth in the garden of Eden when he deceived Adam and Eve. He did so in the 20th century by having many people accept the lie of evolution as God said would happen in Romans 1:25: *"Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever."* The way to have true and reliable faith is to do as we are told in Romans 10:17: *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* Read and believe the Bible!

ETERNAL PARDON

Saturday Read Hebrews 10:14-17

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." I am sure we all have things in our lives that we would like to forget. The good news is that God has chosen not to allow confessed sins return to His conscious level. Being an omniscient, all-knowing God, His Divine love compels Him to wipe all confessed sins from His memory. We read of that total cleansing in I John 1:9: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* Satan will do all he can to remind us of past failures, but we should respond by giving praise to our Savior that He washed them away

with His blood there on the cross at Calvary. That is a great way to gain victory over Satanic intrusions! Our faith in the Lord Jesus and in the Word of God as our instruction book for living gives us a victorious life, the truth of I John 5:4: *"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."*