

**"The Conclusion of the Letter to the Hebrews"**

**Hebrews 13:20-25**

**Introduction:** We are about to finish up a most amazing journey which has taken us through one of the richest books of the Bible. The study of Hebrews has been such a blessing in my life and I hope you can say the same. Tonight in our study we shall look at the conclusion of the letter and examine the closing words of the writer very closely. The conclusion of this letter is something which I believe we will find to be very interesting and very enlightening. In this conclusion we shall see 2 points. We will look at the PRAYER and the PLEA.

**I. The Prayer**

**Notice Hebrews 13:20-21**

There is much for us to learn in this prayer so we are going to break it down and look in detail at what the writer does with his pen here.

**A. The Comfort**

In verse 20 the writer will begin his prayer with something which the readers could hold tightly to for comfort in the midst of the trials which they were facing. In verse 20 the writer points his readers to God the Father and to His Son Jesus Christ.

**1. God's Title**

**Notice Hebrews 13:20**

The writer could have chosen many different titles for God but here in this verse he chose to point to God as the God of Peace. This would be so important for these Hebrew believers who were going through the persecution. They needed to have their minds fixed upon God because He was the only means of peace in the midst all they were facing.

**Application:**

We too need to have our minds fixed upon the God of peace as we live our lives in the midst of an ever changing society. We encounter storms and trials on a regular basis as we pass through this world and one of the reasons is because this world is under the curse. The curse makes life very difficult at times.

**Genesis 3:17-19**

<sup>17</sup> And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground **for thy sake**; in **sorrow** [sadness] shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

<sup>18</sup> **Thorns also and thistles** [pain] shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

<sup>19</sup> In the **sweat of thy face** [tears] shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return [death].

Solomon discovered the curse was inescapable when he entered into his experiment.

### **Ecclesiastes 2:1-11**

I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity.

<sup>2</sup> I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?

<sup>3</sup> I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.

<sup>4</sup> I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

<sup>5</sup> I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits:

<sup>6</sup> I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

<sup>7</sup> I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:

<sup>8</sup> I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

<sup>9</sup> So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.

<sup>10</sup> And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.

<sup>11</sup> Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

But there is coming a day when the curse will be lifted.

### **Revelation 21:1-5**

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

<sup>2</sup> And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

<sup>3</sup> And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

<sup>4</sup> And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

<sup>5</sup> And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

So for now we are under the curse and therefore we need the God of peace. We need to walk close with Him in the midst of this world.

### **Isaiah 26:3**

<sup>3</sup> Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Notice the Words of Jesus in John 16.

### **John 16:32-33**

<sup>32</sup> Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

<sup>33</sup> These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Getting back to Hebrews, the writer reminds them that in the midst of the storm God is the God of peace.

## 2. God's Power

**Notice Hebrews 13:20 again.**

Here the writer points to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and it is in the resurrection where the mighty power of God is seen. There would be storms in their lives, there would be valleys of darkness, and there would be challenges which would be humanly impossible to overcome. But there would be nothing difficult for God. When He raised Jesus from the dead He conquered the greatest enemy of man which was death.

### **Application:**

This is a great reminder for our lives today. As we face the challenges of this world today let us always remember that the tomb of Jesus Christ is empty and that brings encouragement in 2 ways.

- a. Our Hope is alive.
- b. God's power is greater than any challenge which we face in our lives.

Remember the conversation between the Lord and Abraham?

### **Genesis 18:10-14**

<sup>10</sup> *And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.*

<sup>11</sup> *Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.*

<sup>12</sup> *Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?*

<sup>13</sup> *And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?*

<sup>14</sup> **Is any thing too hard for the LORD?** *At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.*

Sarah became pregnant at the age of 90 and Abraham fathered Isaac at the age of 100. There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

### 3. God's Care

Notice Hebrews 13:20 again.

Jesus is the great Shepherd of the sheep. This would have been very encouraging to the Hebrews for many of them had lost most of their possessions.

**Psalm 23:1-6**

*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*<sup>2</sup> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*<sup>3</sup> He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

*<sup>4</sup> Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

*<sup>5</sup> Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*

*<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*

### 4. God's Faithfulness.

Notice Hebrews 13:20 again.

Here the Hebrews are reminded that the New Covenant is EVERLASTING. Therefore they could be sure the promises of the New Covenant were resting in God's faithfulness because they were EVERLASTING promises. The bottom line was and is that all believers are SECURE because of God's Faithfulness. We are secure because of the faithfulness of God.

### B. The Petition

Notice Hebrews 13:21

When I first read this prayer of the writer I see something very different from the prayers which we may have offered on behalf of these people had we lived back then.

There is not one petition offered to God for their lives to be easier. There is not one petition offered to God asking for the persecution to be stopped. There is not one petition offered to God to remove their suffering. But instead the writer petitions God to work His power in 2 ways in their lives.

1. He prays for them to be PERFECT which means STRENGTHENED to perform every good work in order to accomplish God's will.
2. He prays that God will work in them that which is well pleasing to Him.
3. He prays for Jesus Christ to be glorified.

This reminds me of the hymn "His Way with Thee".

1. *Would you live for Jesus, and be always pure and good?  
Would you walk with Him within the narrow road?  
Would you have Him bear your burden, carry all your load?  
Let Him have His way with thee.  
His pow'r can make you what you ought to be;  
His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free;  
His love can fill your soul, and you will see  
'Twas best for Him to have His way with thee.*
2. *Would you have Him make you free, and follow at His call?  
Would you know the peace that comes by giving all?  
Would you have Him save you, so that you will never fall?  
Let Him have His way with thee.*
3. *Would you in His kingdom find a place of constant rest?  
Would you prove Him true in providential test?  
Would you in His service labor always at your best?  
Let Him have His way with thee.*

What do you pray for in the midst of your trials? Do you pray for God to release you or do you pray that God will work His will no matter the cost and that He would be well pleased? Let me show you something which Jesus said in John's Gospel.

### **John 11:1-6**

*Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.*

<sup>2</sup> *(It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)*

<sup>3</sup> *Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.*

<sup>4</sup> *When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.*

<sup>5</sup> Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

<sup>6</sup> When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

The sickness of Lazarus was for the purpose of Jesus being glorified when He would raise him from the dead. Jesus therefore waited 2 days before he traveled to Bethany. Humanly speaking He showed up late but according to God's timing He arrived at just the right time.

**Application:**

There is absolutely nothing wrong with praying for God to deliver us from sickness or death. But we must also understand that it may be God's will that we stay in the midst of the storm and be a witness to those around us.

**II. The Plea**

**Notice Hebrews 13:22**

The word "suffer" means "*to be patient with*". The words "few words" can mean "outspokenly". The writer has been outspoken in this letter and he pleads with the Hebrews to surrender to God's will and patiently wait upon the Lord.

**Notice Hebrews 13:23**

The writer knew Timothy and so did the readers. Timothy had been imprisoned for his stand but now he was released. This would have been comforting to know that they were not the only people suffering for their faith and they could look at Timothy to see that God is able to deliver His people from the storms of life.

**Notice Hebrews 13:24-25**

They were to show respect to the spiritual leaders which God had placed over them who were watching for their souls.

**Conclusion:**

We started this study on January 7, 2015 and I would like to praise the Lord for allowing us the opportunity to spend these 3 years in this letter.